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**Connecting Somatic Knowledge and Dance Training: Expanding
the Frontier of Dance/Somatic Education**

***Continuum Presentation* on Somatic Self-Care:
NDEO/ISMETA
Oct 4, 2018**

Creating a field of refuge, a place to land inside yourself...follow what feels good.

A. Centering/Arriving Practice

- Where are you now
- Grounding yourself
- Feeling your joints loosen & open
- Breath Awareness
- Sensation Awareness
- Open attention

2. What is a body?

- A biological and tangible reality
- An evolutionary point (Part of a 4 mill.yr old history of Life on Earth)
- A process of unfolding
- Primarily fluid (See “Meet your interstitium” in Scientific American)
- The landscape out of which we live our lives
- A creative, innovative process, part of nature
- A living process within a larger living process
- A whole system interacting with other whole systems, within a larger whole

3. Basic elements/entry points into the present moment

- Breath
- Sensation
- Ground
- Sound

- Fluid Movement
- Perception

4. INQUIRY: Let inquiry lead you – some guidelines

- Inquire into the movement of each element: the movement of attention, the movement of breath, the movement of sound, the movement of movement, the movement of sensation.
- Suspend what you “already know” about inquiry and start afresh.
- How we inquire into each of the basic elements leads us into practice, ongoing practice, creating the practice.
- Consider the notion of a “set” practice vs. one that is continually opening, so each time is different, keeping the attention fluid.
- Basic Elements – How do we participate with this living system?
- The body’s experience is truthfully a whole, unbroken, undivided from the rest of nature and the world. To say that it is made of various “basic elements” is at best a choice. We’ve distilled these elements as a kind of convenience, to give our cognition a place to focus, to enable us to have something TO practice.
- Inquiry is about noticing nuances of change in attention, breath, movement, etc.

5. The Dive:

A. Lying on Your back:

- Open Attention (Baseline – let’s talk about this next week:))
- Breathe – softening edges of body, softening skin onto bones (3-5x)
- “MMMM”- Hands on breastbone. Feel Sound moving fluidly through body.

Open Attention (What’s new or different)

B. Begin Rolling and Pouring yourself into the ground and then Pausing.

Follow what feels good.

C. All 4’s

- Rest in Child’s pose if needed

- Cueing the fluid Spine and start to follow fluid movements that feel nourishing.
- Add the “MMM” Sound from time to time
- Exhale with “HA”

E. Lying on Your Back in Constellation

Touching no less than 3 people lightly.

Finish in Open attention on your back and feel the movement that is continuing as you rest. Be aware of what is different and also feel free to let movement that feels good rise from there.

Wild Geese

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

from Dream Work

by Mary Oliver

published by Atlantic Monthly Press

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