

Editorial Booklet

European Conference 2015



T R A C I N G
REFLECTIONS / REFLEXIONS



Body-Mind CENTERING™

Dear reader,

Due to many requests of people wishing to attend the conference and contribute but not being able to travel to Ghent, we came up with the idea for this Editorial booklet, a curated collection of written papers and poster presentations. When we first initiated the call for papers & posters we had no idea what the response would be. When the papers and registrations started to come in, we realized that this initiative responds to a clear need within our widespread Somatics community for opportunities to articulate and share our work.

With this Editorial booklet and Editorial posters (on display at the conference), we share with you a wide range of publications from many corners of the Somatics world, with contributions coming from Europe, Australia and the USA.

We, the coordinators for this booklet—Julia Morozova, the secretary of the European Dance Therapy Association (EADMT) and Noya Nachmany a Co-Chair for the Ghent conference and member of the BMCA Board of Directors—are proud of what has been accomplished here.

We thank everybody for your great enthusiasm and passion, your interesting submissions and your trust. And we wish you all great joy in reading these papers!

Julia & Noya
Coordinators, Editorial booklet and call for paper & poster presentations.

And the Ghent BMCA Conference committee 2015,
Eva Maes – Chair
Kristina Neiryneck – Co-Chair
Noya Nachmany – Co-Chair

Papers

1. *Emotions in Motion: Using movement-based expressive art therapy with people recovering from addiction.*
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2. *The Body in Movement: A practice on life and art.*
Aude Cartoux
3. *Body-Mind Centering® and Performance.*
Sarah Menger
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Kate Tarlow Morgan
5. *On Breath and Breathing.*
Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, written by Basha Cohen
6. *Embodying Differentiation and Wholeness: Lessons from Embryology.*
Kim Sargent-Wishart
7. *Eutonie - harmonische tonus (in Dutch) 'De Vlaamse Eutonie School vzw'*
Therese Windels
8. *Outside Influences, Inside Transformation.*
Jenny Mair
9. *A Body-Mind approach to movement education for adolescents.*
Susan Bauer

Poster Presentations

1. Sarah Menger
Body Mind Centering® and Performance.
2. Misty Tripoli
The Groove®
3. Currents
The BMCA journal, Currents Editorial committee.
4. Martha Eddy
Embodied Dynamic®
5. ISMETA
International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association.

EMOTIONS IN MOTION

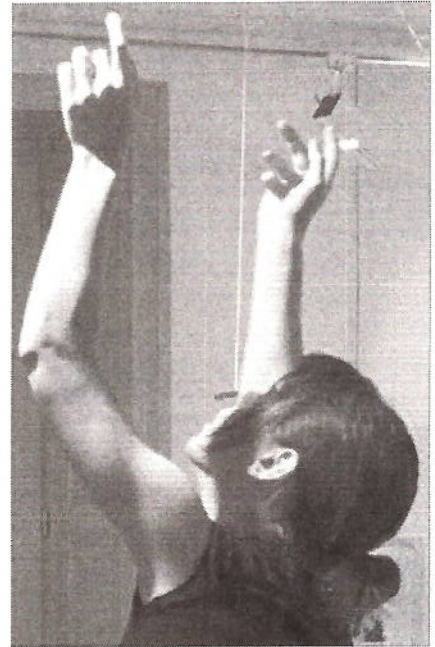
Using movement-based expressive art therapy with people recovering from addiction ~

by Chloe Noble

"Movement is a way to connect deeply and authentically; to express the full range of human emotion."
Daria Halprin

One of the greatest gifts I have received from my training in movement-based expressive art therapy was learning how to be creative with issues belonging to my own existence. By exploring artfully my personal stories I could give a voice to the emotional patterns that were underlying the way I experienced life. Through the container of art I discovered that I had a much larger range of play and freedom than I thought and many resources to address life's situations and live more fully.

Working as an intern in a hospital setting with people recovering from addiction to alcohol I have been amazed by the possibilities that a creative introspective approach can bring to this specific population. Encountering the patients, I remain touched by their sensitivity, by their incredible and inspiring courage and by the deep human issues that led to and entertained their addictive behavior. For most of them their stories with alcohol are closely related to their emotional life. Being under the influence of alcohol often appears like a refuge that can protect them from unmanageable emotions. A refuge that over time became uncontrollable, needing more and more drinks to attain the protection expected, a refuge that keeps them separate from others and from experiencing their true self.



I work with them using the Tamalpa Life/Art Process®, a unique and pioneering method, originated by the American dancer Anna Halprin and her daughter Daria Halprin, a master in the field of expressive arts therapy. This intermodal approach combines movement and dance along with drawing, writing and dialogue and is based on the principle that our real life experiences feed our art, and our art informs the real issues in our lives. At the hospital I call upon various arts mediums to support my patients to connect to themselves and to invite their emotions to be felt and expressed in a healthy and contained way. I found out that my practice can be a rich a complement of psychotherapy and medical treatment.

Emotions and alcohol ~

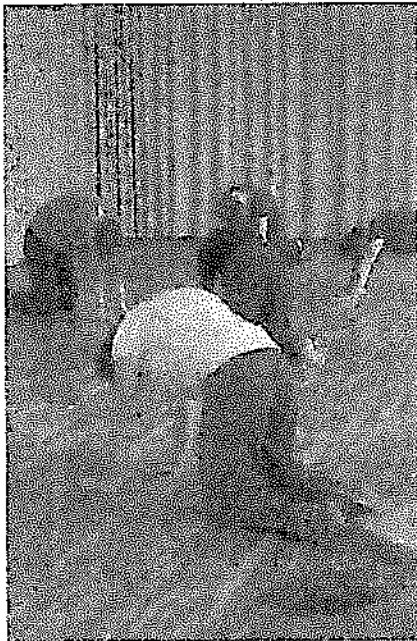
According to the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, an emotion is different than a feeling. A feeling is a private sensation developed by the thinking activity and related to an outside event.

In addition to this an emotion has a resonance in the body, it's a mental phenomenon translated through the soma by the nervous system. It can involve movements in the muscles, in the facial expression, in the posture, that may bring reactions such as tears and laughter or be manifested in the internal system, through the hormones, the heart beat, the lungs activity or the blood pressure. Doctor Françoise Lotstra, specialist in neuroanatomy, differentiates the simple forms of emotions: the universal expressions and gestures common to every culture to the complex form of emotions: those that are subjective and belong to each individual.

Many areas in the brain have a role in the emotional process. We know that the hypothalamus which has to do with the expression of emotions, the amygdala that initiates the feeling of fear and the nucleus accumbens that is responsible for the sensation of pleasure malfunction with alcohol abuse. The intake of alcohol inhibits the fear and the sensation of danger and stimulates the sensation of pleasure creating dependence to the product. The nervous system gets as well affected, slowed down under the effect of alcohol and agitated when the effect disappears, causing deep mood of anxiety and either intensification of the emotions felt or struggles to feel properly within one self.

As they recover from alcohol abuse and become sober, patients have to deal with a whole new way of experiencing themselves and their emotional capacity that can be very frightening and require healthy and sustainable care. Without the alcohol interaction on the brain, some emotions can be experienced as very vivid and overwhelming. Through the Tamalpa Life/Art

Process® method I aim to offer people a ground for expression and providing them with resources to address the emergence of their emotions.



Creating safety ~

As I work in groups, an important aspect of my work is to invite people to feel safe. This includes the delicate but undeniable fact that each individual has his own way of feeling safe. My intention is to support each person finding something that can support them calming down and feel relaxed. This is very important for many people who have issues with alcohol because when they leave drinking, anxiety and stress surface. Through mindful movement, visualization, breathe awareness and other exercises to help reduce tension in the nervous system, my intention is to have patients connect kindly to their body.

Andre, a man in his early 60's, sober for six months, participated in my groups and reported that through slow and easy movements he experienced deep relaxation that was allowing him to feel comfortable and rested within himself. He felt over time much more grounded in his body, aware of his postural habits and tuned in to make adjustments and feel better within himself. This openness to his own internal sensations offered Andre as well a wider openness to the world around him and connected him deeper to the natural world, a place where he felt safe and resourced.

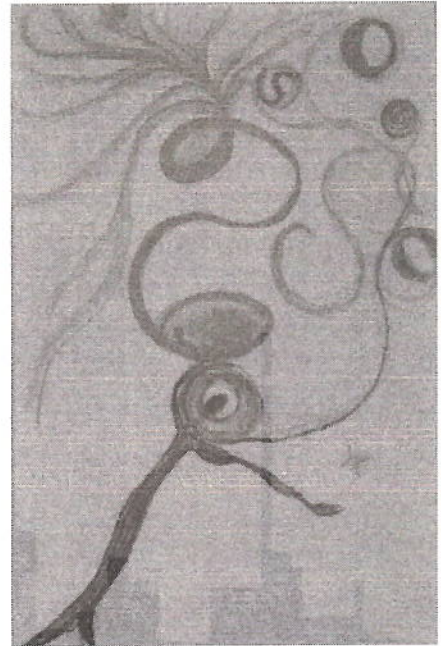
Working with movement and metaphors ~

The way I use to approach emotions is to work with what is called in the Life/Art Process® method the “movement as metaphor”. Emotions use in first place the body and its primary language which is movement to be expressed. On working on the movement we can then work as well on our emotions. Moving can bring us to our deep memories and reveals whatever resides in ourselves, in need for expression. Our emotions can give us messages that we can learn to welcome and encounter in order to inform us about meanings for our life. Whatever it is fear, joy, anger or sadness, we can learn to welcome and be creative with what arise in us and find responses consciously supported by the container of the art.

By using different arts mediums patients can deepen the exploration. With movement and dance they engage their body in space, time and force. There are invited to feel in each body part, to become awake to what's going on inside them, to how they are in space and how they relate to others. Drawing after a movement exploration provides a trace of what has been discovered or what is present with the patient in concrete forms, colors and symbols. Writing allows one to describe with words, to connect with the imagination, to create poetry from an experience, or to give life to the patient's inner dialogues and comments. All those mediums can serve each other and create constellations of creations that will inform and nourish the personal journey.

Working with emotions through this intermodal process with my patients is to me a fascinating experience. I work from Doctor Lotstra's categorization that describes simple and complex forms of emotions. The simple form, the universal one, allows us to communicate our emotions to others, they are built out of all gestures and body expressions that are recognizable by every individuals. To work with them I propose for example, movement works with postures and with the face, exploration about being masked representing defenses or familiar social roles they might have, or working in partners with mirroring and developing others expressions. This stimulates expressivity and communication on their human emotions. The complex form that has to do with how each individual intimately live and relate to his own emotions can be worked out with improv on various themes that belongs to the life of the patient, explorations about being unmasked manifesting more about how they experience and feel themselves in depth, or working on body parts that are more private like the chest or the abdomen. This type of exercises facilitates authentic meetings with personal issues.

Rose, a woman in her forties, sober for almost a year, participated to my groups. After several sessions, I proposed a work on the chest body part. The exploration was about opening and closing the chest area and to bring the awareness in this activity to what was experienced in the physical body, in the mental realm and which sensations were alive. After few movements Rose started to cry, holding strongly herself. A deep intimate life issue got awakened for her. The huge unshared love she was holding back since her husband left her several years before. This theme was highly important for her to work on in her recovery process and from this opening



that happened for her through expressive arts, she was able to share more about her grief and heal her intimate wounds in my groups and with her psychotherapist. The drawing and writing process have also supported her to witness and feel the love she was carrying for him, the sadness and despair his absence left in her heart, and to put courageously her words on it.

By opening through the soma the doors of emotions patients get an opportunity to work on their life stories that underlie the emotional sensations felt. My role is to accompany them, respecting their rhythm, their needs and their expectations. The frame of the sessions is built to



allow coming out everything that may want to arise for each person. Keeping all along a sense of ground and safety is a central concern for me in my work and a transparency that I share with my patients. When more support is needed the patient can keep exploring his story with his psychotherapist at the hospital.

Decentering and resourcing ~

To support patients experience an alternative solution for their emotional responses to drinking or other destructive behaviors, the process of decentering is very important in expressive arts. Once we get at the root of an issue for the patient, we need to find together ways not to reproduce the old reactive pattern but growing from it and transforming the responses to address the issue. Through creativity, the patient can engage his own imagination stimulated by the arts in the aim to provide himself with resources. Like a dream where anything can happen, art can be used as a space for recreating ourselves and to find elements of guidance. The distancing process can help patients respond to their life situations rather than react to it, and possibly react by going back to drinking. Professor Paolo Knill, pioneer in the field of expressive arts, scientist, artist and educator describes the decentering as "an alternative experience of worlding" that bridging back into our lived experience can reveals deep inner resources that in daily life situations may do not have come naturally to our consciousness.

After having met with her personal issue through arts, Rose has been able to take some distance with it and to invite her imagination to provide her with some resources about her emotional wound. I've proposed her to move inspired by the drawing and writing material she produced and to imagine what these creations would reveal her if they were able to speak. By playing around artfully with this question and letting her imagination grow Rose started to develop new movements, different from theses she had used to embody her pain. From this new impulses emerged, she could shift into another state of mind, recognizing that what she needed now was to learn how to give herself care and consideration. She became aware of the possibilities that her own creativity made available for her.

By detaching themselves from their life situations and the related emotions by making art with it, patients can engage in a deep healing process. They are invited to open space between them and their issues and allow creativity to come in that place to support them to reinvent ways of meeting their problems and of living their life. They can find they have many

other resources than their addictive behavior to support themselves and that resides inside them a creative source that can open new perspectives to cope with life. Embodying emotions and exploring them through body expression, drawing and writing, many of my patients reported that they were moving toward healing their wounds but were as well connected deeper to what was beautiful and nurturing in their life. They can discover and learn from the wisdom that their own artistic creations can offer them and experience art as a new refuge that illuminates their life.

I want to address my deepest thanks to Tamalpa faculty teacher Adriana Marchione, who supported me to shape this work and to cultivate my own personality as a practitioner.

Pictures credits:

Portrait by Christophe Lefeuvre

Pictures of workshops participants by Simone Kebbeh-Lutz and Chloe Noble

Picture of artwork by Sigrid Pawelke

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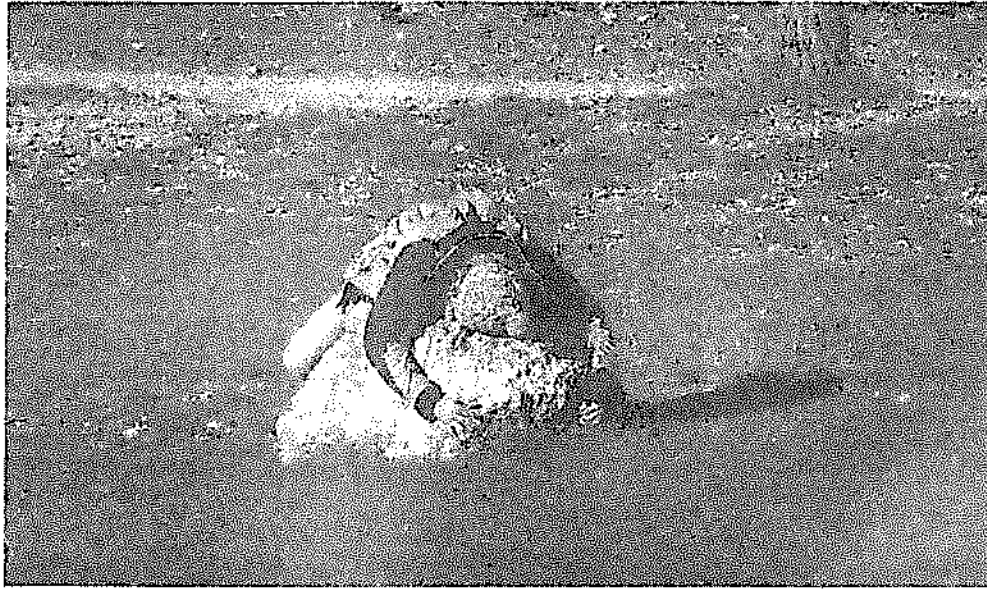
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THE BODY IN MOVEMENT

A practice on life and art

by Aude Cartoux



What is my practice about? How I apply it?

My practice is based on movement as a first medium, in dialogue with the use of voice, writing and drawing. My main intentions are welcome, feel, and develop the capacity to respond to what is present here and now into my body.

I use an artistic creative process and therapeutic skills with the desire to give people empowerment, self-responsibility and freedom to fulfill what they want and need in their own life; to enable people to incorporate bodily intelligence into their daily lives; and above all to invite spontaneity, presence and playfulness. This practice is for everyone.

In teaching collective workshops, regular classes, guiding individual sessions and creating performance art work, I am exploring the body in movement.

The principal technique I am working from is called Tamalpa Life/Art Process®, founded by Anna Halprin and Daria Halprin in 1978, at the Tamalpa Institute, an internationally recognized school for dance/movement-based expressive arts education and therapy.

What is dance?

I remember what was my definition of dance, when I took my first ballet class, at age five: lines, forms, beauty, lightness and training for the body to do specific movements. Next, I practiced modern jazz and I learned how to contract my muscles, to concentrate my strength towards my center to turn, to jump and to use tonic stresses. During those classes, all the students, including myself, we were looking at our bodies moving in the mirror. I saw myself as a tool of movement. My body and I were two separate entities.

Later, I discovered tap dance and my joy of using my feet to express my life force energy. After which, dance became playful and no longer a work. But still, I wasn't feeling I was entirely expressing myself.

When I encountered contemporary dance three years later, I learned new techniques for using my body. The notions of time and space became tools to shape my movement. The possibilities for playing my instrument became more complex and my curiosity increased.

Today, in my opinion, dance is the shaping of time and space, of a movement that is always moving inside us and around us, through the matter of the body. It could be an expression of the ego that wants to be moved, expressed or a giving up of the self that connects to a bigger universal movement. Both appear as life-force energy that needs to be revealed. Dance is an alternation of sensation, perception, ideas, triggers, emotions, packaging, presence, and awareness. Dance is the reflection of where I am internally and externally as I am dancing.

The science of the body in movement:

One of the method I use is called the Movement Ritual, created by Anna Halprin. It works both in theory and in practise by watching the skeleton, exploring the range of one body part, discovering the link between two body parts, etc. It is a repetitive structured sequence of movements that increases awareness of movement, range of motion, flexibility, and serves as a foundation for creative movement explorations. By practicing this technique, people understand their own way to use their body in movement, gain freedom of motion, become more aware of their patterns, and find the strength of their body.

I believe that dance is a reflection of our life and that the experience of our life is revealed in our movement expression and creativity. By admitting that this invisible bridge, the life/art bridge, is permanently in dialogue and movement, we can start to focus on it and open a dialogue between ourselves and our art. Thereby, we can become responsive and creative with our material life. For example, I will use some life themes as a component of an artistic score to perform, and create a bridge between life and art.

In the Tamalpa Life/Art Process method, we combine dance with other art mediums like drawing, writing or voice, then we go from one art medium to another. The intention is to open again a dialogue between those different experiences and intensify the possibility of dialogue.

One example of a way to work on the life/art bridge:

The theme of the exercise is opening and closing. I will guide people to let their body go wherever it wants to go, following those two movements of opening and closing. At the end of the dance, they will find a posture that feels right for them now, hold it and breathe inside it. Then, they will take a paper and draw this posture. Later, they will write spontaneously about how does the posture talk to them in their life? What do they see, feel or imagine as they are looking at their drawing? Thereby, we will travel from one art medium to another and so multiply opportunities to enter in dialogue with our own life/art material.

Art for its own sake

My performance art practice has taught me how to play with the dialogues of life/art, feelings/communication, internal sensation/expression...; I have referred before in this article. I have learned to make visible the voice that emerges out of those dialogues, which I called Art.

My contribution as a performer and as a movement teacher is in how to facilitate this process of dialogue between all kinds of voices in our dance and to teach how to play with them. How can we shape the experience of meeting our sensations, feelings and images in movement, into a form that can stand on a self-sufficient existence and has its own purpose.

Rituals as acts of transformation

Another aspect of my practice is the use of rituals as a way to transform. What I call rituals, could take the form of an art performance, or a concrete action in daily life. I believe that human beings are living in a system larger than the body that includes the notions of space and time. I am interested to look below the miracle of resonant interactions to see how life and healing emerge from the energy and information residing in space and time. We are an element of living nature. So, I believe that by consciously inviting our entire living system in the movement of a transformation and change, we become more efficient in the process of our evolution. By supposing that the brain doesn't make the difference between dream and reality, we can create the reality that we want through rituals that hold the intention of our desired reality. How can a ritual carry symbols and metaphors representing the biggest system? This is the power of art.

In addition to the Tamalpa life/art process, I'm inspired and influenced by two phenomenological approaches that refer to the power of rituals: The *psychomagy*, created by Alexandro Jodorowsky and the constellations pioneered by Bert Hellinger.

The *psychomagy* is based on the belief that the performance of certain acts can directly act upon the unconscious mind, releasing it from a series of traumas, some of which are passed down from generation to generation. The constellations are a method on the idea that a greater soul exists that has one direction. And the direction this greater soul heads in is towards uniting what has been separated or what had been in conflict with one another before. So there is a growing integration or reconciliation of what had previously been in opposition.

"The constantly surprising findings particularly in quantum physics bring science ever closer to spirituality. Quantum physics and spirituality are teaching us that we are deeply connected to all and everything: what happens to others happens equally to us in a very concrete time even measurable way." Dr Albrecht Mahr

Tools for connection

Breathing work:

Breathing is a primary and inevitable action we do in each and every second. Each time we consciously choose to breathe, we remind ourselves that we are alive. I am practicing breath in order to stay connected to what is present in me and welcome it. I am practicing breath to enlarge the internal space sensation of my body, I am practicing breath to calm down and develop a flexible body mind.

The power of touch:

If you ask me what I need to do in my everyday life, I will answer: to touch. Touching is a way for me to remember my human condition. I very much enjoy using hands-on (to place hands on the body and breath through this touch) because it brings me safety, reassurance, peace, care and calm. Each time I put my hand on a person's body part without speaking, and stay for a few breaths with the touch, I will feel a release in the body. I imagine the use of touch with this intention of connecting with ourselves, could be very powerful. Furthermore, I am practicing contact improvisation which is a dance technique in which points of physical contact provide the starting point for exploration through movement improvisation. It is both a performance dance and a social dance. This practice is a way to connect to playfulness, listening, belonging, giving and receiving.

Inner and outer world:

I think that one way to meet ourselves is to connect our being in our inner landscape and another one is to connect in our external perception. I believe that the dance that occurs from one space to the other is opening the awareness of our body and the communication between us and it.

Here, I give you one example of the application of this tool: I will guide people in observing and sensing the state of their body in the present moment, as if they are a witness of themselves. More specifically, I will ask them to look at the breath, comfortable and uncomfortable zone, and all kinds of physical sensations that they are aware of. Same thing for the emotional level: I will ask them what kinds of feelings were present at the time and to name some of them to awake the attention: joy, disappointment, irritation, relief etc. Finally, I will invoke the mental level and all images, thoughts, memories that emerge. Again, people will simply witness themselves and continuously keep breathing. Then, I will propose that the participants touch the points on their body that call their attention, to make contact with what the body needs. Each participant will find his or her own way to make contact. Along the way, I will keep providing resources and support for participants to use: quality of touch, voice, or variations of movement. Finally, I will invite people to enter a stage of responding. The task could be: move wherever your body wants to move in response to your sensations, feelings, and images and let the movement bring you somewhere. Follow your movement.

Communication skills

By using a special tool of the Tamalpa life/art process focused on giving feedback based on what "we see, we feel, we imagine", rather than on what we like and don't like, we can go further better express ourselves responsibly.

I am also applying the Non Violent Communication, created by Marshall Rosenberg. This practise assumes that we all share the same, basic human needs, and that each of our actions are a strategy to meet one or more of these needs. I have a desire to share the beauty of this philosophy and practice because it has brought me a great depth of connection with myself and others in my life.

I think that communication is a natural exchange of information that recalls the heart, body and mind. It is a path to expand and uplift ourselves and each other through exchanges of honesty. Today, I am blending those communication tools in my dance practice in order to stay close to integrity, to improve my social skills, as well as the relational dynamics among people that choose to practise the communication.

"Out beyond ideas of wrong doing, and right doing, there is a field. I will meet you there." Rumi

Blessings of this practise: Who benefits from it?

I use the creative arts to unfold my way of living my daily life, as a form of therapy and a support for my art. In this way, the process of creation is emphasized rather than the final product.

In the same way that this practice has worked for me as a professional dancer, I can imagine it could work for others coming from similar professional backgrounds.

For professional dancers that are used to play the body as an instrument for a long time, this practice can invite them to meet "this body" by entering new doors, and so to deepen the sensibility. They could discover the depth of the links between their personal life stories, beliefs, ways of feeling, and develop their play on stage, close to who they are. What is moving them? What do they move? As I was going further into it, I clarify all those questions: why am I dancing and for whom? What is dance providing to the world? How am I taking care of my body and others'? This practice allowed me to reconnect to myself, to my family, to others and to the world. I think it could bring more awareness and embodiment to the use of the body in the Art of Dance.

For amateur dancers, and everyone interested in practicing this method, it would open a range of possibilities in how to bring their creativity to their life, reinforce their connection with their own body, and allow a place for their expression to be. It can reveal a path where we will follow the body as an essential motor as well as the mind.

For people involved therapeutically in a process of healing, this form of movement would focus on that it is different from other forms of rehabilitative treatments in what it allows creative expression and is more holistic, meaning to treat the full person: mind, body, and spirit. It can be a strong partner of a general eastern modern medicine.

Conclusion:

We have seen all along this article that this practice called "the body in movement", is about connecting our awareness and our body: knowing how our body works, in dialogue with ourselves, others and our life, in order to reflect on what is happening and be able to respond to choices, playing with all our life material for creating a specific art form, using rituals to materialize what we want to manifest in our life, and support a sustainable relationship with connection. Through the unity of the body, mind, and spirit, the practice of the body in movement provides a sense of wholeness to all individuals.

Regarding the modern society we are living in and the challenges that are triggered by the acceleration of time and space, I think that it's more than important to take care of our body and the way we use it. Therefore, we can become more familiar with our instrument and address our needs for well-being, connection, autonomy, meaning, and play, with more choices and flexibility. In paying attention to those needs, I am convinced that we are able to dance through the chaos of life, and balance with all our contradictions, desires or wishes with our consciousness.

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Body-Mind Centering® & Performance

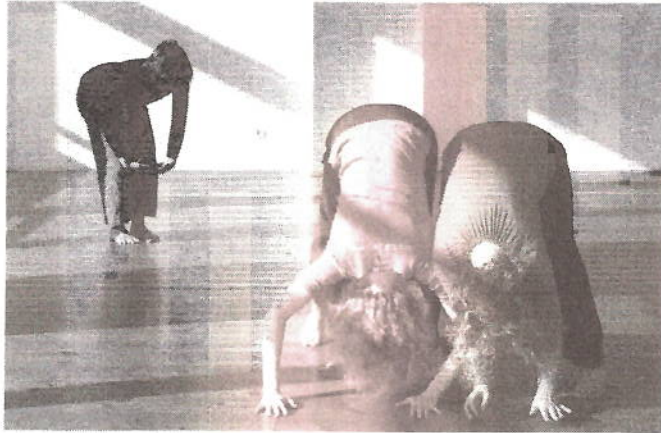


A space with three performers walking around - sound space with noises - chairs, mats and pillows randomly spread like islands all over the place - audience entering silently - successively whenever they arrive - taking time to find their place - eye contact - invitation - performer touching spectator - touching each other - yielding - fascia moving through the arm - moving arm moving body - connections - reverberations and echoes - the performers finding a space alone - like three mountains - moving in resonance to each other - weaving the connection - deepening - solo moments - whirlwind - mutual attraction - three bodies entangled - one plant moving - a flower blossoming out - releasing - crawling the floor - laughing - playing - finding places between audience - behind audience - next to audience - arriving.

ECHOOO - resonances of the body

A performance by Ka Rustler, Odile Seitz and Sarah Menger

'I was very enthusiastic about your performance yesterday. Astonishing how fast one can get into presence and perceive the own body, the space and the others within very clearly. Both the beginning when you were interacting with us and your performance together was great!'
Sonja, art historian & curator



Photos: Sivan Berlin

For me BMC is a great language and my base for creating performance. It offers all these insights into the body and anchors me in sensation and perception. BMC is an invitation to dive into the depth of my body's tissues and take the time to experience myself on a cellular level. Here I take the time to breathe, here I get curious, here I find the continuum of sensing, feeling and action, here I start playing.

Originally I studied fine arts and was into painting and drawing. Now I really enjoy to compose with my body in space and time. I am in relationship and dialogue - with my bodily sensations, with the environment, with others...

In teaching I commit myself to look for ways to give people the chance to have a real experience, to find something new, to hang out in the unknown a bit more than usual so that the hidden can show itself.



'I like your calm manner in teaching and the feeling that everything is all right, whatever might happen in movement or expression.'

Karin, Somatic Movement Art Trainer, Performer & Singer

'Body-Mind Centering' & Performance'

I am offering a one year long advanced training under that name in Tanzfabrik Berlin.

It consists of 8 modules (3 times four days and 5 times three days), the themes are:

- Skeleton & Muscles • Movement Development • Organs • Nervous System & Senses • Fluids • Embryology • Glands & Voice • Integration & Connections •



Photo: Ivo Hofste

It's designed for people with movement experience and an interest in performance and for professional performers (movement/dance, music, voice).

Here I share my research of how to apply BMC to performance. Each weekend we engage in one of the systems and get to know the very specific movement qualities. We explore the mind of each system and get to know the belonging themes that will support your performance practice. It's going to be playful and encouraging.



In the advanced training we work with:

- embodied anatomy • hands-on • hands-on into movement • dance improvisation • structures for solo, duet or group • elements from contact improvisation • closed eyes practice (similar to Authentic Movement) • guided meditations • somatisation • music • elements from voice work • feedback and group resonance • scores •



'Ensouled anatomy is an appropriate expression and I experience the anatomy as if a poem that used to be only memorized is now beautifully set to music. My approach totally changes. You have a great gift to transmit that.'

Christina, physical therapist

'I enjoyed very much the connection between theory and practice. Through that there were many links to my activity as a dancer and teacher. I found the advanced training really inspiring.'

Raisa, dancer & dance teacher

www.tanzfabrik-berlin.de/en/bmc-performance

Sarah Menger, sarahmenger@web.de, Tel. 0049-(0)3362-8864858

Returning to PROPRIOCEPTION now
BY KATE TARLOW ©2015

*[Earlier versions of this text were presented as an introduction to a Panel on
"Proprioception," organized and lead by KTM at the Gloucester Writers Center, Gloucester
MA., July 2013 & in Currents Journal 2011]*

Proprioception

By Charles Olson

1965

Physiology: the surface (senses—the 'skin': of 'Human
Universe') the body itself—proper—one's own
'corpus': PROPRIOCEPTION the cavity of the body,
in which the organs are slung: the viscera, or
interceptive, the old 'psychology' of feeling,
the heart; of desire, the liver; of sympathy, the
'bowels'; of courage—the kidney etc—gall,
(Stasis—or as in Chaucer only, spoofed)
Today: movement, at any cost. Kinesthesia: beat (nik)
the sense whose end organs lie in the muscles,
tendons, joints, and are stimulated by bodily
tensions (—or relaxations of same). Violence:
knives/anything, to get the body in.
To which
PROPRIOCEPTION: the data of depth sensibility/the 'body' of us as
object which spontaneously or of its own order
produces experience of, 'depth' Viz
SENSIBILITY WITHIN THE ORGANISM
BY MOVEMENT OF ITS OWN TISSUES...

In 1794, anatomist and psychiatrist, Johann Christian Reil, coined two
complementary terms -- "gemeingefühl" or "general sensibility," and "cenesthesie" or
"the vital sense," defined as "the undifferentiated complex of organic sensations by
which one is aware of the body and bodily conditions (Websters, 1945)" 'Cenesthesia

was – according to Reil – one of three human (?) qualities that informed the Soul. First, was “external sensation” or the perception of the outside world through the senses. Second, was the “internal sense” otherwise called “the organ of the soul,” where the abilities of imagination, judgment, and consciousness were housed. And, third was this “vital sense” otherwise named “cenesthesie” or commonly know to us, cenesthesia.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the evolutionists incorporated Reil’s “cenesthesia” by calling it *the primary body sense*. In spite of the classic dichotomies of the body-mind split, it was still maintained, on a practical level that “mental life was determined by sensory activity” and the sensations of placement and orientation was part of this action and participated in *soul-fullness*.

Later, in 1880, Henry Charlton Bastian suggested a *kinaesthesia*, which built on Reil’s definition and went into further depth viz. studies of the nervous system and the action between the muscular system and the brain. It was a whole new ballgame when it was discovered that afferent information travelled from various points: tendons, joints, and skin. In 1889, Alfred Goldscheider suggested a classification of *kinaesthesia* into 3 types: muscle, tendon, and articular sensitivity.

In 1906, Charles Scott Sherrington published a landmark work that introduced the terms *proprioception*, *interoception*, and *exteroception*. **Proprioception** pronounced /ˌprɒpɹi.əˈsɛpʃən PRO-pre-o-SEP-shən), from Latin *proprius*, meaning “one’s own” and perception, is the sense of the relative position of neighboring parts of the body. It is the sense that indicates whether the body is moving with required effort, as well as where the various parts of the body are located in relation to each other. Unlike the exteroceptive senses by which we perceive the outside world, and interoceptive senses, by which we perceive pain and the movement of internal organs – proprioception is a third distinct sensory modality that provides feedback solely on the status of the body internally and locates it externally.

Somatically, proprioception is experienced viz. pressure through the joints which fires locator messages into the nervous system at the insertion sites of joint-end tendonous fibers and fibrous muscle bundles. Gravity would assist this proprioceptive state since *pressure through* is an action that needs the Earth Element with which to interact. Some would say that such interdependence of body and earth recapitulates the embryogenic experience of maturing fetus in the womb – as the space in which it grows becomes tighter and tighter would exact gentle pressure to the joint capsules and thereby simulate the sense of gravity.

Now, by the end of Olson’s “Proprioception” – and along the lines of Dr. Reil’s Vital Sensing – the anatomical term of Proprioception expands to a form of GPS where the Soul/The Unconscious or Projection the Self and O. leaves out the word ‘consciousness’ particularly) cannot exist without it and I quote:

Neither the Unconscious nor Projection have a home unless the DEPTH implicit in physical being – built-in space-time specifics and moving – is asserted.

This feels right. To re-instate a theory of knowledge that not only includes the body but begins with it. And, I quote from an unpublished Olsonian text, "The Body Is A House" (1965) —

Inside the body is thing as vast and as difficult to experience as the universe. But it has this advantage that it is inside. It can be experienced directly.

This consideration — of the experience and of the directness — was and continues to be the subject of an entire field of study — what we now call Somatics: a field that subsumes the movement arts and sciences ranging from kinesiology to sports and from choreographic techniques to dance therapy.

The idea of movement as partner to self/knowledge is what my teacher, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen has used, since 1970, as the basis for her work — Body-Mind Centering. BMC comes at the end of a century-long interest in the impact of motor development on both cognition and emotion. Olson (the 50's) and Cohen (the 70's) created a pedagogy that demands an interdisciplinary approach to somatics that is the study of human agency of through movement as impacting on the mind. Of infancy, Eileen Heaney, infant specialist has said "The infant must move or act on his world in order to know it." Therefore, movement performs as a primary 'sense' of the caliber Reil's "censesthie" or that "vital sense." And thus, proprioception — which brings me to the pith of the poem "Proprioception":

To which
PROPRIOCEPTION: the data of depth sensibility...

For Olson, proprioception is not just about the body, but also about placement. For some of us, we wish to broaden the scope of this idea and call it location i.e. locality, local place, local history, localvore, and so on. But Olson also leaves a cautionary, he writes "*the advantage is to place the thing, instead of it wallowing around sort of outside*" which for me, as a performer is the mission. The broader scope of proprioception cannot happen without *stepping in*, stepping in to the Dromenon (the Labyrinth) and making it happen.

Proprioception is about finding your place. It is the Olsonian Vector Experience (dimension, density, complexity) = the "data" of "depth" — and I quote:

...the body of us as object which spontaneously or of its own order produces experience of, 'depth' viz.
SENSIBILTIY WITHIN THE ORGANISM BY
MOVEMENT OF ITS OWN TISSUES.

What propels us is a fundamental desire to move and also a fundamental desire to be located. Or in physiological terms: the three golden rules of Proprioception: Position (intero), Orientation (extero), Location (proprio). This is learning at its very base. This is also the self. This is also history.

Charles was in search of the same kind of complexity that Reil was in search of, the Vital Sense, the depth of depth, and ultimately, that which cannot be touched, but is felt: the soul. I leave you with Paul Valery's definition of the Real Body to which

Valery gives the name, "Nonexistence as a kind of incarnation"² Might it be then that proprioception incarnates our nonexistence by making us BE HERE NOW!

Or on the streets, one can say, "Proprioception is injured, if the joints are injured"³ and the soul has nowhere to go.

¹ Morgan, Kate Tarlow. "The Body is a House, part I," in *The Worcester Review* collection of essays for Olson 100 at Clark University (Worcester, Ma., 2010), 70-77.

² Valery, Paul. "The Problem of the Three Bodies," in *Selected Essays of Paul Valery*. (New York, N.Y.: New Directions, 1950)

³ Jonathan Cluett MD.(7/14/08)

On Breath and Breathing

-- Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen

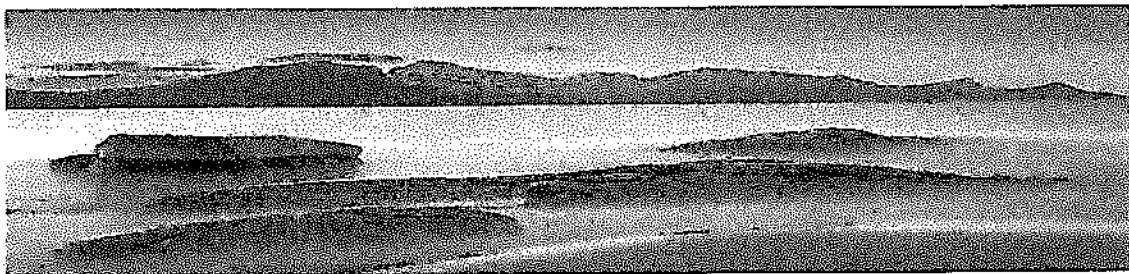
"With all the techniques of breathing that I've explored over about 50 years, the one that works the best for me is to awaken my awareness and then to be effortlessly breathing rather than focusing on making the breath. And what that has done is taken the breath to the cellular level, away from even the lungs and the diaphragms, coming to the place of just letting your breath breathe.

If your hand was on any part of your body, there would be very little movement, including your lungs and diaphragm. If they're awake and everything is aware, everything knows what to do. At the cellular level, all of the cells are breathing. They know what to do. The fluid goes in and the fluid comes out, so there's not a lot of huffing and puffing. Even the belly is quiet and calm.

So you breathe at the center of your body. By the center, I mean if you put a hand on the front and back of your body anywhere, it would be equally distributed, rather it's to the front and back or the right and left or the diagonals or your head and your feet.

There's this ease of distribution.

So that the deeper the breath, the more cells are involved, rather than the more pressure. Letting go of the efforting and the anxiety to breathe or to perform. It doesn't mean not to understand breathing or all the different ways to breathe, but that ultimately you can be restful in your breathing."



I am a PhD research student in the field of performance studies, and my work encompasses what I think of as somatic philosophy, which is a way of saying that I observe consciousness as expressed through my experience of my body, in movement, in felt sensation - the lived experience of being an embodied human being. I have a background as a dancer, choreographer, and movement specialist, and I'm a certified practitioner of a specific somatic modality known as Body-Mind Centering®, or BMC. In BMC we work with the mind from varying scales or perspectives, such as the mind of a cell, the mind of the liver, the mind of arterial blood flow, etc, as well as the mind of the room or of a particular developmental moment.ⁱⁱ

One of the things I'm investigating in my research is the creative or generative process, and because of my background in Tibetan Buddhism I'm specifically interested in the relationship between something manifest or expressed (a form) with the background space it arises out of (known as *sunyata* in Sanskrit, often translated as *emptiness* in English). In Tibetan Buddhism and many other systems the creative process often includes some kind of differentiation of a background wholeness into multiple, singular expressions which arise in relation to each other. This echoes the way we might perceive our bodies if we remember they are a community of cells in motion, subcellular structures in motion, atoms in motion.

This viewpoint indicates body and mind as being dynamic intertwining, interdependent processes. The story of how these dynamic processes of body and mind first appear in their intertwining is what we call embryology, beginning with the event of conception. In my research I'm taking a poetic approach to the events of embryologyⁱⁱⁱ, exploring the narrative of this creative process through embodied movement research. I tend to switch up perspectives and scale a lot in this work and I will do that throughout this talk today.

So the story of embryology is a story of movement and change. The movements of embryology are a special kind of movement, they are gestural events, they are enactive, they make something happen. Each movement gesture that the developing embryo makes totally transforms not only its shape, but its complexity, functionality, location in space, embodiment of that space and its immediate environment (because the embryo creates its own immediate environment as it develops). Each of these transformative gestures opens up new possibilities of activity, expression, self-reflection, and relationship. I believe these gestures are significant philosophically in that they tell the story of our becoming embodied, our earliest development. Remember that the embryo you once were is continuous with the human being you are now - there's no clear point at which you suddenly became something else, you've just been through a magnificent process of differentiation.^{iv} So what are the significant enactive gestures that transform us from being one cell to being this phenomenally complex being sitting here today? And what can those formative gestures tell us about ourselves?

If we journey back to the beginning of our embodiment, we encounter the event of conception, what Buddhist traditions take to be one's birth. The Pali Canon describes conception as 'the emergence of the first thought, the first consciousness in the mother's womb' (Boisvert 2000: 301-2). It might seem odd to us now to think of the first *thought*

occurring at conception, if we associate the activity of thinking with actual words and a kind of cognitive functioning which requires a brain. But I'm suggesting we consider thought not as verbal activity but as a specific kind of movement within space, and that this movement, the movement itself, has inherent intelligence. This first thought, this first hint of movement in the air^v, sets into motion subsequent movement thoughts, which are the formative gestures.

So what is this movement that happens at conception? What happened at *your* conception? From basic biology we know that a cell called a sperm, from your father, and a cell called an egg, from your mother, met and fused. I sometimes imagine it like that clichéd image of a man and woman running toward each other on a beautiful beach, and meeting in a wild embrace, declaring: 'you complete me!' And in this wild embrace of these two cells, the sperm from your father and the egg from your mother, that's kind of true, because they each brought half of a genetic story, and when those two halves combined that introduced your genetic story. Of course neither of these two cells individually was the beginning of you. It was the *fusion* - that wild embrace - that produced a singularity, a unique cell which, as far as we know, is the mother cell of the approximately 100 trillion cells currently creating and carrying the life of your body.

This first cell, the fertilised egg, is called a *zygote*, which is from the Greek word meaning 'joined' or 'yoked,' so it carries the same meaning as the Sanskrit word *yoga*. Our beginning then, our invitation to incarnation, is the yogic fusion of two into one. From a Buddhist perspective the narrative of this event also includes a third character, which is the catalysing or karmic force of the incarnating being. All these energies combined set things into motion internally in the zygote, along with the dynamic interactions of the five elements (which are an important part of my research but beyond what I can cover today).

What do you imagine the tone might be like inside the zygote? A newly formed unique cell, an incoming consciousness with all its karmic history, a one-celled organism pulsating with the potential for a human life, the potential for your human life. What happens? What is the first gesture the zygote makes?

The first thing it does is to divide itself in half. This is the first significant gesture of our embodiment: one becoming two.^{vi}

From the perspective of what we are now, 100 trillion cells, this might seem rather insignificant, maybe it's a fact we remember from a diagram in a biology book- the zygote divides to become 2 cells, they divide to become 4, 4 become 8, and so on. But if we approach this event from the perspective of the cell itself *as us*, as our ontological essence, the beginning of our human-beingness- if we, in other words, *embody* the zygote and its enactive gestures - it becomes quite significant that the first thing we do upon arriving is render ourselves in half.

That's as far as we're going to get today in the story of embryological development, and we're only about 12 hours in, but let's look a little closer at what occurs inside the cell for this division to take place.

In the *zygote*, as in all eukaryotic cells, the DNA - which carries the uniqueness, the genetic spark of the organism - that DNA is enclosed within the inner sanctum of the nucleus, so it's protected within the nuclear membrane. Maybe we can relate to that feeling of having our inner essence protected someplace deep within ourselves. To prepare for becoming two, the nuclear membrane, the walls of the inner sanctum as it were, dissolves. The chromosomes disentangle (they unwind out of the double helix), fully replicate themselves (they make a complete second set) and disperse out into the cellular fluid. Each chromosome stays linked to its new duplicate in the flattened x shape you may

have seen in images. So the spark, the heart essence of the cell, the identifying fire of the individual being, unravels and disperses. Already I feel this, in myself, as an act of trust, generosity, and a sign that our identity is not wrapped up in being one thing, but permeates the field of our existence.

Next, the centrioles, organelles within the cell which are passed on from the sperm, move apart to take up opposite sides of the cell, establishing a polar orientation. (So we're starting to see an expression of spatial orientation - interesting that these come from the sperm which need to have a very clear sense of direction through space.) The centrioles then send out spindle fibres like tentacles, attaching to a small structure (the kinetochore) at the centre of the x junction of each chromosome pair, which line up along the equator of the cell. Until about 25 years ago it was thought that the spindle fibres pulled the chromosomes apart at this point, but now it's believed that the kinetochore kind of winches itself along the spindle fibres. Either way there's a clear parting, directly from the equator to the two poles. It's kind of a rewind of our cliched couple meeting on the beach and merging - now there's an equally forceful separation. We now have two full sets of chromosomes, each regrouping, reweaving into a double helix formation, and coming to reside within its own newly-forming nuclear membrane.

This is the first part of the one becoming two- and it's already a major shift in identity. So in my embodied research I would ask of the experience questions like: What then is the relationship between the two new nuclei, these two genetic 'hearts'? How does sensing my identifying spark in two places feel different to sensing it contained in one place only? How do the two relate? How do they know each other? How does that change the relationship to the surrounding space? What possibilities does this being-two provide that didn't exist while being one?

But we haven't quite finished the story of becoming two yet. This process, called mitosis, is then followed by the second part of cell division, which is called cytokinesis. Cytokinesis is the transformation of the fluid and structural form of the cell to fully manifest the form of two. (If mitosis is an activity of the air and fire elements, cytokinesis is the follow through in the water and earth elements, which are denser and more substantial.) So let's look at the gesture of cytokinesis from the perspective of the cell membrane.

The membrane of a cell is the point of communication between the inner life of the cell and the outer environment. The membrane is active and intelligent. It is semi-permeable, which means it decides what gets in or out, and what stays in or out. So you can imagine yourself now as being a one-celled organism, being the zygote, and sense the container created by the membrane. You can feel it now as your skin, remembering though that the zygote exists in a fluid environment. Through your membrane, or your skin, you can actively meet your environment- tune in to what you sense through all your points of contact and how you bring your presence to that contact with your environment. In BMC we work with this a lot, actively meeting whatever we are in contact with. This is a fundamental movement pattern we call *yield*. So just now, sitting in your chair, can you sense the force of gravity within the contact, and yield your weight into it. Yielding is not about letting go or collapsing, it's more like a priming of the surface, an active meeting, a kind of presence.

When you are this one cell, the zygote, you can yield with and communicate with your environment. You are one entity, in relation to the field that you exist within (and it's in motion in a fluid environment; rolling along toward the uterus). During cytokinesis, after mitosis, the membrane actively contracts around the equator of the cell where the chromosomes were just lined up a moment before. This contraction is accomplished by molecules of actin and myosin -

just like in muscle cells - just inside the membrane. So in a sense already, on day one, we are priming the flexing of our muscles. The membrane draws in at the equator, folding in on itself from all sides, and pinches off to complete the act of division. Now we are two genetically identical daughter cells, sitting in relation to each other within an outer covering, called the *zona pellucida*, which will contain the dividing cells for the first couple of days until there are enough of them to create their own container. Now, as a two-celled organism, not only can we yield to the surrounding environment, but we can yield within ourselves. Our ability to communicate now extends to internal communication as well, between multiple intelligent forms, across the space between. To me, this gesture of division not only sets the stage for, but *embodies*, dialogue and relationship, and reflection. As mathematician and philosopher Brian Rotman (2009: 76) points out, "to re-flect is to bend back, to fold something onto itself." And he continues: "folding engenders an ontological novelty, it brings a previously non-existent inside/outside difference into being. In psychic terms, reflection introduces an interiority, an interior space of consciousness and subjectivity."

So this first gesture of embodiment, the one becoming two, might be seen as awareness folding back on itself, bringing consciousness into being. We're only maybe 12 hours into the embryology story.

I've been exploring the philosophical implications of this, and don't have time to go into all of it today, but just to note from Taoism: Chuang Tzu wrote that "...all things create themselves from their own inward reflection and none can tell how they come to do so" (Chuang Tzu, *Ch. VIII* in Chang 2011: 92).

I could go on and on about this but I'll just leave you with two more aspects of my research that I'm excited about. One is that of course not only does that one cell become two, but those two cells each become two, and those all become two, and in fact most of the 100 trillion cells in your body now will become two sometime very soon. Cell division is an essential part of who we are, a key to our somatic existence. As I mentioned at the beginning there are immediate parallels to principles found in Buddhism and Taoism and other traditions, that creative expression in form is wholeness differentiated, but it never ceases being wholeness. And also that the wholeness, the nondual - the Tao, dharmakaya, basic goodness, space of emptiness - is to be recognised and appreciated in the differentiated manifestation of form.

So this enactive gesture of the zygote then is a clear expression of the creative principle from both of these systems, and, as the movements of embryology continue, each gesture creates more complexity, further differentiation, and with that further opportunity to discern and appreciate implicit wholeness.

The other idea I'd like to leave you with is this. There has been some scientific research done as to the connections between the spatial polarity of the zygote, the orientation of the first three cell divisions, or cleavages, (1 into 2, 2 into 4 and 4 into 8) and how these underlie the establishment of the body's three main axes as it develops. In humans, the first cleavage of the zygote - this first division we were just exploring - is thought to underlie the sagittal plane, the one that delineates the left and right halves of our bodies, what we refer to as the midline. In embryological narratives from yogic traditions, where the energy channels arise first, and the material form organises around those, the first structure that arises is the central channel, which is in the same sagittal plane space as what we call the midline. And the central channel is thought to be where nondual wisdom abides, in the space between the two sides. Because when the membrane of the zygote folds in and pinches off to create two cells, it also creates space in between so there is also the folding-in of space *into* the form, which is inseparable from the space around and the space within everything

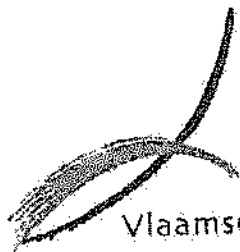
else.

I feel this is the space we recognise in another significant enactive gesture, when we bring our two palms together at midline. And that might now also remind you of your first gesture of embodiment, when you became two.

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- i. This paper was given as a 20 minute talk and was written to be read in a direct, instructive manner. I am providing endnotes and links to further information here for those readers that maybe interested.
 - ii. For further information about Body-Mind Centering please see Bainbridge Cohen (2008), Wright Miller et al (2011), and www.bodymindcentering.com.
 - iii. My original inspiration for a poetic reading of embryology as narrative came from Frances Garrett's (2008, 2009) research into Tibetan embryological literature. My approach offers a synthesis of Garrett's suggestion of embryology as narrative, with the embodied, subjective experience of embryological patterning as taught through the School for Body-Mind Centering (see Bainbridge Cohen 2008: 163-74).
 - iv. Grossinger (1986: 8) defines embryogenesis as the 'active process of transformation which brings each of us into being,' and adds that 'even if we propose that a soul or spirit exists apart from matter, the embryo weaves these two entities together as organism and psyche.' His view echoes that of the Dutch embryologist Jaap van der Wal, who uses a Goetheian phenomenological approach of Dynamic Morphology to observe the embryo's formative patterns and movement gestures. See www.embryo.nl for links to Dr. van der Wal's publications, unfortunately few of which are in English. I am drawing selectively on the work of both in my research.
 - v. This concept of thought as movement of air in space is based in explorations of the Tibetan system of five elements (space, air/wind, fire, water and earth) as symbolic of the fundamental creative forces. This aspect of the research goes beyond the scope of the current paper, however I have written on this material more extensively elsewhere (see Sargent-Wishart 2012).
 - vi. Bainbridge Cohen (2008, p.164), however, interprets this event as 'already being two' from the beginning.



Vlaamse Eutonie School vzw

Eutonie (uit het Grieks 'eu' - 'tonos') = juiste, harmonische tonus

Inleiding

Een soepele omgang met het leven stelt een juist afgestemde lichaamstonus voorop.

En het is een kunst om zowel tot diepe rust als tot hoogste bedrijvigheid in staat te zijn. Toont de roofofbouw die dag in dag uit op het lichaam wordt gepleegd en uitmondt op zoveel gekende lichaamsklachten echter niet hoe veraf wij van deze levenskunst staan?

De eutonie gaat uit van deze realiteit en biedt een ervaringsgerichte ontdekkingstocht waarin aandacht voor de juiste lichaamsspanning wordt ontwikkeld.

Eutonie...een weg...

Eutonie doet beroep op de (miskende) sensorische uitrusting van de mens, en wekt progressief het ganse somato-sensorische systeem, zowel de tactiele als de proprioceptieve waarneming.

Het pedagogisch aanbod bestaat uit oefenmomenten waar vooreerst het huid- en grensbesef aan de basis liggen. Verder steunend op de eutonieprincipes (zie verder) wordt de gevoeligheid en de functie van de tastzin verfijnd in de contactbeleving. Vanuit deze oppervlaktesensibiliteit wordt de waarneming ontwikkeld naar de dieperliggende weefsels en gaat tot de perceptie van het eigen skelet als innerlijke structuur. Bij al deze stappen wordt 'het in contact blijven' met de directe omgeving bewaakt en een globaliteitsgevoel nagestreefd.

Deze oefenvorm wekt telkens nieuwe tonuskwaliteiten die weldoend en opbouwend zijn. Aandachtig leven, alert aanwezig zijn, omgaan met spanning en stress in de zin van telkens te kunnen bijsturen en spanning te kunnen afbouwen, zijn vruchten van het regelmatig zelfstandig oefenen.

In Vlaanderen

Honderden mensen in Vlaanderen konden reeds deze vruchten plukken doorheen het eutoniewerk van de laatste 40 jaren, waardoor hun persoonlijk leven, hun relatieleven, hun werkengagement en spiritueel zoeken werden verrijkt. Dit is onder meer te danken aan de Vlaamse Eutonie School vzw. waar voornamelijk het pedagogische aspect van de eutoniebenadering verder werd ontwikkeld en uitgediept.

De specifieke werkwijze van de Vlaamse Eutonie School:

In haar werkwijze verenigt zij:

- ❖ twee specifieke eutonie-richtingen: de benadering van Gerda Alexander (Denemarken) en deze van Hannelore Scharing (Duitsland), gekenmerkt door:
 - de moeiteeloosheid en de lichtheid van de beweging – G.A.
 - de zorg voor de posturale herordening – H. Scharing
 - de verkenning en creatie van de eigen doorvoelde bewegingen – G.A.
 - de aandacht voor nawerking en innerlijkheid tot op diepe lagen – H. Scharing
- ❖ de wetmatigheden van de spierkettingen zoals ontwikkeld door het Instituut van de spierkettingen naar Godelieve Denys Struyf (I.C.T.G.D.S.), met o.m.:
 - In een beginfase: het uitschakelen van de antigravitatie spierketting PA (AP) door het liggen op de grond om efficiënter de spanningsescalaties af te bouwen.
 - in het verdere verloop: wordt steeds 'intentioneel' gewerkt in de richting van de 'vaste punten van de spierkettingen'.

Hierop steunend vormen de eutonieprincipes de leidraad van het didactische proces:

1. Bewust aanraken = wat ik aanraak, raakt ook mij (touching) in de gelijktijdigheid: d.i. het wekken van de huidgevoeligheid als omhulling en als grens.
2. Contact aangaan met buiten: in de wisselwerking met grensbesef
Deze twee principes blijven aan alle volgende voorafgaan
3. omgaan met weerstand (een nieuwe weg om met spanning en pijn om te gaan)
4. zich verlengen (met de intentie van zich voelend uit te breiden naar en in een voorwerp of in de ruimte)
5. zich afduwen (tegen een weerstand, o.a. de grond) en transport bespelen
6. zich eutoon bewegen
7. zich van het eigen skelet bewust worden
8. inwendige ruimte beleven.

Vier belangrijke accenten krijgen bij dit proces prioriteit:

- Het grondcontact. Dit betekent de permanente gewaarwording van een draagvlak en steunvlak (gezien de mens onderhevig is aan de zwaartekracht, is dit een bestendig gegeven). De bewuste perceptie ervan kan in alle houdingen en handelingen ontwikkeld worden.
- Het globaliteitsgevoel. Dit is het eenheidsgevoel van het ganse lichaam, zowel in zijn samenhang als in zijn gelaagdheid van huid tot skelet.
- Het omgaan met weerstand. Dit betekent het lokaal afvoeren van spanning en dus ook van pijn, wat een nieuw licht werpt op eigen comfort.
- Het transport. Dit is de kracht die ontstaat bij het zich afduwen en zich doorheen het skelet kruinwaarts transporteert. Dit wordt de basis voor de moeiteeloze oprichting en het economisch krachtgebruik.

De Vlaamse Eutonie School vzw werd opgericht in 1989.

Deze school, gevestigd in Vlaanderen (Be), biedt een 4-jarige bijscholing in de eutoniepiedagogie aan van +/- 200 uren/jaar. Doorheen 8 cycli werden tot op vandaag een 70-tal eutoniepiedagogen^{ves} gevormd uit Vlaanderen, Nederland en Duitsland. Begin 2016 zullen een 10-tal nieuw gediplomeerde pedagogen deze rangen vervoegen. Een team van experts in de eutonie staan in voor de begeleiding.

Meer informatie:

In Vlaanderen en Nederland: www.eutonieschool.org, www.eutonie.be

Mailadres: info@eutonieschool.org

In de wereld:

Eutonie is een westerse, internationaal verspreide lichaamsbenadering ontstaan onder impuls van Gerda Alexander (1908-1994) die zowel pedagogische, therapeutische als artistieke doeleinden nastreefde. Deze methode werd in 1987 door Prof. Dokter Helmut Milz bij de WHO geïntroduceerd als eerste discipline voor het bevorderen van geestelijke en lichamelijke gezondheid.

In the world:

Eutony is a widespread, western approach to bodywork, developed by Gerda Alexander (1908-1994), which aspires to achieve educational, therapeutic and artistic goals. In 1987 this method was introduced at the WHO by Prof.Dr. Helmut Milz as the first discipline to promote mental and physical health.

www.eutonie-gerda-alexander.be, www.istace.com, <http://eutonie.skynetblogs.be>, www.eutonie-formation.ch,
www.eutonie.ca, www.eutonie.de, www.eutonie.fr, www.eutonie.at, www.eutonie-ausbildung.de,
www.eutoni.dk, www.rueraishn.org, www.institut-eutonie.com, www.eutonie-crree.com

Outside Influences, Inside Transformations

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March 27, 2015

In the spring of 2014, I began creating a choreographic work called, *With In*. This piece was site specific, set in the Barbara B. Smith outdoor auditorium at The University of Hawaii at Manoa. The piece was set on the cement steps of the auditorium, with the audience using the stage area for seating. There were four dancers in the piece, two men, Wailana Simcock and Gabe DeRego, and two women, Faith Im and Blythe Stephens. The men wore black pants and black tank tops and the women wore short brown dresses with black leggings, and all of them wore black dance sneakers. The music was a mix of composers; A.R. Rahman, Rhian Sheehan, and Zakir Hussain. The final performance of this piece was Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014.

As the December 9th performance date drew near, I recall looking around and realizing how the architectural and geographic influences surrounding this space had affected my choreographic processes throughout this piece. I recollect many times simply sitting in the space to choreograph, watching the wind blow the tops of the Eucalyptus trees that reached above the building tops and noticing the occasional flock of parrots flying by, while above me, the vibrant blue sky welcomed the many clouds gliding across its surface that sporadically released misty rain or a constant downpour. At the culminating performance, an unspoken but very clear

awakening occurred as I recognized how these geographic and structural voices spoke through the work. Did I really create it, or was I just a venue for the creation? In Martha Eddy's article, *Somatic Practices and Dance*, she quotes Yuasa Yasuo, an influential Asian thinker: "True knowledge cannot be attained simply by means of theoretical thinking, but only through 'bodily recognition of realization' ...Simply stated, this is to 'learn with the body,' not the brain."¹ In this paper, I will explore how outside influences stimulated various inside transformations of my choreographic and creative process, including geographical and architectural effects, which in turn generated the movement in this piece.

In retrospect, I can see how the outside influences structured or influenced my choreography. One realization I have had is how emotions gave a perception to the outside influences. So, which one is really effecting or bouncing off of the other, emotions or outside influences, or is it because they are both organic that they combined to influence my creative process? A section from Anna Halprin's school website states: "When explored and expressed consciously and creatively, the connection between body, mind, and emotion make a vital contribution to the artful development of the self."²

The outside space was perpetuating the inside awareness of my body, which in turn gave a spatial meaning and specific vocabulary to the movement used in my piece. It is in this space that my body became the mind and the mind was quieted down, letting the body and organic essences of nature influence perception, emotion, and the creative process. It makes me wonder if at these creative moments, my mind emptied itself and the connection with nature, body, and creativity were unified expressing themselves through movement of this piece.

¹ As stated in *Somatic Practices and Dance: Global Influences* by Martha Eddy, *Dance Research Journal*, pg. 8.

² In the article *Somatic Practices and Dance: Global Influences* by Martha Eddy, *Dance Research Journal*, pg. 4 (<http://www.tamalpa.org>).

Yuasa Yasuo addresses the subject of emptying one's mind in *The Body*. He shares the theory by Fujiwara Shunzei. A part of that theory states, "the first step in learning [to compose] waka, above all, to have a very clear mind."³ (Waka is a Japanese way of poetry concerned with the form and style of the creative process for poetry instead of the format.) This can be the same for the form and style of the creative process in dance as well, which is something I believe I experienced during the creative process of *With In*.

While working in this outdoor site, I often went and sat on the cement steps and quietly observed my surroundings. I felt the organic vibrancy of nature amongst the architectural contrast of the cement which made up the outdoor theater. Even the cement was influenced by nature. Many times I sat on the cement stairs, usually in the shade, and though shaded, the warmth of the cement from being in the sun for the afternoon radiated into my body. Often, I closed my eyes and felt the wind while listening to the selected music, and allowed everything to flow inside me, which helped me come to a decision in my mind that reflected itself as movement. Other times, I watched the tops of the Eucalyptus trees blowing back and forth in the wind while various birds landed on them. This picturesque moment influenced transitions in my piece, as the bird landed on these windy branches, so the transitions between movements became picturesque and natural. During some rehearsals, an occasional misty rain or constant down pour washed over, which brought out other aspects of creativity such as intricate footwork and spatial awareness of place and body. What I most felt there was peace; peace in sitting in such an organic environment while creating.

It was actually one of my professors, after seeing the first movement, which brought to my attention how my movement portrayed the architectural structures of the surrounding walls and

³*The Body*, Yuasa Yasuo, pg. 100.

buildings. As the next two movements developed, I continued to focus on the site awareness. At the performance I experienced an incredible awakening of how the piece, the architectural structure, and nature all combined for an inner body spatial experience for me, and I hoped for the audience as well.

Recently, I listened to a book on C.D and heard this quote:

“The good news is that the moment you decide that what you know is more important than what you have been taught to believe, you will have shifted gears in your quest for abundance. Success comes from within, not from without.” Ralph Waldo Emerson⁴

What impressed me from this quote was that as I watched the performance of this piece, I felt a shift from former boundaries, such as a proscenium stage and lighting for full production, shifting and giving way, reinventing into vibrant beliefs of natural sunlight, wind, and outdoor space, which combined to stimulate my creativity as a choreographer. The aspect of success coming from within, I realized, was such a large part of my choreographic process. The movement stimulated my mind to relax and the surroundings gave creative work from within me and visualized itself through movement. The dancers became a part of this process as well through suggestions and ideas for various transitions and points that did or did not work well with the site. It was such an encompassing development. My choreography came from within, and the more I let that flow, quieted my mind, and let my body transform these influences into movement, the more it revealed itself through my work.

While reading Yasou’s work, I realized I am frequently stuck in my head, and the need to increase my spatial awareness of my body. I needed to be more present, reduce my anxiety, and increase my breath. He spoke about spatial awareness of our bodies, and how often the western culture is so concerned about the importance of the mind, and minimizes the vital importance of the body and spatial awareness it has.

⁴ *The Secret*, C.D. 3, Chapter 5, Rhonda Byrne.

With this in mind, I decided to try an experiment on myself, and it is something I continue to do in my personal practice. Ten minutes before going to bed, I put my facebook and electronics away, burn incense, sit on my bed and take deep breaths. I let my thoughts flow with positive affirmations to myself while breathing deeply. If anxiety presents itself, I take slower, deep breaths and continue connecting with positive affirmations. During this time, I let my breath direct my mind as to what I need to think about in order to help my body heal and be calm inside. It is very helpful in increasing my sleep, feeling rested, and waking up with joy in my life. If I am feeling thoughts of sorrow or pain, I continue to let that work through me as well, with loving thoughts to honor what my body feels and help it progress and flow through my body to work itself out. Presently, I continue to practice this meditative connection of body and mind, finding it vital to my everyday personal well-being.

This exploration and experimentation has been a very intimate and profound, reinforcing the spatial awareness of my body to my mind, and my mind to my body, connecting this system. “Somatic awareness allows a person to glean wisdom from within.....at the center of the field of somatics is the soma-an integral and individual process which governs its own existence as long as it has existence.”⁵ This has allowed me to give more spatial existence to the body that make up Me.

I had a living experience in creating the work, *With In*. This experience, realized at the end of the process, was the tip of a somatic experience that has inspired reflection and motivation for me, with a desire to awaken a more spatial awareness of body and spirit, to relax the mind, and trust the insight that knowledge and creativity will come from within me during my creative process and as a reflection in my current and future works.

⁵ As stated in *Somatic Practices and Dance: Global Influences* by Martha Eddy, Dance Research Journal, pg. 8.

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Somatic Movement Education

A Body-Mind Approach to Movement Education for Adolescents

Part I

by Susan Bauer, M.A.

Somatic education is a term that has come to encompass several disciplines developed during the twentieth century in Europe and the United States. These disciplines, which have gone under various categorical names including bodywork, body therapies, and movement repatterning, represent a variety of therapeutic and educational approaches to working with the body. As a field, they share a common focus on the relationship between the body and the many aspects of the self (Murphy, 1992, p. 386). Pioneers in the field such as Lulu Sweigard, Mabel Todd, Moshe Feldenkrais, Ida Rolf, and Nikolais Alexander were instrumental in the dissemination and development of this work through their research, teaching, and writing. Each developed a specific method or approach to working with the body and movement.

As I began to teach at several private high schools, I recognized the hunger students had to understand and feel more "at home" in their bodies, and felt that such somatic approaches would be valuable—if not invaluable—for my students. My desire to develop, teach, and document a curriculum in somatic movement edu-

cation was further motivated by two factors. One was the underrepresentation of an experiential study of the body in both dance and physical education programs in our schools. The other, and perhaps most compelling, factor was my desire to offer my students this experiential study that had been so valuable to me. My ongoing studies in somatics inspire me as an artist and continue to influence my approach to teaching dance and movement. A personal understanding of one's body enhances and supports all forms of physical expression; underlying all of our movement experience is our moving body.

The following overview provides background information about the particular fields of somatics that I studied, and explains why I have drawn on each one as a resource in developing my curriculum in movement education. While these fields encompass many approaches, I particularly draw from *Experiential Anatomy*, *Mind-Body Centering®*, *Ideokinesis*, and the *Bartenieff Fundamentals*. Because my experiences in Authentic Movement and forms of improvisational dance have influenced both the philosophy and content of the curriculum, I dis-

cuss these forms as well.

Experiential anatomy, a term that refers to a mode of learning about one's body through movement, touch, imagery, and cognitive study, developed parallel to the field of bodywork. This method encourages experiential learning about body structure and function through active physical participation. One's experience with the exercises becomes the basis from which one draws conclusions, and determines what is learned and what is left to be learned. Experimenting, observing, analyzing, questioning, and redefining are an integral part of this study. Motivation, the desire to be involved and to participate with an openness to new experience, is a key element as well (Bainbridge Cohen, 1991, p. 13).

I was introduced to experiential anatomy through a course taught by Caryn McHose in the dance program at Middlebury College (see Olsen in collaboration with McHose, 1991). A major focus of the course was on participation in exercises described in Mabel Todd's *The Thinking Body: A Study of the Balancing Forces of Dynamic Man*, first published in 1937. The course also included study of the vari-

ous body systems using *The Anatomy Coloring Book*. This experiential learning helped me to formulate and physically integrate a more realistic understanding of my body that profoundly affected and deepened my dancing. In addition, I found that limitations I had experienced in dancing began to diminish as I spent time inside and outside of class working on related exercises and visualizations.

The value I found in this class motivated me to study and learn more about the related methods. Over the next ten years I studied various methods, including Laban Movement Analysis, Bartenieff Fundamentals, Ideokinesis, and Body-Mind Centering®.

Body-Mind Centering

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen founded the School for Body-Mind Centering® in New York City in 1973. Bainbridge Cohen's innovative techniques integrate her vast experience in traditional and alternative approaches to movement and healing. In addition to studying dance, dance therapy, yoga, and voice, she is an occupational therapist and a neurodevelopmental movement therapist. She has also been certified as a Laban Movement Analyst and as a Kestenberg Movement Profiler. She has taught at many colleges and universities, conducts workshops around the world, and presently continues to teach at and direct the School for Body-Mind Centering.

Body-Mind Centering (BMCSM) is an approach to movement analysis and reeducation based on study of the interrelationship of the body systems and of the developmental movement patterns of infant movement in the first year of life. Exploration of each of the body systems is seen as a way to gain access to both a movement quality and a particular state of mind associated with that movement. For example, moving from the bones evokes clarity and directness, whereas moving from the organs evokes emotions and fullness. Study of BMC also includes cognitive and experiential learning about breathing and vocalization, the senses and the dynamics of perception, and the art of touch and repatterning. BMC practitioners are applying these principles in many disciplines such as dance, athletics, bodywork, physical, occupational, and speech therapies, psychotherapy, med-

icine, child development, education, and the arts, in both the U.S. and abroad (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 2).

I began my study of Body-Mind Centering with Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen in 1984. I draw on the perspectives of Body-Mind Centering in my classes because they encompass both cognitive and kinesthetic learning experiences that I have found helpful to develop one's fullest physical and expressive range. The BMC paradigm also provides a comprehensive body-based language for describing movement and exploring the body/mind relationship. Further, the creative and innovative pedagogical techniques used by BMC teachers—for example, using warm water-filled balloons to represent our bodies' organs—serve to bring anatomy alive for students. I make use of such activities, as well as BMC methods of touch and repatterning in various partner activities, throughout the curriculum.

Ideokinesis

The term "Ideokinesis" was developed by Dr. Lulu E. Sweigard in 1973 to describe the work and ideas presented in her book, *Human Movement Potential: Its Ideokinetic Facilitation*, which has been widely used by movement and dance educators. Sweigard, a student of Mabel Todd, developed her work from extensive scientific research and teaching experience at New York University, Columbia, and Julliard. Ideokinesis refers to a method of training the nervous system to produce new patterns through imagining movement and developing one's kinesthetic sense. The goal of this inner sensing or imagining is twofold: first, to recognize habitual patterns of movement already established in our bodies (some of which may be inefficient or unhealthy), and second, to begin to establish new, more efficient patterns (Dowd, 1990, p. 7).

Much of both Todd's and Sweigard's work was based on the idea of developing balance of both body and mind to maximize one's movement potential. Balance of the body, as understood in this work, is defined as aligning the axial weights and balancing muscle action around the joints. This minimizes the muscular energy needed to maintain the body in an upright position so that more

energy is available for movement (Dowd, p. 9). Rather than training one's body toward a particular dance style or athletic skill, the training of Ideokinesis helps people to become more efficient in their movement, thus maximizing their movement potential and minimizing their risk of injury or chronic strains (p. 8).

Balance of the mind involves quieting one's inner dialogue. While there is a variety of relaxation and meditation techniques to achieve this balanced mind, the process of visualization is especially effective in helping one to let go of previous thought patterns by providing an image on which to focus. Visualizations also initiate or inhibit certain neurological pathways to the various muscles. This patterning, which can begin in one's mind, is seen as a first step in the process of repatterning one's movement (Dowd, p. 7).

I studied Ideokinesis with Irene Dowd, a dancer and protégé of Dr. Lulu Sweigard at Wesleyan University. I draw on methods of Ideokinesis to help students recognize habitual patterns of movement and begin to make changes in their bodies. I also draw on the process of visualization to help students clear the mind of self-criticism and develop greater concentration.

Bartenieff Fundamentals

The term "Bartenieff Fundamentals" refers to both an approach to body movement education and a specific set of exercises that were developed by Irmgard Bartenieff, an influential student of Rudolf Laban. Beginning as a dancer in Germany, Bartenieff became a pioneer in the development of Laban Movement Analysis in the United States and in its application to dance therapy and physical therapy. She was a founding member and the first president of the Laban Institute of Movement Studies in New York City. She also held a degree in physical therapy and worked for many years in clinical settings with both children and adults. As a founding member of the American Dance Therapy Association, she also focused on the psycho-social aspects of movement. After her death in 1981, the Laban Institute's name was changed to the Laban/ Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies.

Bartenieff developed a series of exercises she called "The Bartenieff Fundamentals," which were specifical-

ly designed to facilitate integration of bodily sensation with emotional expression as a means to unify body and mind (Levy, 1988, p. 142). These basic exercises, along with her approach to body education, are documented in her book, entitled *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment* (1980).

I include several of the Bartenieff Fundamentals in my curriculum. These exercises, which focus on movement initiation and spatial intent, are effective in engaging students in structured movement sequences as a method to help them repattern their movement.

Authentic Movement

The term "Authentic Movement" is one of two terms, along with "movement-in-depth," used by Mary Starks Whitehouse to describe a movement process she developed in the 1950s. A pioneer in the field now known as dance therapy, Whitehouse began as a dancer and laid the groundwork for a form that would later inspire many in the field of dance and dance therapy. Janet Adler, one such dance therapist, met and studied briefly with Whitehouse in the late 1960s. After Whitehouse's death, Adler formed the Mary Starks Whitehouse Institute in 1981 and began her own in-depth study of what she later called "the discipline of authentic movement" (Adler, 1987, p. 20).

The discipline of Authentic Movement, as developed by Adler, involves a mover and a witness. During a timed session, the mover closes his or her eyes and allows inner impulses from the body to guide his or her movement. The mover works with eyes closed in order to attend more deeply to the many levels of his or her kinaesthetic experience. The witness, generally seated to the side of the movement space, attends to both the mover and his or her own internal responses to the movement, bringing a specific quality of attention and presence to the experience of the mover. After the movement session, the two speak about the experience, providing a means to consciously process material that may have formerly remained at a more unconscious level (Adler, 1987).

The form of Authentic Movement is based on the belief that when we join in dialogue with our bodies, we will

know what we need: "The body is the guide, and the mover takes a ride on the movement impulses as they emerge" (Olsen, 1993, p. 47). In addition, the practice of Authentic Movement allows the mover to observe the thoughts in his or her mind much as one does in the beginning stages of many forms of meditation. Over time, the mover begins to internalize the presence of the witness, thereby developing a "supportive, non-judgmental but discerning inner witness" (Olsen, 1993, p. 49).

I studied Authentic Movement with several of the graduates of the Mary Starks Whitehouse Institute beginning in 1984, and more recently with Janet Adler. My ongoing practice of Authentic Movement informs my curriculum in several ways. A method of warming-up I call "Responsive Moving," for example, is derived from the form and philosophy of Authentic Movement.¹ This method, in which students start in stillness and follow their inner impulses to move, provides them with a gentle way of warming up without consciously structuring or judging their movement. In addition to expanding their movement vocabulary, this experience helps students develop a non-judgmental inner witness to support them while moving. Especially in adolescence, when self-consciousness can lead to a strong inner voice of doubt or self-criticism, students benefit from taking time to notice and "repattern" their inner voices, much as they begin to repattern their movement.

Contact Improvisation

There are various approaches to improvisation that focus on the process of dancing as a means of personal expression, self-development, and social interaction. One of these is Contact Improvisation, a duet form developed by Steve Paxton in 1972 in which dancers improvise their movement while engaging in a physical dialogue of touch, momentum, and shared body weight. During duets, dancers maintain a point of contact such that they are supporting and sharing each other's body weight.

Growing out of the 1960s counterculture movement, the form was rooted in a belief in the movement potential of all people and rejected the view that to be a dancer one needed to undergo years of training in a

specific technique. The practice and performance of the dance began as more of a social form in which, theoretically, anyone could participate (Novack, p. 11). As the form evolved, teachers of Contact Improvisation incorporated various methods of bodywork into their teaching, offering beginning dancers an experience of the body and gravity that helped them orient to the dancing. The techniques of Contact Improvisation continue to evolve through experience and experiment. This form of dance influences the work of many noted contemporary choreographers and is taught in many college and university dance programs.²

From studying Contact Improvisation, I learned to integrate bodywork into the teaching of movement; Contact Improvisation manifests in movement many of the concepts of bodywork I had studied previously. I draw on elements of Contact Improvisation, along with other approaches to improvisation, to provide a balance of sensory and motor activity and to add an aspect of playfulness and spontaneous interaction to the class.

A Body/Mind Approach to Movement Education for Adolescents

Dance and movement educators have increasingly gained support for including movement in education. However, our educational system still perpetuates a view of mind and body as separate. The evolution of somatics is itself a testimony to the need for reintegration of body and mind to address this dichotomy that we have inherited in Western culture. As adult educators trained in somatics, how can we bring study of the body and practical, everyday tools for the integration of body and mind into the educational system in a way that is valuable and meaningful to students themselves? This article will discuss a curriculum in somatic movement education I have developed over ten years of working with adolescents in order to address this question.

Adolescents clearly struggle with a complex variety of choices. Daily lifestyle decisions regarding diet, sex, drugs, alcohol, sleep and interpersonal relationships all profoundly affect—and reflect—their values and their body-mind relationships. They also respond to and interact with a multi-

plicity of cultural perceptions and media images portrayed through magazines, television, videos, computers, and pop culture that affect their self-image and self-esteem. They are influenced by the culture from which they come, while their behavior and values also influence and create the culture in which they live. The escalating rate of violence in our nation's schools is further evidence of the pressing need to introduce skills with which students can navigate the complicated transitions that define adolescence.

In this curriculum, although students engage in similar activities, each of their responses is unique. What is meaningful to them is what they discover about their own movement patterns, their body/mind relationships, their lifestyles, their feelings, and their connections to themselves and others. Learning occurs as they become aware of their personal responses to changes in their internal and external environments. Furthermore, when students understand more about personal choices, their potential for growth is enhanced. By engaging in this curriculum, students can gain some of the valuable tools necessary to assume responsibility for the quality of their lives now and into adulthood.

As noted by dance educator Peggy Schwartz (1991), "Curriculum design can be seen as a mirror of the culture in which it is embedded, reflecting the culture's values and beliefs. It can also be understood as a means of shaping values and beliefs" (p. 68). Especially during adolescence, when habits are formed that are often carried into adult life, students can benefit from the experiential learning of somatics—giving them an opportunity to learn about their body/mind at a time when this is central to their development. As educators, we can offer students experiences that help them feel more at home with themselves and increase their self-understanding. This benefits the students themselves and society as a whole.

The way we relate to others and our environment is a reflection of this primary relationship to ourselves. By nourishing students' primary relationships to themselves, we cultivate their broader relationships with others and their environments. In this article, I introduce my theoretical basis for creating such a curriculum in somatic movement education and discuss how these theories are reflected in specific

units in the curriculum that I call "Explorations."

Theoretical Basis of the Curriculum

Forever focused on their bodies, adolescents struggle with their perception of themselves. They think about their appearance, weight, physical skill in sports and athletics, and especially, about how they are perceived by others. Yet, with all this focus on their bodies, in the present educational system students are barely learning about their bodies, nor are they given an opportunity to focus directly on their own perceptions and subjective experience of their bodies. As adolescents bloom into their sexuality, the body is a volatile subject avoided by parents and teachers alike. Despite this taboo, there is a need to help students learn about their bodies and develop healthy body-images and self-perceptions. Clearly, adolescents need support and guidance in developing healthy relationships with themselves.

What in their education currently addresses this obvious need? Although programs in dance and movement education exist in curricula for young children, movement curricula for adolescents consist mainly of physical education programs in sports, athletics, and only occasionally, in dance. Approaches are generally skill-oriented, such that one skill leads to another skill, which leads to a further skill. What is assessed as developmental progression through the curriculum is the degree of skill being developed—a measure of physical prowess, but not necessarily a full measure of health and well-being. In fact, while some students do succeed in a skill-based approach to sports, athletics, and dance, many others who do not often develop negative body images and negative relationships to movement. We see evidence of this today as we work with adults, a generally self-conscious population of movers.

How has this evolved? In our culture at large, the body is generally studied or explored as an object apart from the experience of the self. In fact, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen notes with astonishment the omission of our kinesthetic senses from the traditionally named 'five senses': "It is fascinating and, I must confess frustrating to me that sensations of movement and visceral activities have been excluded from the grouping of the five senses.

As all sciences are reflections of the socio-political-religious ideas of their time, it is appropriate that the historical repression of bodily sensation in Western culture has been transmitted as a matter of scientific fact" (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 114).

Even in subjects that seem to be directly related to the body, such as dance, physical education, and biology, traditional teaching approaches usually omit attention to sensation and subjective experience. In human biology, for instance, the body is generally explored through readings, pictures, and plastic models. Rarely do students refer to, touch, or move their own bodies in studying the human structure or the mechanics of movement. In physical education and many approaches to dance the body is similarly objectified, i.e., often defined as a tool to be refined and controlled for the achievement of specific physical goals. Even Howard Gardner, who succeeded in bringing the term "bodily-kinesthetic intelligence" into the national discussion of educational reform (Schwartz, 1993, p. 9), defines kinesthetic intelligence in terms of physical skill or manual dexterity (Gardner, 1985, p. 206).

As noted by pioneer dance therapist Mary Whitehouse, however, there is a difference between moving for the purpose of developing specific movement skills and moving for the experience of moving: "The kinesthetic sense can be awakened and developed in using any and all kinds of movement, but I believe it becomes conscious only when the inner, that is the subjective connection is found, the sensation of what it feels like to the individual" (1958, p. 7).

Whitehouse also states, "Physical activities are helpful . . . at least they help us to move . . . But they don't connect us with ourselves, because they still have a motive external to the experience of ourselves. They still put us in the position of moving our bodies for a purpose, instead of [for the purpose of] becoming aware of ourselves" (*Creative Expression*).

As the body is objectified in their education, students develop a detachment from their own bodies. Subjective experience and objective fact, however, are inseparable. Deane Juhan (1987) discusses this interrelationship by stating, "Subjective and objective are not two distinct ways I have of viewing reality; they are two

sides of a continuous feedback loop which together make up that reality. How completely I sense my body and how I feel about it has everything to do with the particular course of events going on within it. Attitudes, postures, patterns of behavior, and physiological functions are inextricably fused together in our organisms, and it is primarily my conscious awareness of their interrelationships which gives me some measure of control over my well-being . . . *the only facts about myself that are altogether real to me are those that have come through my own attentiveness* [emphasis added]" (pp. 338-339).

Especially in the often self-conscious stages of adolescence, an approach that addresses this dynamic between objective and subjective reality is essential. However, few educators are currently developing approaches to somatics explicitly for the adolescent population. While educators in the field of dance/movement education continue to develop innovative approaches to movement for young children and while experiential anatomy and other somatic-based approaches are beginning to be offered for college-level adults, adolescents are a highly neglected population in current curricular development.

Paradoxically, despite the resistance to sensation and movement in American culture and education, the field of somatics continues to be an ever-expanding arena influencing many professions, such as the sciences, medicine, the arts, and clinical therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and psychology.

To begin to bridge this gap and utilize the wealth of material being developed in the field of somatics, I have developed an approach to movement education to address the particular needs of adolescents. My approach is based on experiential anatomy, rather than on creative dance or sports, as in most curricular models of movement education for young children in elementary school. Material from this curriculum has also been taught in a wide variety of school, university, and community settings and can be adapted to many age groups.

This curriculum consists of what I call "Explorations," which are a combination of movement, partner work, drawing, and discussions. Through these Explorations, each student becomes his or her own lab to move, experience, and learn from. Keeping

students at the core of the learning experience, with their own interests, discoveries, and insights guiding the curriculum, is essential to this process. Especially in adolescence, when one's body can become a battleground for independence as schools, families, and peers dictate how one should look and behave, students benefit from experiencing the teacher as an ally and a guide. Putting experiential anatomy into contexts to which they can relate, such as methods of warm-up, injury prevention, and the development of focus and concentration, further engages students in the curriculum and helps them find immediate, practical applications for their discoveries. Students also need time to process and integrate body/mind changes they may experience through each Exploration. For this reason, each Exploration concludes with discussion questions and/or an integrative movement activity.

Although there are many mysteries in the workings of the body, there is much that can be known, felt, and understood. For example, when I facilitate study of the skeletal system, students first visualize and then draw their skeletons, trace their own bones, work with partners to feel and identify the curves of the spine, and explore the variations in movement and mood that evolve from shifting their initiation of movement from the bones to the joints to the synovial fluid in the joints.

Explorations also provide opportunities to explore the dynamic interrelationship of body and mind. For example, when students study the physiology of breathing, they touch their own rib cages, learn to differentiate movement of the lungs, ribs, and diaphragm, and play an active role in maintaining their health through an awareness of their breathing. Deep, full breathing is essential to life; it creates a sense of ease that helps to restore both our physical and emotional health. We can learn to use our breathing to increase our physical vitality and clear and focus our mind. Especially in the often self-critical stage of adolescence, such approaches help students to clear their inner dialogue and be more fully present. Awareness of our breathing also teaches us to slow down and learn not to put our bodies "on hold" while we push ahead through our lives.

Explorations also facilitate con-

scious awareness of our cultural conditionings that, literally and figuratively, affect and shape our bodies. For example, media-projected body ideals, parental influences, and peer expectations all influence adolescents' experience and perceptions. The cultural ideal of the flat stomach, for instance, has perpetuated a perception of the abdomen as solely a girdle of muscle, rather than also as a container for our vital organs. However, when we allow our organs to respond to the dynamic flow created by our breath, our breathing becomes fuller. Facilitating student discussion about such complex topics encourages a deeper understanding of their own experiences. By becoming aware of ways in which cultural perceptions influence their bodies, they gain more choice in how to respond. In *Sharing the Dance*, dancer and dance anthropologist Cynthia (Novack) Cohen Bull addresses this complex interrelationship among culture, perception, and active choice: "The body and movement are not purely natural phenomena but are constructed, in concept and practice. . . . Culture is embodied. . . . A primary means of understanding, knowing, making sense of the world comes through the movement experiences society offers to us. Movement constitutes an ever-present reality in which we constantly participate. We perform movement, invent it, interpret it, and reinterpret it, on conscious and unconscious levels. In these actions, we participate in and reinforce culture, and we also create it. To the degree that we can grasp the nature of our experience of movement, both the movement itself and the contexts in which it occurs, we learn more about who we are and about the possibilities for knowingly shaping our lives" (Novack, 1990, p. 8). Likewise, the curriculum we offer students both reflects and can create the culture from which they come.

Finally, adding curriculum in experiential anatomy to the existing programs offered for adolescents serves to balance the current focus on motor learning with a more sensory-based experience. Guiding students in the repatterning of their movement also provides them with a foundation from which to participate more successfully in programs focused on skill development. Further, this curriculum allows students to gain insight about themselves and their body/minds at a time

when this is particularly relevant to their development. As they gain a more comprehensive understanding of their own bodies, students also learn both to respect individual differences and to recognize their commonalities as human beings. Such profound yet simple realizations can add to a growing sense of respect and compassion for themselves and others. In addition to supporting the achievements of dancers and athletes, somatic movement education can positively influence the health and well-being of our developing children, and, thereby, of our next generation of adults.

Implications

This curriculum is based on over fifteen years of study of several somatic approaches and ten years of working with adolescents, yet it is still only a beginning. To expand the potential of this field, we need creative body-based approaches to curriculum that are sensitive and responsive to the needs of children and developing adolescents. Somatic movement education can then become a significant component in students' education through its inclusion in domains such as dance, physical education, health and wellness, and the sciences. To do this, we also need qualified teachers. Presently, many professionals have undergone extensive in-depth training in various somatic approaches. Such professionals can be engaged to help expand present curricula through collaborations with educators. In addition, athletic trainers, childhood education specialists, dance teachers, physical education teachers, science teachers, and health and wellness educators should all increase their skill in and knowledge of somatics to create more body-based curricula. Further, and perhaps most importantly, somatics should be included in the training and degree programs for educators in these fields. Through such initiatives, a larger population of children and adults can increasingly benefit from the growing field of somatics. ☸

Notes

1. The philosophies of Authentic Movement were also influenced by Mary Starks Whitehouse's study of the Jungian concepts of the unconscious and the collective unconscious. Although Authentic Movement is

often seen as a way to gain access to these aspects of ourselves, for the purposes of this curriculum, I do not facilitate it in this way.

2. For further information about Contact Improvisation, see the dance journal *Contact Quarterly: A Vehicle For Moving Ideas*, edited by Nancy Stark Smith and Lisa Nelson, P.O. Box 603, Northampton, M.A., 01060.

Copies of *A Body/mind Approach to Movement Education for Adolescents Curriculum* are available from the author.

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Carol Petersen

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"I like your calm manner in teaching and the feeling that everything is all right whatever might happen in movement or expression."

Karin, somatic movement teacher, performer & dancer

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Raina, dancer & dance teacher

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THE MOVEMENT

The World GROOVE Movement™
"Inspiring the World To DANCE"

We are a global force of dance lovers, conscious seekers, truth warriors, trailblazers and game changers who are passionate about doing things differently. We believe that **EVERYONE** is a dancer and that it is vital to our wellbeing to use these amazing meat suits we live in to express our individuality and creativity. We provide GROOVE DANCEfloors all around the world where we use **SIMPLICITY, CREATIVITY** and **DANCE** as our catalysts for change.



I am a lover and practitioner of esoteric and therapeutic dance programs but the truth is, these are terrifying and weird to the 99% of the population that could benefit from them. I saw a need for a conscious dance program that speaks the same language and meets the majority where they are at. To get them to participate it had to be something that was easy, tangible and accessible that would make them feel comfortable, safe and completely normal to dance their hearts out in a group environment.

Philosophy of The GROOVE Method®

Dance is part of being human. Our bodies were designed for movement and our soul is here to express. These sensory meat suits we flop around in are our vessel of communication and experience and yet we restrict and limit our expression and movement due to the fear of what others may think about it. This prevents us from experiencing our fullest potential and the yumminess of being in a human body.

The truth is, we are all amazingly great dancers when we aren't trying to dance copy or mimic someone else. We have only to tell ourselves a few simple truths that can quite literally liberate not only our bodies but our minds.

1 NO ONE CARES WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE – and if they do, it's their problem.

2 YOUR WAY IS THE RIGHT WAY – You are a unique being; the way you want to do it is the perfect way for YOU.

3 NO ONE CAN DO IT FOR YOU – Your health and the way you feel is your responsibility.

'There are many paths to conscious awakening, music and movement are very simple, powerful and effective tools to facilitate this process'

Misty Tripoli

4 YOU SHOULD LOOK DIFFERENT – You are unique, YOU SHOULD LOOK DIFFERENT!

5 ALL OF THESE ARE JUST GREAT IDEAS UNTIL PUT INTO PRACTICE – You don't understand S#@T until you have practiced and applied it.

The GROOVE DANCEfloor™ is a safe and welcoming place where you get to put these very simple truths into practice. The GROOVE has spread to over 15 countries in less than 5 years because it works, it's powerful and effective. GROOVE provides the simple yet necessary structure that people need to feel safe and comfortable to explore authentic movement. Simplicity is the KEY! We remove and eliminate any and all complex movement and language which allows the opportunity for each participant to define it for themselves.

Deep down we ALL would love to have the ability to move our body confidently and creatively to music. **YOU CAN...** when you do it YOUR way, GROOVE baby GROOVE!

See you on the DANCEfloor.



THE EXPERIENCE

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The GROOVE DANCEfloor™ is a place to get your GROOVE on and DANCE your heart out! Lead by a trained facilitator the DANCEfloor uses The GROOVE Method™ by Misty Tripoli to provide a simple, creative and dynamically interactive group dance experience. The DANCEfloor is a safe and welcoming space for everyone; dance lovers and groovy human beings alike to come together, enjoy insanely awesome music, unite in a simple movement or rhythm then dance it their own way. We are united but unique!

THE METHOD

The GROOVE Method® by Misty Tripoli

The GROOVE Method® is a powerfully simple and effective approach to teaching dance or movement that uses common sense, simplicity and fundamental truth to connect people to their own innate wisdom, foster self-awareness, cultivate authentic movement, inspire unity, creativity and unique self-expression.

Why GROOVE?

A message from Misty Tripoli Creator of The GROOVE Method®



Misty Tripoli

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Misty Tripoli has over 25 years as a movement specialist and has become one of the World's most innovative and engaging teachers, choreographers, truth talkers and mind/body specialists. She has been touted as one of the most creative, controversial and influential teachers of our time. Her passion for truth, creativity and authenticity has inspired a DANCE movement revolution of GROOVE communities across the globe.

Misty Tripoli:

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Principles of Dynamic Embodiment (combining BMC with LMA/BF):

- OBS - Observe, Support, and Offer Options to your clients and students.
- Be as Big as YOU Are - Find your voice and your embodiment by embodying your own 3D physical self. This relates to BMC balance in awareness of contents and container, 3D use of space from GMA - full 3D sharing supported by Barrehead's 3D breathing using vocalization, space 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Currents The Journal of Body-Mind Centering® Association

Currents, the annual journal of BMCA, publishes writings on the nature of the body-mind experience through the lens of Body-Mind Centering as well as exploring these discoveries across disciplines. Supporting both scholarly and creative texts, Currents is unique in its attention to the development of somatic-based authors and their writing process. We welcome fresh research, rich description, and embodied documentation of new modes of healing and expression.

The 2015 Currents Journal issue marks the 40th Anniversary of the Body-Mind Centering Association. We are also celebrating our 17th publication year and our first embodied design. "Perfect bound" issue containing fine, cutting-edge essays as well as our anniversary "insert" honoring the conception of BMCA. In an interview with Jens Johansson, he was asked, "Why did BMC survive?" His answer to me was, "That's a good question, but it's also ridiculous. Why ridiculous? —Because, the Body-Mind Centering work doesn't need to survive. It experiences. As soon as the work emerged, back in the 1970s, BMC became a paradigm, and with paradigms, everything changes—cell to cell."

Along with "cellular consciousness" came the early breathing steps of a bona fide association called BMCA—thanks to the early teacher/practitioners of the work. We, the students, became, as Susan Milani says, "the spokes" around the hub of a wheel. The wheel was our mentor Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen—and with Len Cohen and the School for Body-Mind Centering, the "wheel" became a new model for thinking, feeling and action.

"I see Bonnie as the center of a wheel and we are the spokes going out. The spokes needed a rubber tire around the wheel! —BMCA!"

Susan Milani

From Kate Tarlow Morgan, Currents' Editor.

There is an image that keeps recurring in my mind of my own body pulled and stretched like a well-tanned belt of polished grain leather across a vast landscape of both clay and pavement. I'd hold this image long enough I begin to see the belt crossing at other belts, drawn taut and smooth, training a broader panorama. It's a feeling of flying that this image brings. I breathe in and feel a hand I once held slip across my senses. I recall the sparkle of an eye in the crease of a smiling mouth, soon to disappear behind my shielded position. I notice that I am conducting the ongoing practice of novel radiation that conjoins the original heterogeneity of my limbs and axial attachments (head and tail) reaching infinitely from my center out to the bounds of community. I remember those who are gone, and those who are still here.

Somatic writing comes from us. The movers! We invite this international community to join in the process of translation. Discover your relationship to words and the archive of experience—in and out of your own language.

Currents Journal

www.currentsbmca.org

Pat Etheridge, Martha Eddy, Wendy Sager, & Kate Tarlow Morgan (Editor-in-Chief)

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Body-Mind Centering Association



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May 31st, at KASK - Studio D52
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Facilitated by Elisa Cotroneo, ISMETA
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