

What Moves You?
Movement Analysis for Observation and Transformation in Core Energetics

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Movement never lies.
It is a barometer telling the state of the soul's weather to all who can read it.
— Martha Graham

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ABSTRACT

This paper, written in the time of COVID 19, is an overview of the Laban/Bartiniéff Movement System (LBMS) and its usefulness in Core Energetics practice as an instrument for observation and transformation. An introduction to the overarching concepts of LBMS is provided, with an emphasis on the use of the body's relationship to Space as an indicator of one's state of mind. Ten movement experiences are provided as a gift to the Core Energetics community for use in personal movement practice or one-on-one client and group work. Excerpts of personal process concurrent with the writing of this work illuminate the inner thought process of the author.

INTRODUCTION

I am a lifelong dancer and choreographer, and I hold a Master of Fine Arts in Dance Performance and Choreography from the University of Hawai'i at Manōa (UHM), and a Certificate of Movement Analysis from the Laban/Bartiniëff Institute for Movement Studies (LIMS). Expressing myself and helping others express themselves creatively with their body movement has been the foundation of my life's work.

This project is the culmination of five years of Core Energetics Practitioner training and personal practice, informed by my dance and movement background. I noticed from my first Core Energetics session that Core theory and process overlapped with theoretical concepts from the Laban modality. Everything that had informed me prior to starting Core influenced my approach to my personal process and also how I work with clients.

This paper is written for Core Energetics and somatic practitioners who are interested in bringing more movement into their personal practice and client sessions. It is an overview of Laban/Bartiniëff Movement Studies (LBMS) with an emphasis on Space, and includes movement experiences that can be used for personal movement practice and with clients in sessions or process groups. The theory and exercises presented here are meant to deepen observation, and to provide tools for practitioners and clients to use movement to shift energy, clear blocks, and discover ease, freedom, and joy in their bodies.

LBMS is a very rich and complex modality that requires years of embodied study to fully integrate. What is presented here is a mere sliver of everything that is LBMS. If you are interested in learning more or engaging in further exploration with this material, I invite you to reach out to me for further study.

Movement Analysis in Core Energetics

Movement is foundational to life; our bodies are constantly in motion. Similar to our breath, body movement is both autonomic and within our conscious control. Each of us has a unique movement profile or signature, and certain aspects of our movement, such as our gait, are recognizable and can be reliably used to identify us (Reynolds). Our body movement reflects and communicates our inner world, often more honestly than we realize and without our conscious awareness. Childhood wounding and defensive armoring will show up in a client's movement, and a practitioner with some basic knowledge of movement analysis can use it to augment the information they get from the client's shape and holding patterns in body readings.

LBMS is a tool to discover meaning; movement patterns analyzed using LBMS techniques can reveal certain states of

consciousness. By observing a client in a stuck movement pattern, we may have a key to their state of mind. Core Energetics is about moving stuck energy in order to experience greater

I am a Choreographer

Words have never been adequately expressive to me. I have had, as long as I can remember, a deep need to show who I am on the inside by dancing. There



was something I couldn't say. It was in my body. I had to show it. I remember the day I realized that my dance teacher was just making up the steps she was teaching us. I had thought she was getting them from books or had learned them in dance teacher school. But as soon as I realized that she was thinking up the steps herself, on the spot, I thought, I want to do that! I want to be the one to come up with the steps to the dances!

My sisters and I started choreographing dances at home to songs on 45 rpm records, and performing them for each other. I had my choreographic debut to a real audience at age 11.

When I learned that there were theories about movement and in-depth knowledge about how it could be analyzed for its expressive qualities, I had a similar reaction to the moment I realized I could choreograph. I want to know that! I want to know *everything* about that! I want to unlock the secrets of movement for my dances! I want to know everything there is to know about how movement expresses.

I am passionate about this material. Movement is life. Dance is joy.

capacity to feel, love, and connect with others, and we use body movement to make that happen. In Core work, movement analysis can be a tool for deeply observing stuck energy patterns, and for creating effective movement interventions to help clients clear energetic blocks.

When we observe someone moving, we have a kinesthetic response that is activated by mirror neurons in our brains, and we can feel their movement in our own bodies even though we may not be moving ourselves. Movement is a universal medium for channeling empathy between human beings, therefore an ideal instrument to build a safe therapeutic container with new clients and to connect in community with a group we are leading. Movement analysis provides a basis of understanding the meaning and connection that we experience when we move together.

Laban/Bartiniéff movement analysis is a tool for discovering meaning in movement, and it provides a framework and a vocabulary for understanding and communicating without imparting judgement. It provides a way to articulate movement observation as a connection between the physical mover and their inner world, and a language for expressing the states of consciousness revealed through movement. It utilizes fairly neutral language that is easy to understand and is not jargon-like.

Movement is primal, authentic, and life affirming. Movement is an embodied expression of our energy, and can be used to unlock our defensive holding and lower-self numbness and blocks. Movement interventions can be a soft, gentle, subtle way to transform the energy of the lower self, perhaps more subtle and gentle than some Core Energetics hard techniques such as hitting a cube. Our movement is a deeply fundamental part of ourselves, and part of all life, and as such a direct connection to our core and higher self. Understanding the meaning in our movement and cultivating a purposeful movement practice can connect us to our core, our higher self, our divine nature, and to the collective of all that is.

Movement interventions are useful in sessions where physical contact with the client is not possible, such as remote sessions, with certain traumas, or if a client simply does not consent to being touched at that time. Movement invention does not require any special equipment. Where there is a body, and a little space, movement can be used to shift energy.

METHODOLOGY

The experiences and observations discussed in this project were explored within the Core Energetics training modules with classmates and with my clients in private sessions. I also offered a workshop about LBMS to a group of Core Energetics practitioners and solicited their feedback about how they might utilize the work.

As I was engaged in doing this project, it was impacting my life. Everything that happened to me, every feeling that I processed brought its own challenges that shaped my thoughts and my approach. The embodiment of my own feelings about the project and examining how they were reflected in my coping patterns were inevitable elements of my methodology.

DISCUSSION

An Overview of the Laban/BartiniEFF Movement System

LBMS is a codified system of movement analysis that examines movement on the levels of Body, Effort, Shape and Space¹ (BESS) in order to discover meaning. The system is named for its originator, Rudolph Laban who was an early 20th Century movement theorist. He planted seeds for many creative developments in the understanding of movement, including detailed systems of dance notation known as Labanotation, Motif Notation, and the Language of Dance.

¹ In order to distinguish Laban terminology from identical words in the English language, and in line with common practice in writing in the LBMS community, all LBMS terms are capitalized.

BESS = Body, Effort, Shape and Space

Body = sensing Effort = feeling Shape = intuiting Space = thinking

The analytic system of LBMS is organized into four major categories, Body, Effort, Shape and Space, abbreviated as BESS. LBMS also looks at phrasing, context, and major themes of Inner/Outer, Exertion/Recuperation, Function/Expression, and Mobility/Stability. The modality is extensive, complex and rich. For the purposes of this paper, an overview of BESS principles will be brief, with a focus on Laban's mapping of the body's movement in Space, and how awareness of Space can be useful in Core Energetics sessions.

Body

LBMS was formerly known as LMA or Laban Movement Analysis. Recently the contributions of Irmgard Bartineff were recognized as foundational to the way Laban's theories have evolved, thus the Laban community now includes her name in the name of the modality itself. Bartineff created a series of six exercises based on developmental movement principles that are known as Bartineff Fundamentals (BF) in order to illuminate the experience of the body in motion with an awareness of how and why it is moving (Studd and Cox). She was a physical therapist, and her work was largely about repatterning inefficient physical movements. Anatomy and physiology, developmental movement, body part symbols for notation, and BF comprise the Body category of LBMS.

Developmental movement and body organization ideas are extremely useful for observing, understanding and describing movement, and for using movement for transformation. Body organization, or body part connection are concepts that investigate how we hold an awareness of two body parts moving at once. We can apply that awareness to organize our movement for greater ease, flow, and sensation.

The head/tail connection is one example of such a body part connection. Our head and tail are said to be connected when we are aware of both ends of the spine moving in the same direction at the same time. Awareness of the head/tail connection is already part of the work in Core Energetics, we just do not use Laban terminology to describe it. When, for instance, we are trying to help a client hit the cube and we are asking them to coordinate a forward pelvic thrust as they bring the bataka down, we are observing their head/tail connection. Creating connection where there is disconnect is foundational movement work, common to both Core Energetics and LBMS.

For Core Energetics practitioners interested in an anatomical and developmental approach to movement, I highly recommend investigating Bartinieff's work.

Movement Experience: Spine Strength - Head/Tail Connection

This sequence brings awareness to the Vertical Axis by taking the spine through all of its anatomical actions, and by strengthening the head/tail connection. The Vertical Axis represents our ego strength, and our head/tail connection is important in forward movement. This exercise was designed to help bodies feel their strength in leadership.

Begin by coming down to the floor on hands and knees in tabletop position. A yoga mat can be folded over to provide some cushioning for the knees. Find the head/tail connection by dropping the head and the tail down and pulling the naval up towards the spine (cat posture in yoga). Then drop the belly down and lift the head, eyes and tail up (cow posture in yoga). Repeat several times, coordinating the head and tail moving together, and coordinating the breath with the movement.



Bring the spine to neutral position, and as if “wagging the tail” like a puppy, turn the tail to one side, and then look back towards it. Both the tail and the head are moving in the same direction, with lateral flexion in the spine on one side. Return to neutral, and “wag your tail” and look to the other side. Repeat a few times, coordinating the head and tail moving together, and coordinating the breath with the movement.

Explore the head/tail connection further by alternating these exercises. Begin in cat posture, then wag and look to one side, next cow posture, and wag and look to the other side. Continue this sequence until you can feel the head and the tail making circles together. Reverse the direction of the circle. Return to neutral spine.

Come to a seated position on the floor or a chair. Feel the spine long and aligned in the Vertical Axis. Be aware of any new sensations in your spine.

Allow a spinal twist to begin at the naval, turning it to face one side, then let the heart turn, then the shoulders, the head, then the eyes all twist to one side. Use your eyes and see as far behind you on that side as you can, creating a gentle twist in all parts of the spine. Keep the breath easy and loose. There is no need to use the hands and force the twist, allow the deep muscles of the torso to do the work. Stay for a breath or as long as it feels good, and as you rotate back to a forward-facing position, use your eye focus to see everything around you. See the room and what is in it, scanning as you untwist. Repeat the twist to the other side, seeing as far behind you in the other direction. Slowly return to a forward-facing position.

Check in with your body. How does your spine feel? Is there more awareness of your length and verticality? Do you feel more aligned in your Vertical Axis?

Effort

Effort in LBMS is the qualitative part of movement that shows the mover's inner intention. "Effort" is a problematic word because in English it implies hard work, or struggle, but in Laban terms it only refers to the quality of the movement.² Effort is another concept for energy, and as practitioners we are already noticing and using energy in Core Energetics. Some basic knowledge of Laban's Efforts might help practitioners articulate energetic elements they might be noticing in their clients' movements. Movement Effort is a rich playground for discovery and exploration into meaning making in movement. The following overview touches the surface of what these descriptors are and how they work to communicate the mover's intentions.

There are four Effort continuums and eight Basic Effort Actions (BEA). It is impossible to isolate a single BEA, they are most often seen in combinations of two BEAs, which we call Effort States, or three BEAs, which we call Drives. I include the names of them here not as a study, but to demonstrate their descriptive beauty, the neutrality of the language, the simplicity and complexity of the work, and the potential it has for meaning making and discovery.

Basic Effort Actions and their Meanings

Weight Effort

Light - floating away, head in the clouds, disassociating

Strong - more present and in touch with the earth

Answers the question Who?

Meaning: intention, sensing, ego, self, assertion

Space Effort

Direct - narrowing in, focusing on, protection, tuning out distraction

Indirect - seeing the bigger picture, taking in more information or points of view

Answers the question Where?

Meaning: thinking, attending

² Rudolph Laban's native tongue was German, therefore German is the source language for this theory.

Time Effort

Quick - becoming faster, more rushed, hurried, stressing, reacting

Sustained - slowing down, luxuriating

Answers the question When?

Meaning: commitment, intuiting

Flow Effort

Free - ongoing, uninhibited, giving into the flow of life, safe

Bound - careful, resisting ongoingness, holding back

Answers the question How?

Meaning: feeling, progression, control

Effort States**Effort Drives**

Awake - Space and Time

Dream - Weight and Flow

Remote - Space and Flow

Near/Rhythm - Time and

Weight

Stable - Space and Weight

Mobile - Time and Flow

Action Drive - Weight, Space and Time are present, Flow missing

Example: work actions, such as hammering a nail

Passion Drive - Weight, Time and Flow are present, Space missing

Example: throwing a tantrum

Spell Drive - Weight, Space and Flow are present, Time missing

Example: a hypnotic state

Vision Drive - Space, Time and Flow are present, Weight missing

Example: ballet dance

Most of our movement actions take place in Effort States, or in combinations of two qualities. Effort Drives are usually momentary and show more intense inner intentions. When we are observing our clients, we might notice a shift from an Effort State to an Effort Drive, and this would be a sign that something in their inner world changed. Check in with the client to see what might be happening to have caused the shift.

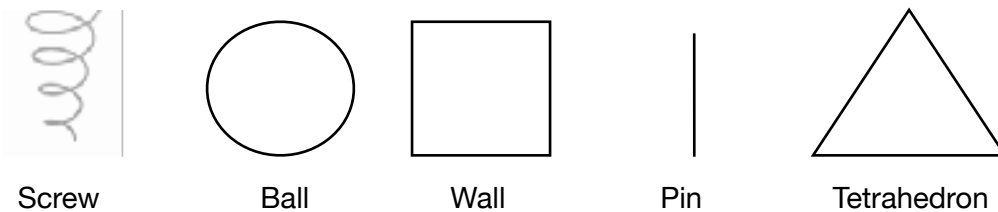
When we analyze movement Effort we also take into account the phrasing, order, and duration of how States and Drives present. The complexity of Effort analysis is beyond this study, but the ideas are presented here as an overview and to inspire further investigation.

Shape

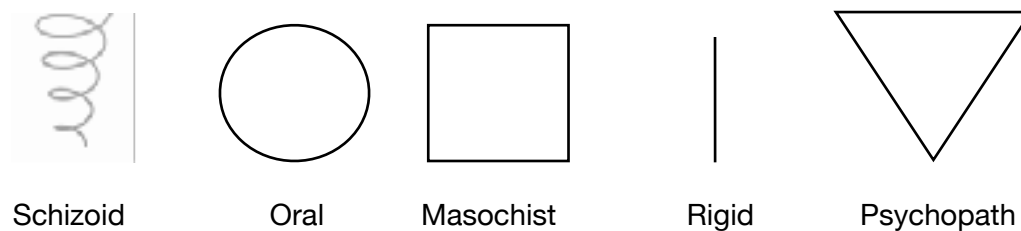
One aspect of Shape as a category of LBMS are five Still Forms which we use to analyze Body Attitudes. Body Attitudes investigate the way a mover habitually holds their body in

movement and stillness and this element of LBMS is very much like body reading in Core Energetics.

Still Shapes or Shape Forms may be useful in discovering characterology. There are five Still Shapes/Shape Forms and they are known as Wall, Ball, Pin, Screw, and Tetrahedron (a type of pyramid).



If we flip the tetrahedron, Laban's still forms could be a shorthand for character defenses in Core Energetics.



These ideas require further exploration, but what I have found useful is to think of them as a shorthand link between LBMS and Core characterology. In my work with clients, I notice that Shape Forms do not always appear in the client's body, but they might show up in their story or presenting issue, and so I consider the shape of the actual issue, matching typical characterological issues to Shape Forms. For example, a Rigid who is experiencing blocks might have a story about how they are stuck between two options, showing me with their gestures that one option is on one side and the other option is on the other side. I see the split they are expressing as a Pin Shape, where in Core Energetics we would say they have a right/left energy split. A masochistic problem for example may be causing a stubborn, wall-like stance or attitude.

The Shape of My Orality

I experience my own orality as round and soft on the outside but hollow within, like the Ball Shape, and in fact only generally round-ish, but actually more amoeba-like with ineffective, undercharged, flabby, impermeable boundaries. Its texture is soft, dense, and thick. Either nothing gets in, or everything does.

I had such an amazing 2019, accomplishing so many of my goals. I made a life-changing decision to have Lipedema surgery on my legs and opened a Facebook fundraiser to raise over \$9000 for my uncovered expenses. The first round of surgery in November was miraculous, and it gave me my life back. I had so much hope. I was in Core 5, feeling confident and at home in my new class. I was SPINNING, doing pirouettes, and chaîné turns. I felt great.

Then, boom, 2020. Four days in, I was called home to say goodbye to my father who died shortly after I arrived. He waited for me. That experience shook me, and the week I spent with my family of origin in my childhood home was disorienting. It brought up old feelings and activated young wounds.

My changing body shape was destabilizing. My first round of surgery had removed the Lipedema fat from my lower legs and I was almost comically top heavy. I was the perfect shape for spinning, but it didn't take much to knock me over. My dad's death, the constant negative energetic undertones in my childhood home, and an uncharacteristic phone call from my ex-husband did the trick. I fell over, and I couldn't get back up. I was stuck on my back like a turtle.

Well, I'm a fifth year Core Energetics practitioner, movement expert, and somatic healer, let me take my own medicine, I thought. What do I need here? Well, I needed my verticality back, for one. In my movement practice, I found vertical alignment, lifting and dropping my weight down into my legs. I did lots of squats and chair posture, various pliés and tried out my new legs. I sent energy down to counteract the physical imbalance of upper displacement I was experiencing.

I became aware of my soft squishy outer shell and my hollow insides. Orality. My physical boundary felt soft, swollen, and cumbersome. It was a barrier around a hollow hole of need, so much need inside, an endless black hole of need. But nothing could get through the thick sticky marshmallow shell of my oral exterior.



Using spoking gestures with my arms, I reached out, as far as my gestures could reach, trying to reach beyond the edge of my Kinesphere/aura to break through my gooey outer boundary and grasped, pulled in, all the way in to my core. I told myself, "I can reach out, I can ask, I can receive, I can bring things in, all the way in to my core, and to my heart, so I can feel it here, inside, where it's hollow." I remembered the important part of my 2019 journey when I reached out on Facebook and asked for help and received what I needed.

These spokes counteract the soft, round, hollow, unstable oral structure with a kind of scaffolding. By looking at my emotional issue in terms of Shape, and Space, I could connect to a movement solution that was a mantra during a destabilizing time.

Their body may not actually be wall shaped, but their attitude and energy are.

When these forms show up in the client's story, movement, or energy, we can bring in movement experiences that counteract the energy of the shape. For example, we could use movements for Schizoid that organize their energy from a three-dimensional spiral into one or two dimensional movement - the Vertical Axis, or the Vertical or Sagittal Plane. Another example is for the upper-displaced Psychopath, we can bring the energy down. These are concepts we are already aware of in Core Energetics translated it into LBMS using a visual shorthand. In the case of the Pin Shaped Rigid, Diagonal movement might incorporate splits, and for the Wall-Shaped Masochist, twisting the spine could loosen their shape and move the stubborn energy.

Movement Experience: A Dance for Orals

This experience strengthens the architecture of the relationship between the Body and Space by building a scaffolding of movement that connects Inner to Outer.

Begin standing with the feet comfortably shoulder distance or closer. Soften the knees and feel the body in Vertical Alignment and take a few breaths.

Create a boundary by exploring the inside of the Kinesphere. Use your arms, hands, and arcing movements to touch as much of your Kinesphere as you can reach. Turn your body around and create a boundary.

Enliven the Vertical Axis by bringing the hands together at the heart, bend and straighten the knees a few times. Keep the knees aligned over the toes, comfortably, and the legs not too wide. Reach the hands up over the head, connect to the divine. Bring the hands together back down the front of the body, all the way down and touch the ground if that feels comfortable. Say, "I connect to the divine, I connect to the earth."

Using your hands, both at once, or one at a time, reach out as far as you can without moving your stance. Reach out beyond the edge of the Kinesphere/aura, and use your gestures to grab and pull the energy back in towards you. Bring the gesture in to your solar plexus or heart chakra, or any chakra that needs the energy. What is important is to reach very far out, and bring the energy into yourself and all the way into your body.

Alternate reaching out using spoking and gathering gestures, and connecting to the Vertical, repeat it in rhythm. Reach out, bring it in (to the core), take the hands up together, connect to the divine, and then down, touching the floor if that feels good. Repeat, reaching in all directions, out, in, up, down, affirming, “I can reach out, I can receive³, I connect to the divine, I connect to the earth.” Out and in, up and down. Repeat, repeat, repeat.

End the dance by feeling the boundary around you again, bring the hands to the body. Feel the energy streaming, notice what has changed. Feel your body within your aura, feel the boundary outside of you. Settle here. Discharge in waterfall if needed.

Space

*“Space is a hidden feature of movement, and movement is a visible aspect of space.”
- Rudolph Laban*

Using platonic solids and golden ratio mathematics, Laban mapped human body movement in relationship to the Space surrounding it, which he called the Kinesphere. LBMS is the only somatic modality that utilizes an organized system of Spatial concepts. Other somatic modalities, including Core Energetics, are primarily focused on going inward. Attention to Space as a connection between our inner and outer worlds is in part what makes LBMS a unique somatic practice. (Studd and Cox).

³ Affirmations inspired by Lisa Loustenou

Space holds inherent messages that we can easily observe in our clients' posture and movements, and these concepts are easy to understand, adapt, communicate, and implement in Core Energetics sessions. Space helps us look at ourselves in relationship with our surroundings, and brings awareness that helps us organize our environment and our lives. Where we move our bodies in space creates boundaries, connections, extensions and possibilities - all of which has significance (Studd and Cox).

We begin by classifying Space into the Vertical, Horizontal, and Sagittal. When we use these terms, they can refer to one-dimensional axes, or two-dimensional movement planes.

Vertical = Grounding

Horizontal = Presence-ing

Sagittal = Mobilizing

Vertical

The Vertical Axis runs up and down through the center of our body, from head to feet and beyond, infinitely in both directions. The Vertical Axis is aligned with our ego and our sense of self. It is an important part of our relationship with gravity and physical stability in a standing position. Our Vertical Axis is part of our head/tail connection, which is an important Body concept for mobility.

The Vertical Plane contains the dimensions of Vertical and Horizontal. It is sometimes called the Door Plane, or the Plane of presentation. If you imagine yourself standing in the shape of an X in a doorway with your hands reaching for the upper corners and your feet open towards the lower corners, you are standing in your Vertical Plane. Since the Vertical is about self and ego, and the Horizontal is about attending to space, movement in this Plane expresses "who and where." To stand in our Vertical Plane is a physical statement of "I'm here."

Movement Experience: The Vertical Plane - I'm here!

Stand with feet together, or as close as possible. Bring the hands together above the crown of the head. Feel the connection through your crown to the divine. Feel a line of energy coming from above and running through the Vertical Axis of your body, dropping down into the earth beneath your feet. Feel yourself in this realm in connection with both what is solid and real in this world and what is above and beyond. Gently bounce and feel your own self in the up-and-down of your Vertical Axis.

Open your feet and arms so that you are standing in your Vertical Plane in an X shape. Imagine you are standing in a doorway with your arms reaching up to the high corners of the doorway and your feet to the bottom corners. Keep your eyes open, and feel if opening your arms and legs makes you more aware of your surrounding space. Allow yourself to spread and feel the length and breadth of your physical presence. Stand strong in your Vertical Plane and say, "I'm here!"

End the exercise by bringing your feet together with hands in prayer position at the heart. Feel yourself present on the ground and supported by the divine. Feel if the exercise brought you more into yourself in the present moment.

Wall Shape: Stuck in the Vertical Plane

A mover stuck in the Vertical Plane may have a strong ego but be unable to move forward. This Plane does not have access to forward and backward movement, only mainly up-and-down with some right-left, side-to-side action available. They may have a Wall Shape appearance, or be putting up an energetic wall. The Vertical Plane is very presentational and the mover might be in their mask, presenting only the front part of themselves.

A movement intervention for Wall Shape is to bring gentle twisting of the upper body against the lower, encouraging gesturing across the center line of the body. Twisting the spine brings awareness and movement to frozen places in the trunk and encourages the mover to turn their head and look around to see that other options exist. They can then begin to ease into the process of moving forward or backward from their stuck place.

Movement Experience: Arm Circles to Open the Heart to the Side

When we think about a movement to open our hearts, typically that brings to mind a Sagittal Plane action. We bring the chest forward pulling both shoulders back at once, spreading the arms and courageously opening forward, leading with our hearts. We might also open the heart by going into a backward bend, which can bring up a fear of falling into the space behind our bodies, our Back Space. The Back Space is full of unknown and hidden things. Heart opening in the Sagittal Plane requires courage, vulnerability, and commitment.

The following exercise is a different way to open the heart. It uses spinal rotation, twisting the upper body against the lower to open the chest and shoulders more gently to the side, one side at a time, without forward commitment or backward bending. This experience is meant to be a gradual and supported heart opening.

Begin standing or seated in a chair or on the floor. Take a moment to ground your lower body by taking a few breaths and feeling your legs and pelvis relax, allowing your weight to drop down into your lower body.

Place one hand on your heart, take a breath in and out. Bring the other arm straight out in front of you, and direct your eye focus to your outstretched hand. Keeping the arm long, straight, without locking the elbow, lift the arm up overhead and begin to circle it up and then back behind you, allowing the shoulder to move with the arm and create a gentle twist of the

upper body against the lower body. Continue the circle by bringing the arm down to your side, and then forward again. Use eye tracking and track the hand with your vision, this will help the head and the spine to rotate. Keep the lower body strong and grounded, do not let the hips enter into the twist. If that means that you are not able to reach back very far behind you when you go to the back, that is okay. Feel into any uncomfortable places, but do not force the movement. It is not important that you reach a certain shape or position; honor your body. Carry the whole shoulder along with the arm so that you create twist as you experience the chest opening on one side.

If you encounter a tight place as you circle the arm and shoulder, pause there. Use the hand that is on your heart to soften the front of the chest from the heart to the shoulder and into the armpit, encouraging the muscle and connective tissue fibers to soften and to relax. Keep the breath easy, and with each inhalation and exhalation allow more space to be created. Send breath, compassion, and love to any tight places. Be patient, and if any feelings come up be present with them. You can repeat this side again as many times as you like.

Change arms when one side feels complete. Notice if one side feels different than the other. Finish the exercise by centering in a neutral position, discharge in waterfall if needed.

Horizontal

The Horizontal Axis runs through the center of the body from side to side, its two directions being right and left. The Horizontal Plane is sometimes called the table plane, or the plane of communication. This plane divides our upper and lower bodies, and has a secondary Sagittal, or forward and backward spatial pull. Movement in this plane holds meaning related to “where” and “when.”

The Horizontal axis is about gathering information and weighing options. If you see your client moving side to side they may be in an either/or position and possibly experiencing black/white thinking. The Horizontal Plane is important for scanning the horizon and spinning. When we are in a Core Energetics Process Group and our leader tells us to look around the room and notice the people with us, we scan the faces in the room in a Horizontal Plane motion. This action, and movement in this plane, brings us into presence.



The Horizontal Plane

Image: Laban

Movement Experience: The Horizontal Plane

Sit comfortably in a chair with your feet planted on the floor. Twist from the waist up to the left, take your gaze behind you as far as you can without allowing your hips to be involved in the twist. See with your eyes as far behind you as you can. Slowly, and remembering to breathe comfortably in and out as you do this, slowly twist all the way around as far as you can to the right.

As you slowly twist to the other side, use your eyes and scan the room around you. Really see what is in your space. When using this intervention with a client, you can ask them to name the things they see as they go around the room. ‘I see the wall. I see the lamp. I see a photograph on the wall,’ etc. Make certain that you are using your eye focus to attend to Space. Return to neutral spine.

What do you notice about your body in your space? Do you feel more present? What has changed?

Spinning

Spinning is an action that happens in the Horizontal Plane. If we think about spinning metaphorically, we might notice that there are times when we are spinning emotionally or mentally, and that spinning has the same energy as a physical spin. Sometimes spinning might feel good, and some structures seem to be physically set up as natural spinners. Rigid characterology might show up as Pin Shape, with a strong ego strength and harmonious physicality, centered on the Vertical Axis, with balanced right and left sides. Since the Horizontal Plane actually rotates around the Vertical Axis, vertical alignment with even right/left balance makes for easy spinning.

A spin might become dysfunctional if we get stuck in a decision process, or we become too busy with too many options and too much to do. We keep turning around and around looking for and grasping for the next thing, and we get stuck in a pattern of doing things, but not actually going anywhere. Whether the spin is our natural pattern or not, we may be unable to move forward, or we might be knocked off center and send the spin spiraling out of control, or fall down, like I did when my father died.

Intervening in a Spin

If our client is stuck in a spin, we can use movement to bring them out of the Horizontal into the Vertical or Sagittal Plane (do they need to ground? or mobilize?) or into diagonals (do they need wholeness, to integrate splits?) Diagonals and three dimensional movement will be presented later in this paper. The following sequence uses movement in the Vertical Plane to bring grounding and presence, and to counteract the Horizontal Plane action of spinning.

Movement Experience: Vertical Plane Sequence

Begin standing with feet together and hands at the sides, and take a few breaths, feeling yourself aligned in your Vertical Axis. Feel your connection to the ground through your feet. Bring the hands together at the heart, and slowly slide them up the body towards the sky, and holding the palms together over the head, connect to the divine, to universal oneness.

Open the arms and legs to an easy X shape. Keep the breath easy, and feel yourself in the here and now. Say, "I'm here!" Repeat this affirmation if you like, until you feel grounded and present. With the feet slightly out-rotated, begin bending and straightening the knees and elbows, bringing them towards one other, coordinating the breath, taking your own timing. As your joints warm up, you can go a little deeper, sweeping the arms fully out to the sides and down, as if you are scooping something up from the ground as you drop down and forward, and then sweeping them open and up over head as you straighten the legs and back.



Side Angle Posture

Return to your X. Rotate the right foot open towards the right side, and bend the right knee. Tip the torso over towards your bent right leg in a side angle posture, with the right hand or elbow resting on the knee or thigh. Keep the left arm reaching out from your shoulder, towards the ceiling.

Take a few breaths here. Feel that you are flat in this posture, with little to no forward movement, everything is in this sequence is flat, Wall Plane. After a few breaths, return to your X and rotate the right leg back to parallel with the toes facing comfortably forward/slightly out-rotated. Bend the knees and ankles again a few times, and return to the X repeating the affirmation, "I'm here," before rotating the left foot out to the side, and easing into a gentle side

angle posture on the left side. Keep the eyes forward the whole time, since this exercise is about feeling strong in the vertical plane.

Return to your X, repeat the sequence again, if you like.

If your body is warm, and you would like to go further, you can include half moon posture in the sequence by straightening the front leg, reaching down towards the floor, and



Half Moon Posture

lifting the back leg off the floor. Holding onto a chair or a wall for balance is fine. You can set up a chair, table, or yoga block on both sides of you so you have somewhere to put your hand on each side without stopping the sequence to make adjustments. The exercise is not about balancing in the posture, but rather about feeling the flatness of the Vertical Plane.

The complete sequence is as follows: X, elbow and knee flexion, turn the right foot out, lunge into side angle, shift the weight forward and straighten the leg for half moon, return to side angle, return to X with feet parallel, and, repeat on the other side.

Continue to monitor your pace and breath, taking the timing that feels right and safe for you. When you feel complete, return to your X, bring the feet together and hands to the heart, and check in with your body and feelings.

Sagittal

The Sagittal Axis intersects with the Vertical and Horizontal axes traveling from the front to the back. The Sagittal Axis is about commitment and intuition, choosing to go towards or back away; we advance or retreat. Sagittal Plane movement is mainly along the Sagittal Axis with a secondary Vertical pull. This Plane is known as the Wheel Plane, or the “Plane of Operations.” It is associated with intuition and commitment, and is plane that we are moving in if we do a forward roll, or a back handspring. If you have ever attempted either of those maneuvers, you are

well aware of the element of physical commitment involved in their successful completion.

Movement in this plane holds meaning related to “who” and “when.”

If we are stuck in a Sagittal pattern, we might move forward as if with blinders on, very direct forward or backward motion. This might describe a typical Type A (perhaps psychopathic) personality that is very goal- and action-oriented and decisive. These personalities might be great leaders that can think on their feet and are excellent in crisis situations due to their reflexive decision making abilities. They might also withdraw and withhold in relationships, moving straight backward without considering other possibilities that would require Horizontal awareness. There is a black-and-white quality of being “all in” or “all out.” A Sagittal pattern can be functional or dysfunctional, or it may serve us for a time, and then we burn out, or our relationships suffer from it.

Laban associated movement qualities (Efforts) with Spatial movement patterns. These associations are known as Affinities, and when they happen we say they are Affined. For example, when we move up, it is usually with Lightness, and when we move down, it is usually with Strength. We already are aware of this Affinity in Core Energetics, but we use different language. When we notice a client’s energy, attention, or body moving upward and becoming lighter, we might think that they may be dissociating, and we may intervene by helping them become more grounded, pressing down on their shoulders or head, or by having them make downward movements with strength, such as stomping on the floor, or dropping their weight down in a squat. Notice that these movements happen on the Vertical Plane, the “I’m here!” Plane.

The Sagittal Plane is Affined with Time Effort. What that means is that Advancing forward and Retreating backward are often done with attention to how quickly or slowly we do

those movements. Laban said that we most often Advance with Sustainment (slowly), and that we would normally back away with Quickness. He was developing his theories in the early 1900's in Europe, a completely different time and place than what we are living in now. Is it a modern-day Affinity to more commonly move forward with Quickness and backward with Sustainment in our movement patterns? Let us explore this movement and its Affined qualities and see what our bodies tell us.

Movement Experience: Advancing and Retreating with Quickness and Sustainment

Find a space where you have the freedom to move forward and backward. See the space in front of you, and begin slowly advancing. Pretend you have blinders on and forward and backward are the only directions to go. When you have gone forward slowly as far as you can or want to, retreat by walking backward quickly. Pause, take a breath and notice what you feel.

Now try the opposite. Look ahead of you, move directly forward with quickness. When you arrive, stop, and slowly back away. When you return to your starting position, pause, take a breath, and notice what you feel.

How did it feel to advance and retreat? Did it feel different to move in these different patterns? What felt comfortable, like it might be your normal pattern? What is significant to you about that? Did any of it felt awkward? Did any feelings come up?

One Dimensional Movement in Space - Axis Scale

Laban created movement scales, similar to musical scales, that consist of sequences of movements expressing directions and points in the Kinesphere. The most basic of these scales is the Dimensional or Axis Scale. This scale illuminates movement along the Vertical, Horizontal and Sagittal Axes in a specific order. Movement scales can be quite complex expressing the incredibly intricate golden ratio geometry of Laban's Space Harmony. I recommend deeper study

of Space Harmony and movement scales for anyone interested in exploring complex geometric shapes and patterns with their body.

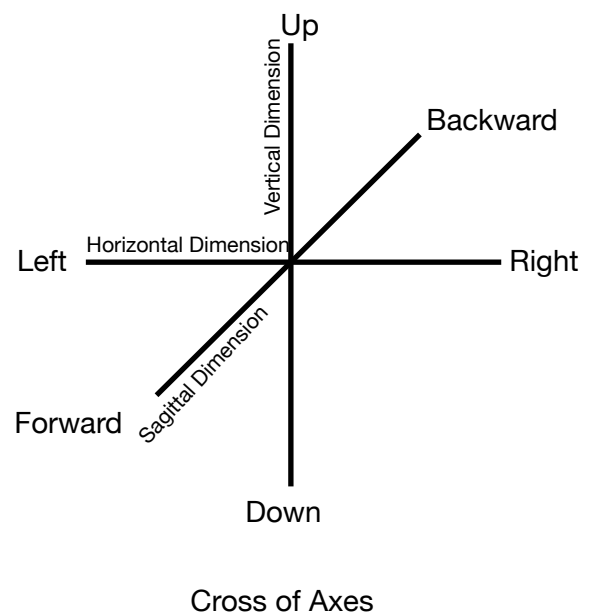
Qualities of Laban's Cross of Axes

There is inherent beauty and simple meaning in the basic movement pattern and neutral language of the Dimensional Scale. The axes of these three dimensions build an energetic scaffolding within the Kinesphere. By tracing these imaginary spatial constructs, our bodies can be supported by Space, in Space. Aligning in space with intention to the relevant meanings of each axis articulates relationship between our inner and outer worlds. The Dimensional Cross of Axes is a very stable form and movement along this scale can be grounding, presence-ing, and mobilizing. Practicing this scale is an elegant experience with the potential of connecting to emotional, spiritual and intellectual parts of ourselves through purposefully patterned movement.

Movement Experience: Laban's Dimensional Scale

To perform an Axis or Dimensional scale, we explore each dimension by moving along each axis in the following order: UP, DOWN, SIDE ACROSS, SIDE OPEN, BACKWARDS, FORWARDS.

Choose either the right or left hand to lead (it will matter most along the horizontal axis). Because we are moving along a one dimensional line, and our bodies are not truly capable of one dimensional movement, starting with the right hand and using the hand to follow each axis is a good way to start. This scale can



also be done using other body parts, or our eye focus, our core, or just our energy with intention. Scales are meant to be a tool for exploration.

Begin by taking the right hand up along the vertical axis. Allow your body and core energy to follow. Experience going UP. When you have gone as far as you can, using the right hand, follow the vertical axis down with your hand, as far as you can or as far as feels comfortable.

Return to your starting position. If you started by using the right hand, begin by going to the left side. If you started with the left hand, then you would start by exploring the horizontal axis to the right. The correct sequence would be to go SIDE ACROSS, then SIDE OPEN.

Return to your starting position and find the Sagittal Axis. This axis is a line going through the center of your body from front to back at waist level. Bring your hand to your belly, and imagine the line going forward and backwards through you. Let your core retreat backward, rounding the spine and taking a few backward steps, then let your energy and your movement follow this line forward in space.

Repeat the sequence with the other hand. Allow yourself to explore each axis, up and down the Vertical, side across and side open for the Horizontal, and backward and forward on the Sagittal. Allow your body and energy to follow the hand and the line of the movement, let the movement get bigger if that feels good. Let go of the idea of lines and just follow the directions in order. Change sides and repeat several times, finding flow. Laban's sequencing of the scale, Vertical, Horizontal, and Sagittal was purposeful. What do you notice? Does the sequence feel right to you?

What comes up for you as you repeat the exercise? Does leading with one side or the other feel more comfortable, more awkward? How is it for you to follow a prescribed sequence?

Do you find it constrictive, or freeing? Is there room in this exercise for you to explore your movement?

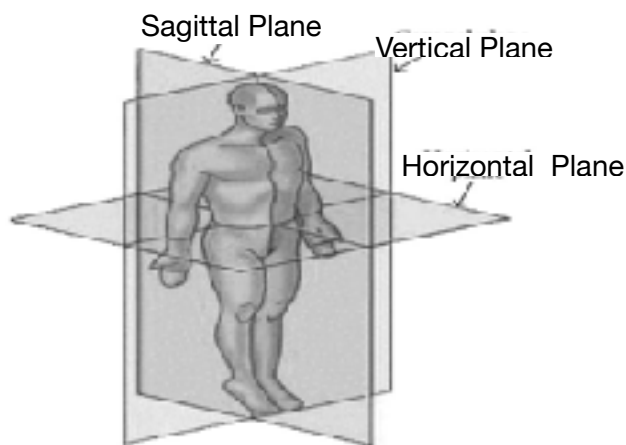
Vertical, Horizontal, Sagittal

Vertical = Grounding

Horizontal = Presence

Sagittal = Mobilize

Laban's sequencing of the Axis Scale is elegantly logical considering the meanings present in the Vertical, Horizontal, and Sagittal. First we must ground in ourselves, aligning our



ego/spine/posture, connecting from the top of our heads to our feet and beyond (Vertical). Next we find our presence in our surroundings, scanning the horizon and seeing all the options available to us (Horizontal). Then, grounded and present, we can take action and mobilize forward or backward (Sagittal).

An attendee in my workshop noted that they were often in the Sagittal Plane in their own movements, and that they chose Sagittal interventions like hitting the cube, or rolling on the roller with their clients. Sagittal movement seems easy to access, it feels confident and decisive to make a snap decision and go with it. Many of our Core Energetics techniques to move energy are mobilizing, and utilize movement in this plane.

Consider if it is a pattern to (metaphorically or actually) sidestep the Horizontal Plane action of looking around at our options before mobilizing forward or backward. The Sagittal Plane is associated with intuition. If I decide to move forward or back away (Sagittal) without looking around to investigate what is around me (Horizontal) then what is my decision based on?

Is it an intuitive choice, or motivated by something else? Sometimes we have to make decisions without knowing everything there is to know, we “leap before we look,” but that is not a healthy approach to every decision. There is meaning and information in how we access the Sagittal. Do we just go? Or do we look around first? Do we consider other options, or do we only see in binary? Noticing how we access the Sagittal Dimension may provide insight into our state of consciousness when making decisions.

Taking a Horizontal scan before a Sagittal intervention or movement may allow us to take a pause, to become more present in our surroundings, and to bring more mindfulness to our decisions to mobilize.

Movement Experience: Move on 45

This is a quick movement sequence that has the structure of Vertical, Horizontal, Sagittal.

Our brains need a 15 minute break every hour in order to function at optimal attention (Carnegie). We also know that sitting in a chair for long periods of time has multiple ill effects on our health (Edward R. Laskowski). I like to get up at 45 minutes after the hour, you can also set a timer for 45 minutes to remind yourself to get up and move. Here is a movement routine that takes less than five minutes to do.

Begin by standing up out of your chair and shaking out the arms and legs. Stand with arms open above the head and legs comfortably shoulder width, body in a big “I’m here!” X. Bend the hips, knees, and ankles, bending the elbows down towards the knees. Breathe deeply timing the breath with the movement, exhaling as you bend down and inhaling as you come up. Repeat several times, going deeper if that feels okay.

Come back to the X, and explore the Vertical Plane, reaching up to the upper corners of the Plane, going side to side working down the sides of the plane, alternating right and left until

you get to the bottom corners. Then, go back to the top and begin again this time reaching across the Plane with the right hand to the upper left corner, alternating left hand to upper right corner, and twisting side to side, reaching across the body, working your way down the Vertical Plane to the bottom corners.

Keeping the legs about shoulder width apart, pivot both feet to face the right wall. You are now in the Sagittal Plane with one foot forward and one back. Bend the front knee keeping the back leg straight, bring both hands up overhead, and then fold the hands behind the head. Open the elbows, open the chest. Hold for 3-5 breaths. Be sure to keep the pelvis tucked so that the hip flexors in the front of the hip can stretch. These muscles become overly tight when we sit in chairs for too long. Lengthen the lower back and tuck the pelvis under to release the hip flexor. Release the hands, pivot the toes to face the front, then the left, bend the left knee in a lunge and keep the back leg straight, reach up and fold the hands behind the head again. Open the shoulders, chest, drop into the lunge and tuck the pelvis forward to feel the stretch in the front of the hip. Breathe, let the hip flexors release.

Release the hands and shift the toes back to the front wall. Repeat the lunge on each side, going a little deeper this time. Finish by bringing the feet together and returning to your chair.

Two Dimensional Movement

Our personal movement signatures are largely two-dimensional; we live in the Vertical, Horizontal and Sagittal Planes. Each Plane holds inherent meaning, and so can reveal a mover's state of consciousness and offer insight about where they might be stuck. Two Dimensional movement is a doorway into the mover's state of mind, and can also be used as a tool for constructing purposeful interventions to help shift energetic patterns. If we can see our client

stuck in a Plane, we can help shift their energy by moving them into a different Plane, or into one- or three-dimensional movement.

Three Dimensional Movement

Movement along a straight line, a Vertical, Horizontal, or Sagittal Axes, has only one spatial pull and is considered one-dimensional. Movement in a Plane has two spatial pulls, therefore is referred to as two-dimensional. A Diagonal has three spatial pulls and therefore is three-dimensional.

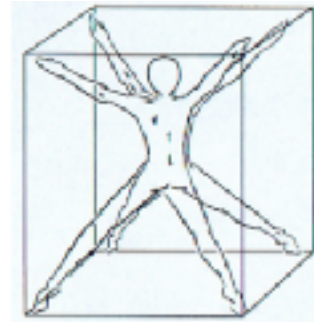
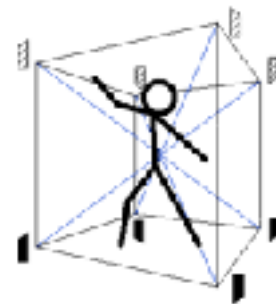


Image Credit: Choreutics

We find Diagonals in Space by imagining ourselves standing in the center of a cube. The corners of the cube represent equal spatial pulls between three directions of the axis scale, Up, Forward, and Side Left, for example, would have a diagonal pull to Left Forward High. There are four Diagonals reaching from each corner of the cube and intersecting in the center of the body.

- Left Forward High to Right Back Low
- Right Forward High to Left Back Low
- Left Back High to Right Forward Low
- Right Back High to Left Forward Low



Diagonals in Space with Labanotation symbols
(Double click for animation).

We can face one wall of the room and imagine the corners of the room as end points for the Diagonals. We can play with Diagonals from a standing or seated position, reaching arms and legs to opposite corners. We can practice a Diagonal Scale by using one hand to trace the diagonal lines as far as we can in space, like we did with the Axis Scale. Moving through the diagonals in this way creates an opening and closing in the body, crossing of the body's midline,

necessitates flexion and extension in our joints, twisting in the spine, and multiple changes of visual focus.

A Diagonal through the body is a sensory tool useful for addressing holding patterns caused by energetic splits. All character defenses can experience splits. If a body has an upper/lower split, a right/left split, or a front/back split, we can break through the spatial barriers created by those splits by moving our bodies through Diagonals. Diagonals can cross the planes of multiple splits at once, enabling integration and feelings of wholeness.

Movement Experience: Diagonal X-Rolls

Begin by lying on the floor on your back in a big X, legs open comfortably and arms extended diagonally from the shoulders. Feel the diagonal pulls between opposite hands and feet, be aware of one diagonal and then the other.

Slide the right hand across the front of the chest to the left shoulder, and down the arm to the left hand. Keep the right leg on diagonal stretched and long and allow the right shoulder to come off the floor and the spine to twist to reach this position. Stay connected through the torso and be aware that the lower back may want to collapse into an arch and break the energy. Keep the spine long but allow it to rotate. Feel the energy of the stretch diagonally through the body. Relax in the stretch as much as possible.

Keep the breath flowing throughout the exercise. Slowly slide the right hand back down the arm and across the chest and open back up to the X. After a breath or two begin with the left hand and slide it across the chest to the right shoulder, down the arm to the right hand. Relax here, feeling the diagonal pulls in the torso. After a few breaths, return to your X, and feel what has shifted in the body and awareness.

Repeat the exercise, this time starting in the lower body. Beginning from the X shape, bring one leg across to meet the other and then cross over, allowing the hips to rotate. Keep the arms high in the X. Allow the knees to bend, and with the hips drop over to one side. Keep the spine long and avoid breaking in the lower back. Feel a diagonal pull from the top leg through the torso, up to the outstretched hand.

Keep the breath relaxed and allow yourself to feel the diagonal pulls across the body. Let the energy flow, nothing should be painful, breathe and gently stretch. After a few breaths return to the center X and repeat starting with the other leg. Relax into the shape and do not force the body. Bring a gentle stretch and feel the diagonal pulls through the torso, hips and shoulders. Return to the X shape.

Roll to one side, stay for a few breaths, and sit up slowly. Allow any feelings or shifts that came up to integrate. Take time to feel any shifts in perspective you may have experienced, or to presence any feeling or awareness that might have come up.

Rotation

Rotation is the most developmentally advanced movement to which our bodies have access. There is a developmental progression from simple to complex as we move through one, two and then three dimensional movement. Diagonals in Space are the basis of three dimensional movement and the entry point for our capacity for rotation.

Rotation is desirable in movement interventions because it breaks stuck patterning and creates cross lateral connections. Rotation is also inherently beautiful, expressive, and enjoyable. When we rotate, we change our perspective. We can create a circle, a sphere, form a boundary or a container. We can spiral, coil, or twist. We can physically participate in metaphors - taking a turn, turning it over in our minds, beating around the bush, rolling with the punches. Only three

dimensional movement allows us to accommodate others by shaping, molding, or wrapping around one another (Studd and Cox).

Consider the following when creating movement experiences: do you/your client need grounding and stability? If so, Dimensions are good interventions. Are you/they stuck in a spin, or planar movement? Try switching planes - Vertical to ground, Horizontal to see options, or Sagittal to encourage a decision and to mobilize change. Do you/they need to move through stuck patterns, or integrate split parts of themselves? If so then try a Diagonal. But consider where you/your client is in the moment and what will bring their body, energy, and consciousness into alignment.

- Dimensions (Cross of Axis) - grounding and stable
- Planes (Vertical, Horizontal, Sagittal) - less stable but more mobile than planes
- Diagonal - most unstable and most mobile, most active

Practical Steps for Bringing (More) Movement Into Your Client Sessions

1) Set the Space for Movement

If you are interested in bringing movement to your practice, set your space accordingly. Do not overload it with furniture, and what furniture you do have keep against the walls with open space in the middle. A nice, soft, clean carpet will invite your clients to the floor. Keep the lighting low, set the energy with ritual and aroma. Energize the space by doing your own movement practice there.

I have encountered little client resistance to movement, perhaps because I present myself as a former dancer and yoga instructor, movement expert and somatic practitioner. But my space is what truly calls people to be comfortable doing bodywork and movement in sessions. When people enter my office, they remove their shoes without being asked, and they seem to be called to sit or lie on the floor. This is true even when I use my office for professional meetings, not just

session work. If you want to incorporate more movement, arrange and energize your space for movement.

2) Establish Trust

Your relationship with your client is the foundation of your work together; meeting them where they are is absolutely fundamental (Loustenau). Before you do any movement, complete a thorough intake process including questions about any physical limitations they have. Get to know your client, their history, their ego strength; who they are through deep listening and connecting. Build a trusting therapeutic container before you attempt a movement experience, and bring movement into the session if and only if it is in service to your client's highest good. Avoid having an agenda that may hurt your client. Even as a movement expert I do not use movement in every single session. There are many times when the client does not get up off of the couch and that is okay.

3) Observe Movement

A client told me that when I analyzed their movement that it felt like "deep listening." Observe the client when they are speaking, keeping your observations simple; the first thing you notice is probably the most important. Use your observations to inform you about the client in that moment or their patterns over time.

4) Always Get Consent

Movement is a tool among many other therapeutic tools that we have. When we use it we cannot plan for how the energy will move and what is going to happen, exactly, so let the client know that you are on a journey of discovery together, and that they can stop at any time. You can also change the experience mid-stream if it does not resonate.

5) Respect Physical Limitations

Trust your client's knowledge about their own body, pain, and limitations. A movement experience should not be a workout; we are not pushing our clients to do more than they think they can, as if they are at the gym. We are not trying to fix anything about their body, rehabilitate injuries, or build physical fitness. Movement experiences in Core Energetics are not meant to be corrective, they should feel good. Nothing should hurt, and everything can be modified to be comfortable and pleasurable. "No Pain, No Gain" is not a helpful approach.

Be aware of your judgements and assumptions about body size, fitness, and capabilities. You cannot tell by looking at someone's body how well they can perform any physical action.

The ultimate purpose of a movement experience is to bring awareness to new sensations in the body. with new patterning and increased energy flow, and then to observe and support what comes up in the client's awareness, just like any other Core Energetics intervention.

6) Use Neutral Language

If you choose to share observations with a client, such as in a body reading, use neutral language. Start by saying what you are observing, and not what you think it means. "You look very aligned vertically today" is a very different statement from "You are really in your ego today, what a strong sense of self you are presenting!" Movement has meaning, but we must consider the context, always, because context affects meaning. No matter how much you see, know, or sense happening in the room, allow the client to contextualize your observations.

7) Keep it Simple

Movement analysis is a very complex modality, but I have given you some templates for noticing the client's relationship to Space. Some bullet points for your toolkit:

- Vertical/Horizontal/Sagittal = Grounding/Presencing/Mobilizing

- One/Two/Three Dimensional = Continuum from Stable/Grounded —> Mobile/Activated

8) Keep Checking In

The purpose of movement analysis and movement experiences in session is to thoughtfully shift energy, move blocks and create awarenesses for the client. When the body starts to move in new ways, energy moves as well, and thoughts and feelings come up. Continue to check in by asking questions about what they feel and what they are aware of as they go through the experience. Movement may be gentle and shifts may be subtle. Be open and observant, notice shifts in yourself and your client and check in with the client when you notice them. Like many interventions, we will not always know exactly how a movement experience is going to unfold, but when my clients are willing to try them, they have always experienced a shift in their energy and awareness.

9) Be Courageous

You can do this! Embrace the life-affirming energy of moving. Movement is life. Movement is also forgiving. If an experience isn't working, you can change it up, or stop. It is okay!

CONCLUSIONS

I asked a client for feedback on a movement intervention I did with her. She has some Rigid patterning, and often presents with upper/lower and left/right splits in her consciousness that sometimes also show up in her body. On this particular day, she told me very eloquently (she is a poet) that she was spinning. I asked her to lie down on the floor and I described the Starfish Breathing experience to her. I did not demonstrate the movement, but I let her interpret the instructions.

She was open in an X shape on the floor, and quickly closed up into a ball. She held there for a few breaths, and then quickly popped her arms and legs back open all at once. Interestingly, she did not let them rest on the floor, but held them up. She was working so hard, going back and forth between these two positions.

I asked her if I could help her, and she agreed. I told her to rest her limbs on the floor, and relax as much as she could, allowing me to help her move her arms and legs. She rested her arms and legs on the floor, and I gently moved one arm, and one leg over to towards the other. I softly encouraged her to roll to her side. I moved her legs for her and bent her knees, helping her round her spine and allow the hands to come together in front of her chest and for the chin to tuck softly down. She was on her side in the fetal position. I told her to rest, and to take a few breaths there. Then we unravelled her position back to the open X, and I helped her move to the other side. We went back and forth another time.

She started to smile, and I asked her what was coming up for her. She remarked that it was “totally like her” to make the action much more difficult than it needed to be, and that she was only thinking about hitting the end points of the movement. It did not occur to her that she could go slowly, or move one part at a time. She said that the way I helped her felt nurturing, and she felt supported, and she realized that in her life, she was focused on arriving at outcomes, and sometimes rushed to do it all at once and without asking for help. “I’m missing the process. I see the value of process. I can be supported in the process.” She went on to talk at length about how she could be enjoying her work more, finding pleasure and ease, and accepting support and nurturing.

When I asked her for feedback about the use of movement in her therapeutic work in general, she said very poetically, “Bodywork and movement are a chrysalis for feelings and

unspoken messages. We communicate in how we stand, how we move, our posture. There is so much insight and deep listening happening.”

Movement Experience: Starfish Breathing

This beautiful exercise is based on developmental movement principles and it encourages us to feel with the whole body by moving in an early pattern, naval radiation. Naval radiation is moving from the center/naval to the periphery of the head, tail, arms, and legs. Starfish Breathing is a very simple full-body extension from the naval outward, and a collapsing back in toward the center.

A breath exploration can accompany the movement. The inhale, which intuitively feels like an expansive movement, was described as energetically contracting. The exhale would then be expansive (Staunton, 158). This is a layer of awareness that can be explored in this exercise.

Begin by bringing all limbs as close to center as possible. Slowly and thoughtfully, extend all six limbs (head, tail, arms and legs) to their fullest extension. This movement can be done lying on the floor or start with standing and go to a seated position, depending on how much room you have in the space. Experience a slow unfolding of the whole body, one limb at a time, or all at once, and slowly return to full closing in.

The breathing can be relaxed, but notice as the body extends if the inhale or exhale feels more like reaching out, and same on the body contraction, does the inhale or the exhale feel more like contraction?

In the act of exploring the process of going from inner to outer in a whole body experience, we can discover sensation and feeling of our separate parts and of the whole. During this movement exploration participants can notice what comes up and afterward share any

sensations, feelings, discomfort, realizations, or new awareness they have of how their body parts and whole are connected or disconnected.

Conclusions, Continued

I taught movements from the “Dance of Orals” two different times to people who were experiencing vertigo. One person said that they liked the idea of reaching out past the aura, and another said they liked touching the ground with their hands. Two people reported that they did the exercise a few times and that they felt an improvement in their vertigo symptoms.

As part of this project, I offered a workshop, What Moves You? where I taught participants Space theory and led them through some of the movement experiences described in this paper.

Every participant said that they came away from What Moves You? having learned concepts that they felt would be useful in their own self-practice or their client work. One person said that they thought they might have taken away deeper understanding had they been given time to practice embodying the material more. Another participant said that they found the material useful in working with characterology.

Participants in What Moves You? said they learned new tools to observe their clients better, and that these concepts encouraged them to explore body movement in a way that would allow them to feel the body when they might be stuck in their head. Another participant said that they would connect the concepts they learned to how we show up in the body, and another said it offered refinement in perceiving emotional and physical patterns, and in the selection of practices that might intervene in the problem. Participants said that the material about the Vertical, Horizontal, and Sagittal planes was really easy to see and understand, and that they felt that the concepts around decision making and how it shows up in movement in the Sagittal Plane was



Photo: Alexia Hsin Chen

I began my fifth year project with the ego intention to write the most important paper ever, so that everyone could be impressed by how smart I am and notice me. Maybe, I thought, that would make it all mean something - my lost life as a dancer, all the education that went into that, the trauma of my divorce, the abandonment of my family. I will show them.

I already have several degrees, certificates, and trainings, all of which I aced, and they were all going to get me noticed somehow, and yet I still feel incomplete. No amount of validation or approval from grades, praise, recognition or awards is ever enough. Graduation is always a letdown, and I tell myself that my accomplishments don't really matter.

As the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted normal life this year, my self-invalidating thoughts went into overdrive. People are suffering and dying alone. Forget my Core 5 project, what if I have to die alone? Will I be able to feel like I mattered in this world without anyone by my side to tell me I did? Should I even keep going with this project, my fifth year, and my life?

I was with my dad when he died. He waited for me to drive six hours from New York so he could see me one last time. I mattered that much to him. When I saw him so frail and dying in his bed, I wondered, what was I so afraid of? I realized how much I always wanted him to approve of me, and how much damage I did to myself telling myself that he didn't care. But my daddy so clearly loved me. To ever think otherwise was a distortion.

My mentor Sam helped me to stay in my heart this year, and Charlie reminded me that I am on a spiritual journey. I resisted, in my mask, presentational. "You deserve to feel good about yourself," Charlie said to me. That caused me to dissociate and break down. My first reactive thought was "No, I do not!" I was doing this project and living my life for the wrong reasons, for validation from others, to "prove myself" and impress people. I did not believe that *I* should feel good about *myself*.

My final conclusion for this project is to claim that it is an expression of who I am, my history, how I think, and how I relate to others and to my life and environment. I completed it to satisfy my own desire to express those things. Time and time again I have been reminded by Spirit that I am a dancer. A dancer is a movement artist. This is me, and this is my work - to create movement that expresses and inspires joy. I am proud of who I am, and I feel good about myself.

Movement is life. Dance is joy.

helpful. Participants felt that introducing more expressive movement in their practice would take time.

After a two-hour workshop about using Laban's Space theory in Core Energetics, participants said that they immediately felt that they would be more aware of their own movements in space, and which planes of movement they were not moving in, and how that awareness cued them to explore their own surroundings more thoroughly.

One participant shared that they found a lot of value in the process of moving in different planes, and acknowledged that all planes are valuable. They found the language non-judgmental and helpful for understanding where clients may be stuck. The movement experiences presented, they felt, would help clients work through stuck places without feeling judged.

One participant acknowledged that they did not grasp all of the material, but felt confident that they had learned enough about two and three dimensional movement. They indicated that they would like more opportunities to learn more. Another participant acknowledged that they did not feel that they had expertise in the area of movement, but that felt that the material was clear enough that they could use the knowledge about planes to explore and break patterning.

Participants in the workshop unilaterally said that they wanted to learn more about how characterology is represented in Shape, Space, and Effort and how to work with specific character structures using LBMS. Others said they wanted to embody the shapes of the character defenses more. In general, there was interest in learning more and further investigating these concepts. I definitely think there is more work to do in this area, and I am also encouraged to know that this work interests others, and that there is potential for me to offer more workshops and to continue to engage with this material.

RESOURCES

I created a Facebook Group - [What Moves You? Movement Studies](#) - for anyone interested in further engagement with this material.

APPENDIX

The movement experiences from this paper are provided again in this appendix for ease of access. It is highly recommended that you read the information and theory on which the exercises are based and try them out yourself before attempting them with a client.

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Movement Experience: Spine Strength - Head/Tail Connection

This sequence brings awareness to the Vertical Axis by taking the spine through all of its anatomical actions, and by strengthening the head/tail connection. The Vertical Axis represents our ego strength, and our head/tail connection is important in forward movement. This exercise was created to help bodies to feel in their leadership.

Begin by coming down to the floor on hands and knees in tabletop position. A yoga mat can be folded over to provide some cushioning for the knees. Find the head/tail connection by dropping the head and the tail down and pulling the naval up towards the spine (cat posture in yoga). Then drop the belly down and lift the head, eyes and tail up (cow posture in yoga). Repeat several times, coordinating the head and tail moving together, and coordinating the breath with the movement.



Bring the spine to neutral position, and as if “wagging the tail” like a puppy, turn the tail to one side, and then look back towards it. Both the tail and the head are moving in the same direction, with lateral flexion in the spine on one side. Return to neutral, and “wag your tail” and look to the other side. Repeat a few times, coordinating the head and tail moving together, and coordinating the breath with the movement.

Explore the head/tail connection further by alternating these exercises. Begin in cat posture, then wag and look to one side, next cow posture, and wag and look to the other side. Continue this sequence until you can feel the head and the tail making circles together. Reverse the direction of the circle. Return to neutral spine.

Come to a seated position on the floor or a chair. Feel the spine long and aligned in the Vertical Axis. Be aware of any new sensations in your spine.

Allow a spinal twist to begin at the naval, turning it to face one side, then let the heart turn, then the shoulders, the head, then the eyes all twist to one side. Use your eyes and see as far behind you on that side as you can, creating a gentle twist in all parts of the spine. Keep the breath easy and loose. There is no need to use the hands and force the twist, allow the deep muscles of the torso to do the work. Stay for a breath or as long as it feels good, and as you rotate back to a forward-facing position, use your eye focus to see everything around you. See the room and what is in it, scanning as you untwist. Repeat the twist to the other side, seeing as far behind you in the other direction. Slowly return to a forward-facing position.

Check in with your body. How does your spine feel? Is there more awareness of your length and verticality? Do you feel more aligned in your Vertical Axis?

Movement Experience: A Dance for Orals

This experience strengthens the architecture of the relationship between the Body and Space by building a scaffolding of movement that connects Inner to Outer.

Begin standing with the feet comfortably shoulder distance or closer. Soften the knees and feel the body in Vertical Alignment, take a few breaths.

Create a boundary by exploring the inside of the Kinesphere. Use your arms, hands, and arcing movements to touch as much of your Kinesphere as you can reach. Turn your body around and create a boundary.

Enliven the Vertical Axis by bringing the hands together at the heart, bend and straighten the knees a few times. Keep the knees aligned over the toes, comfortably, and the legs not too wide. Reach the hands up over the head, connect to the divine. Bring the hands together back down the front of the body, all the way down and touch the ground if that feels comfortable. Say, "I connect to the divine, I connect to the earth."

Using your hands, both at once, or one at a time, reach out as far as you can without moving your stance. Reach out beyond the edge of the Kinesphere/aura, and use your gestures to grab and pull the energy back in towards you. Bring the gesture in to your solar plexus or heart chakra, or any chakra that needs the energy. What is important is to reach very far out, and bring the energy in toward yourself and all the way into your body.

Alternate reaching out using spoking and gathering gestures, and connecting to the Vertical, repeat it in rhythm. Reach out, bring it in (to the core), take the hands up together, connect to the divine, and then down, touching the floor if that feels good. Repeat, reaching in all

directions, out, in, up, down, affirming, “I can reach out, I can receive⁴, I connect to the divine, I connect to the earth.” Out and in, up and down. Repeat, repeat, repeat.

End the dance by feeling the boundary around you again, bring the hands to the body. Feel the energy streaming, notice what has changed. Feel your body within your aura, feel the boundary outside of you. Settle here. Discharge in waterfall if needed.

⁴ Affirmations inspired by Lisa Loustenou

Movement Experience: The Vertical Plane - I'm here!

Stand with feet together, or as close as possible. Bring the hands together above the crown of the head. Feel the connection through your crown to the divine. Feel a line of energy coming from above and running through the Vertical Axis of your body, dropping down in to the earth beneath your feet. Feel yourself in this realm in connection with both what is solid and real in this world and what is above and beyond. Gently bounce and feel your own self in the up-and-down of your Vertical Axis.

Open your feet and arms so that you are standing in your Vertical Plane in an X shape. Imagine you are standing in a doorway with your arms reaching up to the high corners of the doorway and your feet to the bottom corners. Keep your eyes open, and feel if opening your arms and legs makes you more aware of your surrounding space. Allow yourself to spread and feel the length and breadth of your physical presence. Stand strong in your Vertical Plane and say, "I'm here!"

End the exercise by bringing your feet closer together with hands in prayer position at the heart. Feel yourself present on the ground and supported by the divine. Feel if the exercise brought you more into yourself in the present moment.

Movement Experience: Arm Circles to Open the Heart to the Side

When we think about a movement to open our hearts, typically that brings to mind a Sagittal Plane action. We bring the chest forward pulling both shoulders back at once, spreading the arms and courageously opening forward, leading with our hearts. We might also open the heart by going into a backward bend, which can bring up a fear of falling into the space behind our bodies, our Back Space. The Back Space is full of unknown and hidden things. Heart opening in the Sagittal Plane requires courage, vulnerability and commitment.

The following exercise is a different way to open the heart. It uses spinal rotation, twisting the upper body against the lower to open the chest and shoulders more gently to the side, one side at a time, without forward commitment or backward bending. This experience is meant to be a gradual and supported heart opening.

Begin standing or seated in a chair or on the floor. Take a moment to ground your lower body by taking a few breaths and feeling your legs and pelvis relax, allowing your weight to drop down into your legs and/or lower body.

Place one hand on your heart, take a breath in and out. Bring the other arm straight out in front of you, and direct your eye focus to your outstretched hand. Keeping the arm long, straight, without locking the elbow, lift the arm up overhead and begin to circle it up and then back behind you, allowing the shoulder to move with the arm and create a gentle twist of the upper body against the lower body. Continue the circle by bringing the arm down to your side, and then forward again. Use eye tracking and track the hand with your vision, this will help the head and the spine to rotate. Keep the lower body strong and grounded, do not let the hips enter into the twist. If that means that you are not able to reach back very far behind you when you go to the back, that is okay. Feel into any uncomfortable places, but do not force the movement. It is

not important that you reach a certain shape or position; honor your body. Carry the whole shoulder along with the arm so that you create twist as you experience the chest opening on one side.

If you encounter a tight place as you circle the arm and shoulder, pause there. Use the hand that is on your heart to soften the front of the chest from the heart to the shoulder and into the armpit, encouraging the muscle and connective tissue fibers to soften and to relax. Keep the breath easy, and with each inhalation and exhalation allow more space to be created. Send breath, compassion, and love to any tight places. Be patient, and if any feelings come up be present with them. You can repeat this side again as many times as you like.

Change arms when one side feels complete. Notice if one side feels different than the other. Finish the exercise by centering in a neutral position, discharge in waterfall if needed.

Movement Experience: The Horizontal Plane

Sit comfortably in a chair with your feet planted on the floor. Twist from the waist up to the left, take your gaze behind you as far as you can without allowing your hips to be involved in the twist. See with your eyes as far behind you as you can. Slowly, and remembering to breathe comfortably in and out as you do this, slowly twist all the way around as far as you can to the right.

As you slowly twist to the other side, use your eyes and scan the room around you. Really see what is in your space. When using this intervention with a client, you can ask them to name the things they see as they go around the room. ‘I see the wall. I see the lamp. I see a photograph on the wall,’ etc. Make certain that you are using your eye focus to attend to Space. Return to neutral spine.

What do you notice about your body in your space? Do you feel more present? What has changed?

Movement Experience: Advancing and Retreating with Quickness and Sustainment

Find a space where you have the freedom to move forward and backward. See the space in front of you, and begin slowly advancing. Pretend you have blinders on and forward and backward are the only directions to go. When you have gone forward slowly as far as you can or want to, retreat by walking backward quickly. Pause, take a breath and notice what you feel.

Now try the opposite. Look ahead of you, move directly forward with quickness. When you arrive, stop, and slowly back away. When you return to your starting position, pause, take a breath, and notice what you feel.

How did it feel to advance and retreat? Did it feel different to move in these different patterns? What felt comfortable, like it might be your normal pattern? What is significant to you about that? Did any of it felt awkward? Did any feelings come up?

Movement Experience: Vertical Plane Sequence

Begin standing with feet together and hands at the sides, and take a few breaths, feeling yourself aligned in your Vertical Axis. Feel your connection to the ground through your feet. Bring the hands together at the heart, and slowly slide them up the body towards the sky, and holding the palms together over the head, connect to the divine, to universal oneness.

Open the arms and legs to an easy X shape. Keep the breath easy, and feel yourself in the here and now. Say, "I'm here!" Repeat this affirmation if you like, until you feel grounded and present. With the feet slightly out-rotated, begin bending and straightening the knees and elbows, bringing them towards one other, coordinating the breath, taking your own timing. As your joints warm up, you can go a little deeper, sweeping the arms fully out to the sides and down, as if you are scooping something up from the ground as you drop down and forward, and then sweeping them open and up over head as you straighten the legs and back.



Side Angle Posture

Return to your X. Rotate the right foot open towards the right side, and bend the right knee. Tip the torso over towards your bent right leg in a side angle posture, with the right hand or elbow resting on the knee or thigh. Keep the left arm reaching out from your shoulder, towards the ceiling.

Take a few breaths here. Feel that you are flat in this posture, with little to no forward movement, everything is in this sequence is flat, Wall Plane. After a few breaths, return to your X and rotate the right leg back to parallel with the toes facing comfortably forward/slightly outrotated. Bend the knees and ankles again a few times, and return to the X repeating the affirmation, "I'm here," before rotating the left foot out to the side, and easing into a gentle side

angle posture on the left side. Keep the eyes forward the whole time, since this exercise is about feeling strong in the vertical plane.

Return to your X, repeat the sequence again, if you like.

If your body is warm, and you would like to go further, you can include half moon posture in the sequence by straightening the front leg, reaching down towards the floor, and



Half Moon Posture

lifting the back leg off the floor. Holding onto a chair or a wall for balance is fine. You can set up a chair, table, or yoga block on both sides of you so you have somewhere to put your hand on each side without stopping the sequence to make adjustments. The exercise is not about balancing in the posture, but rather about feeling the flatness of the Vertical Plane.

The complete sequence is as follows: X, elbow and knee flexion, turn the right foot out, lunge into side angle, shift the weight forward and straighten the leg for half moon, return to side angle, return to X with feet parallel, and, repeat on the other side.

Continue to monitor your pace and breath, taking the timing that feels right and safe for you. When you feel complete, return to your X, bring the feet together and hands to the heart, and check in with your body and feelings.

Movement Experience: Laban's Dimensional Scale

To perform an Axis or Dimensional scale, we explore each dimension by moving along each axis in the following order: UP, DOWN, SIDE ACROSS, SIDE OPEN, BACKWARDS, FORWARDS.

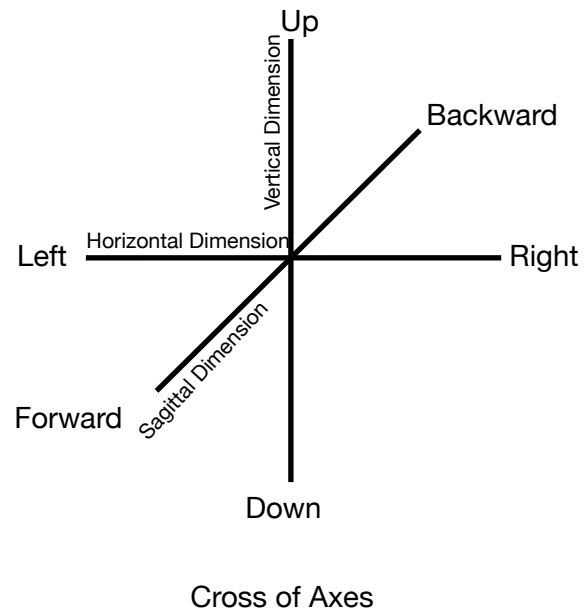
Choose either the right or left hand to lead (it will matter most along the horizontal axis).

Because we are moving along a one dimensional line, and our bodies are not truly capable of one dimensional movement, starting with the right hand and using the hand to follow each axis is a good way to start. This scale can also be done using other body parts, or just our eye focus, our core, or just our energy with intention. Scales are meant to be a tool for exploration.

Begin by taking the right hand up along the vertical axis. Allow your body and core energy to follow. Experience going UP. When you have gone as far as you can, using the right hand, follow the vertical axis down with your hand, as far as you can or as far as feels comfortable.

Return to your starting position. If you started by using the right hand, begin by going to the left side. If you started with the left hand, then you would start by exploring the horizontal axis to the right. The correct sequence would be to go SIDE ACROSS, then SIDE OPEN.

Return to your starting position and find the Sagittal Axis. This axis is a line going through the center of your body from front to back at waist level. Bring your hand to your belly,



and imagine the line going forward and backwards through you. Let your core retreat backward, rounding the spine and taking a few backward steps, then let your energy and your movement follow this line forward in space.

Repeat the sequence with the other hand. Allow yourself to explore each axis, up and down the Vertical, side to side open and side across for the Horizontal, and forward and backward on the Sagittal. Allow your body and energy to follow the hand and the line of the movement, let the movement get bigger if that feels good. Let go of the idea of lines and just follow the directions in order. Change sides and repeat several times, finding flow. Laban's sequencing of the scale, Vertical, Horizontal, and Sagittal was purposeful. What do you notice? Does the sequence feel right to you?

What comes up for you as you repeat the exercise? Does leading with one side or the other feel more comfortable, more awkward? How is it for you to follow a prescribed sequence? Do you find it constrictive, or freeing? Is there room in this exercise for you to explore your movement?

Movement Experience: Move on 45

This is a quick movement sequence that has the structure of Vertical, Horizontal, Sagittal.

Our brains need a 15 minute break every hour in order to function at optimal attention (Carnegie). We also should not sit in a chair for long periods of time as that has multiple ill effects on our bodies and our health (Edward R. Laskowski). You can get up at 45 minutes after the hour each hour, or you can set a timer for 45 minutes to remind yourself to get up and move. Here is a movement routine that takes less than five minutes to do.

Begin by standing up out of your chair and shaking out the arms and legs. Stand with arms open above the head and legs comfortably shoulder width, body in a big “I’m here!” X. Bend the hips, knees, and ankles, bending the elbows down towards the knees. Breathe deeply timing the breath with the movement, exhaling as you bend down and inhaling as you come up. Repeat several times, going deeper if that feels okay.

Come back to the X, and explore the Vertical Plane, reaching up to the upper corners of the Plane, going side to side working down the sides of the plane, alternating right and left until you get to the bottom corners. Then, go back to the top and begin again this time reaching across the Plane with the right hand to the upper left corner, alternating left hand to upper right corner, and twisting side to side, reaching across the body, working your way down the Vertical Plane to the bottom corners.

Keeping the legs about shoulder width apart, pivot both feet to face the right wall. You are now in the Sagittal Plane with one foot forward and one back. Bend the front knee keeping the back leg straight, bring both hands up overhead, and then fold the hands behind the head. Open the elbows, open the chest. Hold for 3-5 breaths. Be sure to keep the pelvis tucked so that the hip flexors in the front of the hip can stretch. These muscles become overly tight when we sit

for too long. Lengthen the lower back and tuck the pelvis under to release the hip flexor. Release the hands, pivot the toes to face the front, then the left, bend the left knee in a lunge and keep the back leg straight, reach up and fold the hands behind the head again. Open the shoulders, chest, drop into the lunge and tuck the pelvis forward to feel the stretch in the front of the hip. Breathe, let the hip flexors release.

Release the hands and shift the toes back to the front wall. Repeat the lunge on each side, going a little deeper this time. Finish by bringing the feet together and returning to your chair.

Movement Experience: Diagonal X-Rolls

Begin by lying on the floor on your back in a big X, legs open comfortably and arms extended diagonally from the shoulders. Feel the diagonal pulls between opposite hands and feet, be aware of one diagonal and then the other.

Slide the right hand across the front of the chest to the left shoulder, and down the arm to the left hand. Keep the right leg on diagonal stretched and long and allow the right shoulder to come off the floor and the spine to twist to reach this position. Stay connected through the torso and be aware that the lower back may want to collapse into an arch and break the energy. Keep the spine long but allow it to rotate. Feel the energy of the stretch diagonally through the body. Relax in the stretch as much as possible.

Keep the breath flowing throughout the exercise. Slowly slide the right hand back down the arm and across the chest and open back up to the X. After a breath or two begin with the left hand and slide it across the chest to the right shoulder, down the arm to the right hand. Relax here, feeling the diagonal pulls in the torso. After a few breaths, return to your X, and feel what has shifted in the body and awareness.

Repeat the exercise, this time starting in the lower body. Beginning from the X shape, bring one leg across to meet the other and then cross over, allowing the hips to rotate. Keep the arms high in the X. Allow the knees to bend, and with the hips drop over to one side. Keep the spine long and avoid breaking in the lower back. Feel a diagonal pull from the top leg through the torso, up to the outstretched hand.

Keep the breath relaxed and allow yourself to feel the diagonal pulls across the body. Let the energy flow, nothing should be painful, breathe and gently stretch. After a few breaths return to the center X and repeat starting with the other leg. Relax into the shape and do not force the

body. Bring a gentle stretch and feel the diagonal pulls through the torso, hips and shoulders.

Return to the X shape.

Roll to one side, stay for a few breaths, and sit up slowly. Allow any feelings or shifts that came up to integrate. Take time to feel any shifts in perspective you may have experienced, or to presence any feeling or awareness that might have come up.

Movement Experience: Starfish Breathing

This beautiful exercise is based on developmental movement principles and it encourages us to feel with the whole body by moving in an early patterns, naval radiation. Naval radiation is moving from the center/naval to the periphery of the head, tail, arms, and legs. Starfish Breathing is a very simple full-body extension from the naval outward, and a collapsing back in toward the center.

A breath exploration can accompany the movement. The inhale, which intuitively feels like an expansive movement, was described as energetically contracting. The exhale would then be expansive (Staunton, 158). This is a layer of awareness that can be explored in this exercise.

Begin by bringing all limbs as close to center as possible. Slowly and thoughtfully, extend all six limbs (head, tail, arms and legs) to their fullest extension. This movement can be done lying on the floor or start with standing and go to a seated position, depending on how much room you have in the space. Experience a slow unfolding of the whole body, one limb at a time, or all at once, and slowly return to full closing in.

The breathing can be relaxed, but notice as the body extends if the inhale or exhale feels more like reaching out, and same on the body contraction, does the inhale or the exhale feel more like contraction?

In the act of exploring the process of going from inner to outer in a whole body experience, we can discover sensation and feeling of our separate parts and of the whole. During this movement exploration participants can notice what comes up and afterward share any sensations, feelings, discomfort, realizations, or new awareness they have of how their body parts and whole are connected or disconnected.

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