

## II-3

### How body techniques limit the body to what they focus on

As the whole focus of human consciousness has been on the exterior and not on the within, also in traditional movement schools and physical disciplines worldwide the whole point of view has been on the outer level, either on how a movement looks like, or on an effect it has on the body, which is also an outside-orientation. The view was on what it expresses and not on the place where it is arising from, on the movement and not on the mover. Of course there was focus on the mover as well, because it needs to be there, as it is obviously impossible to present something with the body without having awareness of it. But the inner work was done *for* the outer work. The outer result was the goal and the subject of the work. Even esoteric disciplines like hatha yoga are mostly taught and trained as how a position is supposed to look rather than how it arises from the one doing it. This is using the body to achieve something, rather than to be in it, with it and from it. I do not know of any traditional movement approach anywhere that has the body's inner knowing as its guideline. They all stick to a form. They are goal oriented.

In this work it is moving from the sensational momentum within. It doesn't matter at all what the result is. There is no result to achieve. The movement on its own is the purpose of the movement, and even you cannot call it "purpose", because there is no purpose to it. It's just pure moving, pure bodying.

Even if we play with forms, those forms don't have a significance of themselves; they are there to facilitate a framework for the formless, spontaneous inner spark to express itself in, or sometimes to tickle it a little bit to come out. I'm always ready to let go of a form when something genuine and different wants to find its way through the body, and I repeatedly invite participants to do so. It's trusting the bodies inherent wisdom more than our ideas about it, and trusting the newness of the present moment more than our knowledge and experience. This makes this work very exciting, and it makes it ever self-renewing, self-regenerating, self-transforming.

The form of a somatic discipline actually reflects the view of the body that their practitioners have, and the particular dimension of body awareness that their founders were conscious of and focussed on. There are so many different ways to work with the body because there are so many different ways in the body. Don't stop identifying with one of them. Enjoy them, and if you're attracted to a particular one, enjoy that one. And remain open to see that there is so much more to the body. Remain available for your own body. Sometimes a disease or an accident are a great help for that, because you are forced to relate differently to your body. But without having to be forced, do let yourself relate differently to your body than you did so far. Play with it, experiment, explore. Have fun, and let yourself be surprised and amazed.

Restriction to a particular view of the body defines the restriction of a somatic discipline. Within that restriction, a lot can happen; a lot that couldn't have happened without the restriction being there in the first place. So there is nothing wrong with a restriction. The problem is getting stuck identifying with the restriction, and thereby having the restriction restricting your body instead of opening it up. Restriction on the Outer Body

is fine; it can enhance the aliveness of the Inner Body. When you identify with that and take it into the Inner Body, you do something that is not right. You cut aliveness off. The nature of the Inner Body is to flow as limitlessness; that includes any limitation. But it doesn't turn into limitation. That only takes place when it is forced onto it from without.

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When people start learning to work with their body, they become conditioned. People doing breathwork relate everything to the breath, Alexander teachers focus on the head-body-relation, Laban students analyze every movement etc etc. This is all helpful in its way. What it also does is to

*restrict* your open awareness; it compromises innocence in meeting the body. So in as much as it brings you into your body, *it also takes you away from your body*. As soon as you learn something, a pattern is set up; as soon as you identify with what you learned, you are stuck in a pattern. Patterns are not to be believed; they are to *be in*, to remain as open awareness while a physical pattern flows through. If you are being in it, then every time a pattern touches you, there is not a repetition, but a new door. Every single movement pattern is a doorway to endless realms of physical experience. Even if it stays the same outside, it is varied endlessly inside. And that just with *one* pattern, while in reality there are always many patterns flowing into each other simultaneously, which multiplies endlessness with infinity! So you never get bored. And, being in your body that way, you never get old. There isn't even such a thing like 'growing old', not to an opened-up physical awareness. It just grows wide, all the time and into every direction. We as humans are yet so limited in our physical existence, because our awareness is so limited, so identified with patterns we learned, and we are mechanically repeating. One could live a very simple, unspectacular life, if one's awareness is opened up, unrestricted in that, one has an ongoing ecstatic outburst in it. And when you, from that inner space, go into exploring your body, you really start changing and transforming this body; you start to actually use its potential. And to that, there is no end.

So a real movement work is not about setting new patterns primarily; also not about changing old patterns. It is more about awakening something that is beneath the pattern, and then through this *seeing* through the pattern; which does, in consequence, change the pattern and set a new one. But there will be no fixation on this new pattern. What matters is that living flow underneath, which will always create new patterns, new responses, new ways. From there also repetition of patterns is dynamic, not rigid, never stuck. This living flow gives colour to all action in life. This living flow makes movement work interesting.

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The best way to work with a body (your own or another one) is to have no mental framework at all. Mental support can be there, a particular mental understanding can be in view; but be very light about it. Don't treat your specific understanding of the body as if it were the truth of the body. It is just a particular point of view.

This view can swim within a general openness: then it is fine. It is not fine if it substitutes the openness. Openness provides space. Then a view can float through space; it is changeable, mouldable; it is as fine for that view/technique to get lost in the space as it is fine for it to be gently focused on and applied.

The particular view/ technique can *do* something, but the base ought to be the beingness of the body itself. On such a base, every bodywork session is an amazing exploration, discovery and surprise. It cannot ever get boring, it cannot ever become repetitive. It is always new, as the body itself is ever renewing.

There are endless ways to work and play with the body.

You may study and practice bodywork forever, you will never come to an end. In itself, the body is eternal. It is eternally transforming. Body is metamorphosis, and as consciousness evolves, body transmutes. Let yourself be surprised. Never stop at *any* view of the body you ever learned. It may be a very interesting one, deeply revealing for you and therapeutically highly helpful, but it isn't the everything. Ayurveda isn't the truth about the body, TCM isn't nor Feldenkrais, nor anything else. When you take it too literally, you distort it. A good Ayurveda practitioner is one who doesn't take Ayurveda too seriously. It is not about what Ayurveda says about the body, as it isn't about what Alexander or any Tai Chi master says about the body. *It is about the body*.

So who will have supreme authority about it, other than the body itself?

Your open awareness opens you for the body.

Your fixed, prefabricated awareness closes you for the body – while you work with it!

So relax and open up.

Be available. Be innocent.

In your next session (as receiver or giver), *you may find out something which nobody has ever come across and realised!*

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Body work is balance work. When one has a lack of some energy, this energy may have to be supplied to or initiated in him/ her, when one is stuck in one physical pattern, a modulating pattern may be introduced to him. When one is excessively rigid, fluid movements may be applied; when one is too loose, too unstructured, he'll need something stabilizing.

So there cannot be one method for everybody, and it can be dangerous when a practitioner of a certain technique undifferentially applies his work. I think it's definitely an advantage when a practitioner has a wider range of methods he learned – even if he specializes in only one of them, it gives him a wider view and an awareness of limitations of his work. The body is multi-dimensional, so to work on the body ought to take place on multiple dimensions.

Personally, I love it to never know where my next session will go. I respond to the moment. The moment is as well the momentary question in the client as the momentary response to that in me.

We share the moment, and by being in the moment the session unfolds. It's always jumping into the unknown. I don't consider it a good sign if I come to a session and the body therapist already knows what he's going to do. Or even if he knows, inside it can still be a surprise, something new, unanticipated. Just not a routine. And particularly not imposing a system on the body. Living bodies do not fit into any system.

The System Body is alive, dynamic, dialectic and prismatic, so a Body System has to match that to be worth of the body.

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The variety of breath techniques you can learn from teachers, traditions and books may be quite enormous, but there is no comparison to the breath ways your body has in store, and opens up to you if you're open. They are infinite.

They are ways, not techniques. Nothing is being imposed on the situation; it is a response to the situation, the most natural respond, the response of the moment, the appropriate response your body knows. This is the body's way: It always gives itself to what is, and thereby gives to you what you need. It is this way that shows you the ways.

All you need to do is to be responsive towards the response, to give into what the body offers, to be open.

To be open to your body means to *physically listen* to it.

When you listen you hear the answer.

Instead of you being the answer to your body (as techniques try), be an open-ended question towards your body.