

WITHIN AND BEYOND THE BODY: THE PERCEPTION OF ENERGY

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ABSTRACT: This workshop offered an introduction to the observation and tactile experience of the movement of energy through the body, through space and in relationships. The workshop also functioned as a synthesis and application of the information presented in this and the previous workshop, "Change in Perspective of Human Anatomy through Recent Scientific Discoveries in Relationship to the Perception of Movement." The participant experienced activities enabling him to become aware of personal biases, his own and others', concerning energy and science. Experiential activities developed an awareness of and sensitivity to energy by using touch as a conduit of energy in communication. The power of touch was addressed through social and cultural implications and legalities surrounding touch. An objective of the workshop was to address the body as a healing intelligence in and of itself, but time did not allow for this presentation. Healing of self and the environment in relationship to touch, with a discussion of disorders in movement and energy patterns as manifested in diagnoses such as Autism, Parkinson's Disease and Sensory Processing Disorder is briefly presented.

Keywords: Fascia. Touch. Energy science. Bartenieff Fundamentals™. Communication.

RESUMO: Este workshop ofereceu uma introdução para a observação de experiências tácteis do movimento de energia pelo do corpo, através do espaço e nas relações. A oficina também funcionou como uma síntese e aplicação das informações apresentadas na oficina anterior "Mudança de perspectiva da anatomia humana por meio de recentes descobertas científicas em relação à percepção do movimento". O participante experimentou atividades que lhe permitiram a consciência de preconceitos pessoais, da sua própria e de outros, relativos à energia e à ciência. Atividades experienciais desenvolveram uma consciência de – e uma sensibilidade a – energia, usando toque como um conduto de energia em comunicação. O poder do toque foi dirigido através de implicações sociais e culturais, e legalidades ao redor do toque. Um objetivo da oficina foi o de abordar o corpo como uma cura inteligente (em e de si mesmo), mas o tempo não permitiu esta apresentação. Cura de si e do ambiente em relação ao toque, com uma discussão de distúrbios em padrões de movimento e energia que se manifestam em diagnósticos como o Autismo, a Doença de Parkinson e sensível distúrbio de processamento, são temas brevemente apresentados.

Palavras-chave: *Fascia*. Toque. Ciência da energia. Fundamentos de Bartenieff, Comunicação.

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RÉSUMÉ: Cet atelier a été l'introduction à l'observation et tactile l'expérience de la circulation de l'énergie au travers du corps, à travers l'espace et dans les relations. L'atelier a également fonctionné comme une synthèse et à l'application de l'information présentée dans ce et l'atelier précédent, "Changement de perspective de



l'anatomie humaine grâce à de récentes découvertes scientifiques en relation à la perception de mouvement." L'expérience d'activités participant lui permettant de devenir conscients de préjugés personnels, son propre et autres", concernant l'énergie et de la science. Activités expérientielles élaboré un de conscience et une sensibilisation à l'énergie à l'aide, comme un moyen de l'énergie dans la communication. Le pouvoir de toucher a été adressée par répercussions sociales et culturelles et juridiques entourant touch. Un objectif de l'atelier était d'aborder le corps en tant qu'un renseignement de guérison et de lui-même, mais le temps ne permettent pas à cette présentation. La guérison de l'autonomie et de l'environnement en relation à toucher, avec une discussion des troubles en circulation et de l'énergie, qui se manifeste dans les diagnostics tels que l'autisme, la maladie de Parkinson et le trouble d'intégration sensorielle est brièvement présenté.

Les mots-clés: fasce, toucher, la science d'énergie, principes fondamentaux de Bartenieff, transmission

This workshop was designed in two parts. Part One is an introduction to the observation and tactile experience of the movement of energy through the body, through space and in relationships. The movement workshop, "Change in Perspective of Human Anatomy through Recent Scientific Discoveries in Relationship to the Perception of Movement" is foundational to this workshop. "Within and Beyond the Body: The Perception of Energy" offered the participants activities to develop awareness of personal biases, their own and others', concerning energy and science. The workshop activities included learning how to receive knowledge from the body by using the senses and intuition in observing and listening to the body. Experiences in awareness of trust, intending, listening, informing and becoming informed by the body were introduced to develop sensitivity to energy as communication. Part Two, not presented due to time restrictions, was a presentation of the body as a healing intelligence in and of itself. Disorders in movement and energy as manifested in diagnoses such as Autism, Parkinson's Disease and Sensory Processing Disorder were to be briefly addressed. This information is included in this paper.

Part One Review

We began by recalling pertinent information from the previous workshop. We had looked at the body as a collection of separate parts and coexisting systems. The initial focus had been on moving from separate systems, but the emphasis was on the newer (to western anatomists) perspective of systems that unite parts as patterns of communication, particularly the cellular and fascial systems (Oschman, Energy medicine, the scientific basis, 2000, p. 89). The second workshop of the first day had been presented by AwaHoshi Kavan on "Healing Sound: Silicium Crystals and Body Resonance." The attendees were asked to review what was new information in their own bodies and/or movement awareness/perspective from both of the first day's workshops, then to introduce themselves to the person sitting to their right or left and briefly share in duets or trios what they had determined was important to them from the earlier workshops. The audience shifted to group themselves accordingly.

Why did I ask the participants to review and share? As expressed in the first paper, movement learning is reinforced and re-evaluated (Henricks, 1987, p. 33), when verbalized by both the person who experienced the movement and by the person actively participating as "listener." Sharing and reflecting on the movement experience after a period of time, gives rise to new insights and perceptions concerning it. The person listening, perhaps a different person than the partner of the previous day, has their own perspective on what the mover shares and comments, perhaps eliciting more insight for and within the mover. Sharing is learning, and in a classroom or workshop situation, is usually more enthusiastically received than listening to the professor lecture from a podium. The presenter, per the day before, does not collect these insights or conversations as she would if conducting research. This time of communication is for the individual participants. The sharing brought the audience into a place of re-acquaintanceship, memory and preparedness for the present workshop. "Maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement" (Henricks, 1987, p. 53).



Slide lecture

After the participants “touched base” through their sharing, a short slide lecture on Thomas Myers’ perspective of fascial lines, which he calls “Anatomy Trains” (Myers T. W., 2009), was presented. Also introduced were slides of the intracranial membrane system (SonoWorld, 2001-2012), (Beal, 2006) to address a misunderstanding that had arisen the previous day concerning this thickened fascial structure. Slides of living fascia (Guimberteau, 2005) and two drawings (Rolf, 1989, p. 39), (Salinger) were shown as illustrations of fascia as flexible netting. The now well-known Thompson photo of magnified fascia was also shown (Myers T. W., 2009, pp. 12, Fig1.1.B). Tom Myers’ images gave the participants an intellectual understanding of fascia as preparation and support for their kinesthetic experience of moving from the fascia in the Bartenieff Fundamentals (Bartenieff I. w., 1980) warm-up. Myers’ perspective on fascia is highly accessible to movers and provided the workshop participants with a basic knowledge of the holistic structure and function of fascia.

The participants were disappointed that the purpose of the presentation was not to learn the individual “anatomy trains” and move from each of them, but to understand and experience the idea of fascia as all pervasive, to realize that there was a detailed studied, explored understanding and theory of fascia, and to conceptualize that the experience of moving through fascia was a different experience than moving from muscles or bones. Myers’ discovery of the sternalis was more recent than the Anatomy Trains publication (Myers T. , Tom Myers, 2012), so the understanding in this workshop was that all the “trains” are connected in a way not addressed in his 2009 book.

Bartenieff Fundamentals™ Warm-up

The attendees lay on the stage floor, preparing to move in a Bartenieff Fundamentals™ class organized through the supportive images of Myers’ fascial lines. Bartenieff Fundamentals™ as warm-up beautifully addresses moving and awakening the flow of energy in bodies through Myers’ images of the continuity of the fascial netting. It is the

opinion of this presenter that Irmgard Bartenieff, involved with fascia through her knowledge and use of Bindegewebsmassage (Lamb, 1983), addressed moving from the fascia when she spoke of bony landmarks, connections, dynamic alignment and the other concepts and principles involved in Bartenieff Fundamentals™ (Hackney, 1998, pp. 231-246). She knew kinesthetically what it felt like to move from, and feel restrictions in, fascia.

The warm-up began with all on their backs on the stage floor, stretching and breathing fully into the dimensions. The fascial lines were reviewed and emphasized during the warm-up. For example, the participants were asked to be aware of the Superficial Back Line during heel rocks and in curling to one side, then stretching, curling and unfolding to return to their backs. Awareness of moving from the Superficial Front Line was next suggested in the same movement, i.e., curling to one side, stretching, curling and unfolding to return to the back on the floor. Awareness of the support of the Lateral Lines was also added to this simple movement of curling and stretching from side to side and onto the back. Sensitivity to the Arm Lines, and then the Functional Line, came into play with the actual rolling. Here the Deep Front Line of fascia was also added as support for mobility, and then for stability in leg stretches. The Deep Front Line was activated for pelvic shift, and the Spiral Line came into play there too. The Lateral Line stabilized support for pelvic shifts and knee drops, as did the Deep Front Line. Many of the participants were familiar with the Bartenieff Fundamentals™ concepts and principles that underlie movement. Now with the added images of fascial support, a new layer of knowledge gave them much that they were eager to absorb and process.

The purpose of the warm-up was to integrate the previous day’s material and to embody, enliven and empower the participants through moving from a “network of communication,” the fascia (Oschman, Energy medicine in therapeutics and human performance, 2003, pp. 122-128) as preparation for effective communication during the rest of the workshop’s focus on energy. The warm-up ended with Seesaw. In order to perform Seesaw successfully, the partners must coordinate



their breath, effectively “ground,” (Hackney, 1998, p. 41) and be dynamically aligned in using spatial intent. Seesaw was used as an integrating level change transition from focus on self to connecting with others.

Working in partners, one person lies on the floor with the knees bent, feet on floor. The other person is standing over her. Both people have their arms extended and are clasping hands (or forearms). The partners exchange positions by allowing a weight shift to do all the work. There is no pushing or pulling. One partner will feel the change between the backward-downward shift of weight into lying, while the other experiences the forward-upward shift into standing (Bartenieff I., 1970, pp. One -7, 4).

People then mobilized to standing and walking. They were asked to do what they yet needed for their individual bodies to prepare for the rest of the workshop. The presenter asked, “So what is “energy?” What is “science?” How are these terms meant in today’s class? How much are you a skeptic? How much do you intuit? What do you accept? What is absolute nonsense to you? Let’s consider ‘Science.’”

Taking Inventory - The Continuum

The width of the stage was designated as a continuum with “Hard science” stage right, “Soft science” in the middle and “Woo-be,” stage left, although I called “Woo-be” “Soft science” in this particular workshop. These words are used to roughly categorize the numerous sciences. “Hard Science” is defined as “any of the natural or physical sciences (Physical science, 2001-2012) where facts or truths are derived from empirical investigations or experiments based on scientific method” (Scientific method, 2001-2012). Examples are physics, chemistry and earth science. (Physical science, 2001-2012). “Soft Science is “any of the specialized disciplines based on qualitative analysis or scientific investigations for which strictly measurable criteria may be difficult to establish” (Herrmann-Keeling, 2008). “Soft science” has also been described as more concerned than the “Hard sciences” with human behavior, institutions,

and society. It includes psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science (Soft science, 2001-2012), among others. For this workshop, these representative social and behavioral sciences fall toward the middle of the continuum, which additionally held linguistics, psychiatry (Cambridge University Library, 2008) and Laban Movement Analysis.

The sciences become more abstract, i.e., less involved with solid materials or quantifiable energy as one moves away from “Hard sciences” along the continuum toward what is harder to substantiate in the material realm. Sciences such as Bioenergetics, the science of energy flow through living systems (Cullen, 2009), Biomagnetic fields, Bioelectric fields, and Biomagnetism, the study of fields emitted by living systems (Oschman, 2003, p. 7), are examples of sciences approaching “Woo-be,” but are to the right of it along the continuum.

“Woo-be” is the presenter’s word for what is often outside the limits of one’s belief, something that is a stretch for a person, a society, or a culture to believe. Examples of “Woo-be,” are sciences or therapies which consist of energy work i.e., Reiki, Human Energy Fields (auras), chakras, energy meridians, acupuncture, body tunings, CranioSacral Therapy, Radionics, which is “the study of human body's perception of, and reaction to, ultra-low intensity radiation” (Radionics, n.d.) and astrology.

Formal science, in some references was considered a “Soft science” (Soft science, 2001-2012). Since, formal science such as math, logic, and statistics, (Wisegeek, 2003-2012) are systems theories applied to test and develop all science, they fall outside the contextual continuum parameter of this workshop experience. Classification of science comes with its own problems and disagreements among scientists as to which science belongs where, or if they can be categorized at all (Herrmann-Keeling, 2008). The classifications in use in this workshop are not meant to be a thorough or enlightened approach to hard or soft science or to make a statement concerning science, but were used as a means to an end. The fact that all science is theory, some accepted, some not, was not addressed.

The following activity was based upon a lecture often used in the Upledger Institute, Inc. CranioSacral Therapy training in describing



a continuum from the material body to spirit. (Upledger J. D., 2011, p. 10). It was used in this presentation to determine where people were in their perceptions and understanding of the word "Science." The presenter asked:

So what is Energy? What is Science? How are these terms meant in today's class? How much are you a skeptic? How much do you intuit? What do you accept? What is absolute nonsense to you? Let's look at Science.

The attendees were to think about what they accept in terms of Science and what they have difficulty accepting. The "Woo-be" factor, a monitoring experience where one knows that they cannot accept something as being plausible, was discussed. Where does each of the participants draw the line between science as real and "Woo-be?" They reflected upon "Hard science," "Soft science" and "Woo-Be," and then moved to the area along the staged continuum that was where they felt most comfortable. Uncertainty was permitted. The participants then gauged their individual response in relationship to the group's response by where each stood along the continuum.

This exercise allowed the presenter, who was planning to adjust the presentation according to the distribution of the group along the continuum, to observe the tenor of the group. Many congregated around "Woo-be," while several felt free to navigate in the infinity symbol, a Figure 8 pattern, around the whole, demonstrating their consideration of all science. Most of those present were willing to investigate with open minds. Only a few were concrete in their "Hard" scientific beliefs.

The exercise was not about challenging science or belief, but about reflection and realization. It brings a wealth of information to the awareness of the participants. The exercise provides a way into the individual's place of knowing/unknowing/belief/unbelief. They realize, if they have not done so before, where they draw the line concerning some of their beliefs. Before this experience, they may not know that they set limits or, if they do know that they do, why the limit stops where it does. This questioning may allow those who have been closed to experimenting with energy to

suspend their beliefs throughout the rest of the workshop.

Energy

Energy exists in all matter (Wiens, 1999-2010). It is possible to also address energy along a continuum as we did with science, from the energy contained within hard material such as granite, to energy within softer material such as the human body, to describing consciousness as an ethereal form of energy (Melnick, 2011, p. 42). How is energy released from granite; how is energy released from the human body? The transference of energy from where energy exists is the crux of the matter. Do we recognize energy when we see it? Where are we as individuals stopped along a continuum of accepting "energy," as a science word and as a new age word?

In the broadest sense, "Energy is the ability to create a force over a distance some time in the future" (Wiens, 1999-2010). There is historic confusion and bias around the word energy that has slowed "hard" science exploration of energy (Dunning, 2010). Technologies have now been developed that measure the Human Energy Field in and around living systems (Oschman, 1990-2012). The presenter to the workshop participants:

What if some of us are capable of seeing, perceiving, sensing or feeling what others do not? In using Laban Movement Analysis terminology for qualifiable descriptors of movement, some may never see (not recognize, but observe), a mobile state, a shape flow, a spatial tension, a movement's trace form. Does this make them any less real? Are our perceptions closed off, or undeveloped? Where does the perception of energy enhance or limit our observation skills? Or does it influence them at all? Some will accept only what they learned in science class many years ago as science or energy, some accept every theory out there as probable. Do you accept that auras and chakras are now explained and accepted with a logical "scientific explanation? Where do you fall in the vast field of "energy belief?" Do stones heal? Do lymph star machines work? What of the powers of Qigong or Chi Kung, a healing from across the room, from

across the country? What is happening when we feel something in a hands-on experience, when someone puts a quartz crystal under the massage table? Is what we sense or feel, i.e., perceive, the result of an overactive imagination? Or is something quantifiable there?

A picture falls off the wall in responding to gravity, the wind blows our hair into our eyes, we hear sound wave energy as music, we wipe the sweat off our necks from heat or shiver in the cold (unknown). We accept these forms of energy as relatively “real.” What makes them more “real” to some than “auras?” Where is your skepticism along the continuum? Is it hard core? Where is it soft? What do you dismiss because you do not want to consider it? Do you believe in any of the numerous modalities created around touch, i.e., Touch for Health, CranioSacral Therapy, Swedish Massage, that touch makes you feel good, that touch makes you feel bad, that a disruptive presence entering a room is felt, that we humans can see, sense, feel the unseeable? How do we perceive the unseeable and what is it that we are exactly perceiving? Again, where does your acceptable perception of energy fall along the continuum?

How does the working of the brain relate to this? What about those gifted with some “cross-wiring,” a synesthesia that can see music, hear colors, etc? Is that the reason auras and chakras are seen or felt? Is this a mis-wiring in the brain, or a sensitivity that we all can develop?

In Energy Science:

It is beneficial to group the basic concepts of energy from the different areas of science together. Such a common study of energy could be called energy science, which does not cover specific details of all of science but rather only the ones specifically relating to the concepts of energy (Oschman, 2011).

What is Energy Medicine? According to Dr. Oschman (2011), “Communication, or acquisition of knowledge of any kind occurs only with an energy transfer.”

Energy Medicine is the field of mind-body medicine and the exploration of the role of “natural ‘energy forces’ within the body in maintaining normal health and wellbeing. It is about how these energies or forces may be channeled to assist in healing and in the restoration of normal health” (Oschman, 2000, p. back cover).

The presenter to the participants, “We are all sensitive to touch and energy. So let’s explore our own energy in communication.”

Energy Experiential Activities

These activities were presented to develop sensitivity to the transference of energy. They are designed to explore trust, intention, spatial intent and listening to, informing and becoming informed by the body. Communicating energy was experienced first through touch, then without touch. A preparatory exercise dealt with “intent,” which according to Merriam-Webster, Inc. (1984) is defined as “concentrated purpose.” It is possible to enhance and develop one’s own physical presence or self-awareness through intent. The exercise was about enhancing an awareness of energy changes within oneself. The presenter calls it “The fingertip exercise” and adapted it from an exercise she observed taught by Deepak Chopra on “The Dr. Oz Show:”

“Start by vigorously rubbing your hands together to generate heat and then placing them over your own heart, finding a connecting between your hands and heart.”

Close your eyes and stand with (open) hands in front of you, palms upward. Focus on your breathing and slowly begin to focus your energy on your heart. Feel your heart beat and focus your energy there... Now move the focus of your energy slowly from your heart out to your finger tips. Feel your finger tips throb with your heart beat. You have just redirected blood from your brain to your extremities. (Chopra, 2011).

The participants were directed to feel how warm their fingertips were. They were ready to continue. There are many issues surrounding touch,



issues of trust of self and of others. These were briefly addressed to empower the participants to take care of themselves during these events and were discussed more fully later in the workshop, after the experiences. The presenter:

Be aware. Use your radar/intuition. In this workshop, you are always in charge of who touches you and how. Come to each other and shake hands. Do this with several people. Notice now how each other touched, shook hands, the differences in the encounters. Discuss these experiences with the last person whose hand you shook.

This exercise brings into conscious awareness the many phrasing pattern possibilities of approach, touch (shake hands), release, and the infinite variety of ways to shake hands. In the shaking of hands, there are endlessly unique differences of approach and touch in the use of space, dynamics, use of the body and the accommodation of the two people to the space between them. Also considered is the adaptation of one's preferred way of shaking hands to the circumstances and to the person being greeted. People have an instantaneous impression from the approach, the touch (shake) and the release. Each part of the movement phrase communicates a tremendous amount of information to the subconscious mind. One often knows whether they like or dislike someone simply from a handshake. Sensitivity to touch and movement observation is heightened in this exercise.

In the next exercise, every two people were given a balloon and asked to find a way to be comfortable in sitting with the balloon between them. The people in the auditorium adjusted accordingly, the people on the stage sat on the floor facing each other with the balloon held between them. One partner's hands were placed on the top and bottom of the balloon. The other partner's hands were on the sides. This (Upledger J. D.) CranioSacral Therapy 1 exercise demonstrates how it is possible for energy as intent to be perceived by another person. For those not aware of subtle energy transference, this exercise often shocks. One of the partners is asked to gently press and then release the pressure on the balloon so that the

other can feel it. "Neutral" is just lightly holding the balloon, with no active pressure or release. The partner "receiving" identifies the pressure as "in," "neutral," or "out." The first partner is then asked to intend putting energy into the balloon, pull it out, or come to neutral with partner number two again identifying the changes. There is no visible movement, yet the partner can feel the change and responds. They both experience this exercise as giver and receiver.

Participants can be incredulous and have trouble accepting what they themselves are actively participating in, even as they feel the transfer of energy as held, or going into and out of the balloon. They then repeated the exercise without the balloons, touching their partner with different intent on a hand, an arm, a thigh, the foot, or face.

After this experience, most of the participants knew that it is possible to feel their own energy traveling through a body, whether in, out or in a neutral holding (Upledger J. E., 1983). They were ready for the next phase of the experience, focusing on what is happening between their hands.

The participants were asked to place their hands around a body part of their partner, i.e., an arm, head, leg, foot, etc., This time, they were to make an energetic connection through to their hand on the other side of that body part. They were asked to be aware through their sensory and kinesthetic perceptions and to focus on what was happening between their hands to notice any subtle changes or movement of the tissue between their hands. It is possible to feel movement or a release of heat, among other changes. As they tune into the tissue between their hands, they might feel they are melding with it. Melding is when the person touching feels like he/she is actually sinking into the other's tissue, merging or blending with the person being touched (Upledger J. E., 1983, pp. 20-21). The participants briefly played with this idea of connecting (Dowd, 1991).

The next experience allowed for communication with various systems within the body through touch. Focusing on different systems through intentional touch was explained. Different systems, such as muscular, skeletal, cellular, craniosacral and lymph were suggested. The intent of the touch



is slightly different for each system, i.e., touch into bone is lighter than connecting into muscle (Dowd, 1991, pp. 21-29). Not much time was spent with experimenting with the different systems, but the fascial system was emphasized. Breath support through both awareness of breathing (many people unconsciously hold their breath) and synchronization with the partners' breathing was brought to the participants' consciousness. A reminder to attend fully to the task was also advised. When both partners had connected through experimentation with each other in this way, they were asked to stand, close their eyes and stay energetically connected through their hands as they backed away from each other, connecting through the space between them without seeing or touching. It is always fascinating to note that some duos are able to travel as much as 40 feet apart from each other and still feel a connection, while others can only separate a few inches and then lose each other.

All were asked to move around the stage, finding an energetic connection with the rest of the people on the stage. They extended their energy beyond their bodies to connect with the others. This is an extension of their Bioenergetic and Biomagnetic fields, also known as their Human Energy Field, According to Batic (2001):

The Human Energy Field (HEF), sometimes referred to as the aura, is a complex combination of overlapping energy patterns which define the unique spiritual, mental, emotional and physical makeup of an individual. A person's HEF is that part of the Universal Energy Field (UEF) associated with that specific individual. There are three basic ways of describing the HEF: in terms of energy meridians, chakras and energy bodies.

With their heightened awareness, the participants were asked to expand their attention to the entire space of the stage as they walked around it. They were then divided into two groups as they continued walking. One group approached someone from behind and touched that person on the shoulder to get their attention. They noticed how they themselves touched and how they were touched. Using instinct, not reasoning or process of

elimination or any left brain engagement, they used the energy/dynamics of the touch to find a partner for the next exercise. By this time the energy in the room had become completely connected and concentrated.

Using the Bartenieff Fundamentals™ concept of dynamic alignment (Hackney, 1998, pp. 96-102), they were to aid each other, one moving, one touching, in establishing a head-tail connection through movement, with information communicated by the partner through touch. A simultaneous initiation of movement from the sacrum and head toward (curling) and away (lengthening) from each other in the sagittal plane was demonstrated. Touch, one hand on the sacrum, one on the top of the head, informed both partners as to whether the one moving was indeed initiating simultaneously.

In the next exercise, the partners, taking turns, touched each other with an index finger. The one being touched practiced meeting, melding, shaping and softening his/her body around the other's finger. The one touching used intention to meet and merge with the tissue. They noted again what kind of energy and touch worked for each of them in this situation and what did not. They were asked to notice, explore and change their energy and touch as they worked and to be open to feedback from their partner.

They were invited to reflect upon the warm-up today. How did touch help, or did it? Intentional touch, kinesthetic communication through proprioception, is used in Bartenieff Fundamentals™ to communicate and develop a heightened awareness of movement. Touching a particular area, body part or system can elicit in a mover awareness for initiation or sequencing of movement from that area. Touch can be used to encourage the flow of movement and grounding. For example, if a standing person feels that his energy is blocked from the knees downward, a light sliding touch down the lower legs may allow him to image and feel the flow of movement down his legs into the ground, at the same time allowing him to become aware of his legs as anchors into the ground through his feet. Sliding the hands off the body with directional spatial intent can bring attention to that spatial intent, i.e., the mover



then has an awareness of the emphasized part of the body continuing and connecting that line of direction out or off of the body into the space. The quality of how one touches, Effort, and the adaptation of that touch to the body, Shape, can elicit a variety of qualities of movement from the mover in how they kinesthetically respond to the touch.

From the presenter:

Using intuition again, immediately find another partner without thinking or checking in with your mind. Go with the first impulse, do not question it, trust your intuition even though you don't know why you are choosing this partner. Seesaw with this partner, meeting and melding, then with active energy awareness. How is this different from the earlier Seesaw you experienced today?

The session ended with fully intentioned hugs all around, a synopsis and discussion.

Implications of touch

Touch is a large topic with only brief mention here. It is necessary for physical and social survival for mammals (Montagu, 1986, p. 46). The contractions of the mother's uterus during birth as a mammal passes through the birth canal serve as massage in stimulating the life sustaining systems of the body, including digestion and excretory (Montagu, 1986, pp. 58-61). Mammals receive this stimulation through licking the placenta from the newborn and in cleaning the genitals and mouth area (Montagu, 1986, pp. 26-29). It is important that babies born by cesarean section receive adequate stimulation through massage in order to completely fulfill this part of the birth process and prepare the baby for functioning outside of the womb (Montagu, 1986, p. 46).

Touch elicits differing responses in the body. We are mostly fluid, so an abusive touch can reverberate just as effectively though the tissues as a loving touch (Emoto, 2004, p. xxv). Healing, intentional touch can be projected into the systems of the body with highly effective results (Upledger J. w., 2008, pp. 93-94).

"Sacred" can be defined as "worthy of spiritual respect" (Jaia Dev, n.d.) or an intimate communing with the divine (Hassner, 2009).

For many people, touch is regarded as sacred. With the merging and exchange of tissue cells (Dowd, 1991) possible in the slightest skin-to-skin contact, touch is intimate. If merging of tissue cells occurs in something as social as a handshake, it seems appropriate that there are many varied cultural stigmas surrounding touch. In society the proximity of distance and the appropriateness of touch are handled in many interesting ways. An example is riding in elevators with strangers. Inappropriately close, so uncomfortable, people in elevators do not look at each other, but look up at the numbers conveniently placed above them to allow for an escape from the social awkwardness of intimate distance. The presenter asked for cultural norms concerning touch from the international audience and some were shared.

In American culture, children are often raised to understand touch as sexual or invasive. Media encourages this perception. Relatively recent, healing touch is now becoming more culturally acceptable. Susan Cotta wrote a book, *I Can Show You I Care: Compassionate Touch for Children* (2003). This book was well received and used with positive results in testing. Children were taught to ask permission to touch an injured child and respectfully touch to heal. "The results show statistically significant increases in pro-social behaviors, and equally significant decreases in aggressive and hostile behaviors" (Cotta, *The touch that could change the world health & wellness*, n.d.).

What is the appropriateness of touch in movement classes? Touch has been accepted as a learning modality in the physical arts because people drawn to these arts tend to easily learn through proprioception. Many are kinesthetic learners. In the past few years this presenter has seen that touching a child, to encourage turnout in ballet, for example, can come under question. Children in dance class become confused with the cultural training that touch from an adult can be bad and are not sure whether the teacher is being helpful, or if the touch they receive in a movement correction is "bad." The 17th c. use of a stick by the ballet master or mistress to beat time and to touch in correcting placement and movement (Cather, 1913, p. 92) and the dichotomy of not touching, but using an object that could also be considered a weapon, illustrates that the issue of touch has existed for centuries in dance training.



Licensing and regulation of touch

Touch in massage and bodywork in the United States is a huge and highly regulated profession. This recognition of the power of touch i.e., the ability to do harm or good through touch, has brought about national, state, county, and city licensing, regulations and restrictions, all requiring registration, paperwork and fees. Initially created to separate prostitution from legitimate massage and bodywork, the regulation has become financially profitable for the many and various organizations, so regulation and massage policing groups continue to multiply. Regulations and payment of fees to stay legitimate are making it harder to be a practicing professional. Massage schools have multiplied (American Massage Therapy Association [AMTA], 2012) and people are entering the profession with the minimum of anatomical, movement and kinesthetic and ethical qualifications, making it necessary for the continuing education and testing regulations (AMTA, 2012). The irony is that as separation of the various aspects of massage, energy and bodywork by the various organizations are attempted for the benefit of regulation, evolving research, understanding and experience are validating a holistic approach to the body, touch, healing and health. The message is that the body is a whole, a gestalt, a spiritual, physical, psychological and emotional entity, and respect for humans as complex dynamics must be taken into account in working with each other (Lachney, 2010). The regulating organizations do not have this understanding.

As you have experienced in this workshop, the energy of touch can be projected. Humans express and exchange energy across distance as communication. A smile or disapproving frown “touches” us, affects us, can set a mood or convey a tone. Touch is powerful.

Part Two

The following information including a movement experience, was prepared for, but not presented in the workshop.

The Human Energy Field (HEF) was encountered in an earlier movement experience as people walked around the stage extending their energy into the space around them. It is

made mention here in relationship to Rudolf Laban’s theory of movement and in preparation for a final movement experience. Laban defined the Kinesphere as “the reach space immediately around the body” (Maletic, 1987, p. 59) and the Dynamosphere as “the space in which pure dynamic actions take place” (Laban, 1976, p. 30).

From Caroline Myss’ “The Anatomy of the Spirit,” (1966, pp. 33-34), in a section entitled “The Human Energy Field” we read:

Your physical body is surrounded by an energy field that extends as far out as your outstretched arms and the full length of your body. It is both an information center and a highly sensitive perceptual system. We are constantly “in communication” with everything around us through this system, which is a kind of conscious electricity that transmits and receives messages to and from other people’s bodies. These messages from and within the energy field are what intuitives perceive. Practitioners of energy medicine believe that the human energy field contains and reflects each individual’s energy. It surrounds us and carries with us the emotional energy created by our internal and external experiences ... This emotional force influences the physical tissue within our bodies. In this way your biography, that is the experiences that make up your life, becomes biology.

For this presenter, the above beautifully described HEF or Biomagnetic field is also describing Laban’s Dynamosphere combined with the physical reach space of the Kinesphere. Myss and Laban are in agreement when he states that “the conventional idea of space as a phenomena which can be separated from time and force and from expression is completely erroneous” (Maletic, 1987, p. 163).

Movement Experiential

Verbal instructions from the presenter are:

Playing in the Kinesphere/Dynamosphere as a movement experience involves sensing the spatial relationship and energy changes within and around the body. Move and connect with that inner space and its capacity. Gradually let that awareness of space extend beyond the inside of your physical body out to the space around



yourself. Find a way of moving your Kinesphere through the space, traveling, changing shapes, levels, dynamics, always aware of your personal space. Focus on the energy surrounding your body, Recall the energy of connecting to your hand through someone else's body and connect your body movement through space to someone else's movement. Invite the other into your Kinesphere. Explore this interpersonal space. Separate your Kinesphere from this person and connect with another. Note how your joint Kinesphere (the spatial relationship) and the joined Dynamosphere (your energy together in this space) is now different from the last connection you shared. Both of you note the space in the room, the general action space, your environment. Explore this general space together. Join another group of movers. Join another and another until the general space is your group Kinesphere and you are dancing and moving in a single group energy. Bring this to a close.

(If we had been able to finish with this as the last movement experience, we would have closed here with the ending hugs instead of where we did.)“Rest and write.”

The transference of energy in healing and health

Andrew Taylor Still (1873-1954) was an American osteopath who believed that the body is a self-regulating system, that the body's own self-corrective forces heal. The body tends toward a balance point, a homeostasis. It has an inner wisdom. The practitioner does not do the healing, does not attempt to “fix,”but “listens” to the body through highly trained kinesthetic and proprioceptive skills and offers energetic support to the body in what it needs (Class notes from Susan Cotta CranioSacral Therapy I classes, 2006). This can involve emotional, physical, and spiritual support, the facilitator staying within the boundaries of his/her practice. “Healing energy” described by Dr. Oschman (2000, p. 87), “whether produced by a medical device or projected from the human body, is energy of a particular frequency or set of frequencies that stimulates the repair of one or more tissues.” He goes on to suggest that working with the biological rhythms of energy

fields could be an important source of healing worthy of investigation, since the medical world, until fairly recently has focused almost entirely on the molecular(2000, pp. 91-92). There are many supportive touch therapies; an example, and the one in which the presenter is educated, is CranioSacral Therapy. With the understanding that there is much that is still unknown about the healthy transference of energy in healing through energy and touch, let us focus attention on unhealthy exposure to energy.

Electric power transmission systems consist of interconnected transmission networks called power grids. “Power grids transmit electricity in high voltages to reduce energy loss” over long-distances. (Stein, 1999-2012). The “grid” is the networks that carry electricity from the plants where it is generated to consumers and is comprised of wires, substations, transformers, switches, etc. (U.S. Department of Energy, n.d.)An Electromagnetic Field (EMF) is:

a property of space caused by the motion of an electric charge. A stationary charge will produce only an electric field in the surrounding space. If the charge is moving, a magnetic field is also produced. An electric field can be produced also by a changing magnetic field. The mutual interaction of electric and magnetic fields produces an electromagnetic field, which is considered as having its own existence in space apart from the charges or currents (a stream of moving charges) with which it may be related. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2012)

EMFs are referenced along with dirty electricity (Dirty Electricity, 2006-2007) when there are too many fields in any given area with too much constant and overexposure to them. With our increasing consumption of energy via modern technology, our bodies are exposed at a distressing rate to many more EMFs than were the bodies of our ancestors. Our homes have EMF leakage from electrical outlets, televisions, microwave ovens and other kitchen appliances. Our incessant reliance on communication devices that are physically close to our bodies, i.e., cell phones, alarm clocks, iPads, and computers only increases our exposure to an alarming degree (Horner, 2008).



Are we sensitive to these EMFs and are they sensitive to the Human Energy Field of individuals? Cellphones and their emittance of radiation with possible brain tumors as byproduct (Benivia, LLC, 2011) have been in the news almost since cell phones were invented. Substantial information exists that they affect brain tissue (Fiore, 2012) and that the effect of exposure is cumulative (Brenner, 2010). My body disrupts over-air transmissions as I walk by a television or radio; I often have difficulty at airport self-check-in stations because my energy does not allow the touch screens to work. The one time I submitted to the airport full body scanner (Brenner, 2010), my trained- to-perceive-energy system was upset for days. More and more reports exist stating that many illnesses today may have cause in this consistent unseen bombardment of low level radiation (Gamble, 2012).

Affecting the brain and nervous system, continuous everyday exposure to electromagnetic frequency zones create a constant source of stress, altering body polarity, and magnifying our body's self-protective fight or flight response. This compounds adrenal loads from all other stressors, physical and emotional, and significantly reduces our ability to effectively cope, leading to fatigue, tension, and illness. Highly disruptive to our nervous system, EMFs also numb or dull our sense perceptions and interfere with normal brain wave activity. And they disrupt neurotransmitters such as dopamine, which helps us focus, experience pleasure, and feel energized, and serotonin, which helps stabilize our moods (Heller, 2012).

Andrew Goldsworthy BSc, PhD, retired biologist with Imperial College, London says that autism risk from EMF exposure (is) even (a) greater problem than cancer risk. "...Weak electromagnetic fields can have a greater effect than strong ones and thus prolonged exposure to weak fields (where cells are maintained in the unstable condition for longer) is potentially more damaging than relatively brief exposure to much stronger ones" (Goldsworthy, 2011). He also says that a deficiency in the dedicated hard-wired neural networks needed for efficient communication with others result from early exposure to electromagnetic fields. Furthermore, Dr. Dietrich Klinghardt, MD, PhD (Why where

you sleep matters if you want a healthy baby, 2009) found that if a pregnant woman sleeps in strong electromagnetic fields, her child will likely begin to exhibit neurological abnormalities within the first two years of life, such as dysfunction, hyperactivity and learning disorders. Autistic children appear to be hypersensitive to "dirty" electricity and other man-made EMF energy (Tara, 2008).

Exposure to the omnipresent EMFs could be causing or contributing to the proliferation of autism and an increase in symptomatic behavior. Autism seems to be prevalent in countries with increased information technology and appears to be increasing as fast as the information/energy grid spreads (Burrell, 2011). A recent study in three information technology regions of the Netherlands discovered that the presence of autism spectrum condition in those regions was more extensive than predicted (Roelfsema, 2011). In truth, EMFs are suspect as contributor to autism in more and more research (Klinghardt, 2009).

Michael J. Fox, an actor with Parkinson's Disease (PD), noted that he could function better in Bhutan (Stukin, 2009) a country with relatively low EMFs (Ray, 2007). No direct links with EMFs contributing to PD have been found, but pulsed EMFs have been demonstrated as affecting PD in reversing a body image disorder of PD (Reuven, 1998). Recent research showed repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation prevented the fall of dopamine in the striatum of rats with Parkinson's disease. (Yang, 2010). Whether EMFs help or heal, they have a physical effect.

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) is mentioned because of the proprioceptive and kinesthetic misinformation that often occurs.

SPD is a neurological disorder that causes difficulties with processing information from the five senses: vision, auditory, touch, olfaction, and taste, as well as from the sense of movement (vestibular system), and/or the positional sense (proprioception). For those with SPD, sensory information is sensed, but perceived abnormally. Unlike blindness or deafness, sensory information is received by people with SPD; the difference is that information is processed by the brain in an unusual way that causes distress, discomfort, and confusion (Sicilie-Kira, 2010).



People with autism usually have some sort of SPD but those with SPD do not necessarily have autism (Sicilie-Kira, 2010). For individuals with SPD, touch, i.e., proprioception can be highly sensitive and overly stimulated. Clothing can be uncomfortable, touch painful. There is little research to support that SPD is directly caused by exposure to EMFs, though they were listed as causative in online notes for a Powerpoint lecture as environment affecting the individual child on a slide entitled “Sensory Integration -the Big Picture.” Man-made EMFs were also discussed in that lecture. (Bolles, 2005)

Sensory integration and motor development are entwined and lay the foundations for the capacity for learning (Boon, n.d.) For those of us in the movement and therapeutic healing professions, it seems imperative that all possibilities, seen and unseen, should be considered suspect in healing or harming, until proven otherwise. Our bodies are simultaneously highly sensitive and resistant, and our incredible immune system will function to keep us healthy as long as it able. Parkinson’s Disease slows in its progress when dancing to music is encouraged (Earhart, 2010). Temple Grandin discovered that being tightly wrapped relieved her oversensitivity to touch and nervousness (Sicilie-Kira, 2010; Reuven, 1998). This information is proving beneficial to both animals (Thundershirt, 2010) and humans. There is much research to consider, much to be learned in determining a healthy body and environment. “The fully integrated body may be a body that is entirely free for the flow of signals” (Oschman, 2003, p. 92).

In looking to the future, Thomas Myers stated that “understanding of patterns is replacing treatment of symptoms, and this will make our work more lasting and let it reach into physiological and psychosomatic dimensions as well as musculoskeletal” (Myers T., *Learn to earn: Kinesis*, 2010, p. 36).

He also said in the same article that “Medicine of the future will rest on good nutrition, clear communication and movement” (2010, p. 36) and I would add, on the awareness of the mutual effect that humans and the environment have upon each other.

In conclusion, it is the hope of the presenter that participants finished these presentational workshops with many discoveries and new awarenesses, among them: a new or deepened sensitivity to, and consciousness of, their own bodies, their energy, movement and contributions to the environment; their ability to access different bodily systems through the changing dynamics of touch; and a newfound perception of the changing perspective on anatomy, healing and the environment in which we live.

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