Term 4 Lesson 2

26.1.2022

Very good to see you!

Let’s make the list of the exercises, let’s continue:

* Listening to the chest / chest connection/ chest nestling/ couple work
* Hands and feet on the floor
* Moving with the spine on all 4s. Alone or with a partner.
* Moving around the center (keeping the center still)
* Listening to the pelvis/ partner work. (Hands on hips, one hand on belly and one hand on sacrum, and the changing in between without lifting the contact)
* Freeing the articulation of the joints/ freeing the movement
* The ocean belly, individual and couple work.

I will describe this one: This is an exercise that we can do alone. When alone you lie down on your back you imagine the area starting from the bottom of your sternum until the pelvic floor, and you imagine fluids, organs, spine in this space, and imagine it is like a big ocean, and you try to find the waves and you try to move from the organs, and activate all muscles and pelvic are and the spine, by touching yourself, or letting the wave working for you. Or when in a couple your partner will put his/her hands on the solar plexus and the lower belly and just connect to your belly and listen and follow the movement, and gradually will change position without lifting off the contact.

So, the bank is growing :)

Today I was thinking why do I insist so much on the structure, also last time I was talking about it. I think it is very important, and of course I can only speak about my experience, in my dance work and in my teaching work, having taught many years, since I was 18, starting with little children. I have come to learn that structure is something very important. But not for its own sake, so structure, we don’t want to create structured people. Structure is actually like a tool on which we can rely and which helps us to find some kind of a playground and a space for exploration. Because of the logic of the movement. The movement in itself in the body has a logic. I don’t know if you have ever thought about this. But even classical ballet over the last 40 years has developed into a logical way of movement. Before it was illogical based on aesthetic values, and imposing this aesthetic on the human bodies but throughout history, there were so many injuries and destructive things, and in order to come to this aestheticism, people understood that they have to respect this logic of the movement.

Because in the end we are a mass that has a capacity which has to work with gravity.

The movement logic in our work is very important. And within yourself as a facilitator you have to understand the logic of moving, of dancing, of activating the physical body. Because that is the body that enables us to reach all the illogical sides of our being, that is the emotions, the expression, the energy, the experiences. In all that invisible part that we are living there is no logic. That’s what I think. But all the physical parts have a very simple, very clear and beautiful kind of logic to it, and when we learn this we can make poetry with this logic.

Our aim is to prepare the body so that it can move harmoniously. That’s what Somatic Dialogue wants. Through the dialogue of the bodies we want to reach a harmony that is specific to us, we want to see the client becoming more and more harmonious with who he is. So this is our aim at the end of the day.

Why through the dance? Because the dance is something really old, it is celebrative for humans throughout history. (We can make a list of the books to read later on)

The thing is for example, a very good dance class, if it is constructed in a very good way, and if it has a perfect structure, lifts up the energy and the spirit, always. When you go to a very good dance class, no matter how you enter you will get out very high. You will feel good, feel free, and you will be in all of your spirits. That’s quite good already. So you don’t need any drugs, any stimulants, you just need to dance for one and a half hours, and you are already high. Very practical.

That is why I am going to try to push you to really work your brains towards how to construct a really nice class. With the logic of it, so that even if you are not going to do this, this is not a dogma. It doesn’t mean that you have to learn this and repeat it as it is, no no. Anyway it wouldn’t work, because for that you would need all that experience as a dancer. But you can understand the logic through it, you can understand how the body works, so that it reaches that openness in the spirit and in the energy, and for this you don’t need to be a dancer, you just need to be intelligent. (which you all are)

So for this you need to know what it takes, what you need. Because why? This structure that I will try to teach you is something that always works, no matter what, so when you come with a client at a certain moment on your journey, you can just pick out a class for your memory. So you can take out this class and teach it or execute it for your client and it will work. That will be the backup and the security. And it is also a great practice for you to master this art.

So if you will create many classes just for the fun of it, for yourself or for your clients, you will through that practice master this art, and especially you’ll need to know this if you wish to lead group lessons. Group lessons are different from individual hours.

In group lessons you cannot focus on everyone, so you’ll need to create a structure which everyone can connect to, and it is the structure that will move through the people, connect them to each other and to you and then they will come to a group harmony. If you do this well enough you can create within 2 hours a very harmonious group. No matter what kind of people there are.

When I say this it may sound a little totalitarian, but it is so: whatever you transmit physically you’ll have to be in full control of what you are transmitting. in full control means:

* you’ll have to be able to do it
* you have to be able to word it/ formulate it
* you have to be able to discuss it, discuss also how it feels, at least these three things

Being in full control of what you are transmitting means also that you have to be fully trusting that this is what you are transmitting. The slightest doubt will not work. It will not be convincing.

Because the reason for this is also to spare you from any disaster or catastrophe that may occur. Being in full control of what you are transmitting means also, it should not be received as a superiority. This point is important. So it is not that you need to be perfect in order to do that, we must not lose our humbleness towards the work, but still we need to be very sincere in the fact that what we do, we know how we do it. **You will refrain from doing or transmitting or teaching something which you have never done.** You can do it but it will not work. And everyone feels it when you are doing something that you are not knowing.

Which is great in a way, because if you really work for that, then whatever you’ll do will be authentic and nobody can copy you. You will be your master. This is an agreement that you should do with yourself from now on.

A good movement guide, a good dance teacher or **a good somatic dialogue facilitator always opens the way of the movement. By transmitting the sensational quality of the exercise** or the goal or aim, where we are aiming at at the end of the class. you don’t have to say it or explain but you have to transmit it, and it transmits, **so you have to have this inner structure in which you know that whatever you do you will open the way for the movement to happen.**

We need to be giving inspiration only by the way we are in the class, and I think if you work on this being well there, the quality of your presence, being connected to what you know and how you are transmitting it, this is already an inspiration for the other person: if you are poised, in peace, if you know what you are saying, if you give that space and that time, and if you stand your ground (remember we were talking about standing your ground), then already this is an inspiration, and even with the way you approach the work, the way you speak, you’ll have to be an inspiration for the other person. You cannot just make them move only through your words. The words are important but your words have to be impregnated by your energy, enthusiasm, your sparkle and so on.

Because imagine: as there is no formula, you have to create your way, in a way you start the work by taking the client into your world. You start by teaching the client what you know. You are not teaching anything else, we are not teaching dance, we are not passing on a form, or a technique of execution, we are not interested in that, execution happens by the way.. so you are taking the client into your world. It is important to be aware of this because it is your world of movement, with the movements that you know, with the awareness of how you are moving, with your energy, you influence them with your energy without wanting to influence them. By taking them into your world, you make them go through an experience. But we don’t impose, we don’t shape, we don’t mold, we don't encourage them to copy us, and of course they will at one moment copy us, but we will ignore that part, but we encourage them to find the joy in their own explorations. This is very important. That's why… Let's go back to the first term: the addressing, how to talk and what to say. We don’t want to talk about the negative things. Why should we? Who are we to say that something is wrong? It is not up to us. But we can talk about the nice things. Because through this encouragement of what we see and feel, and putting it in a positive way, we encourage the client to hear, and connect what he hears with what is going on.

When you encourage the client by what you say, by positive comments, such as I like the way you used your arms, because etc etc…you enable the client to connect what he hears from you, beautiful movements of arms, to what he did in that moment, to his sensation.

Beliz: *I also feel that, and you have been saying this in your previous classes, it is also looking at it from that perspective of what they have really accomplished, and where you would like them to go is also the relationship between the two of you… and it will give you the knowledge to say, oh maybe I need to get them to go deeper, and so… what is my part, how do I give another exercise so that they will go deeper,, so that can really go into that… etc. İnstead of looking at it as something that they haven’t been able to do, seeing as what is our next way to go, our next challenge together, really, I think it turns it into a mutual relationship.*

Yes, so we come back to the Muhabbet right, this is the dialogue that happens, and also when I listen to you now, it is also confirming indirectly what the client has done is already a step. It  is already an achievement, it is not something lost.

Katerina: *Yes, I always say, before the next improv, I say it was there, and we just helped it to come out. And it is always there, but it is very  little or subtle, and we just need to give more space to it.  It is very encouraging to say, it is happening, it is going, you are doing great, and do it again, and because it is like this.*

It really is like that, all the knowledge is in the body, in the person, and the client just needs the right circumstances and experience in order to become aware of it. Very good, nice.

I said that we don’t impose, and maybe some of you may laugh remembering how I teach, because I can be very pushy sometimes. **But we don’t impose, but we gently and perseveringly insist on certain things.**

Because it is about relating, we talk about the relationship. In order for something to move, you need to approach and come back, you don’t want to impose yourself on the client, but you can also just let it happen. You have to throw the little hooks to see how much the client resists, or until he can go. It is very subtle, like a little bit of flirting even.

**We gently and perseveringly insist**, that means you don’t give up, you cannot give up. If your client gives up, you’ll respect it. But you don’t give up. We insist on certain things: the aims that we set. If you want your client to relax, you will not give up on this, you will do your best, lure, seduce, convince, do magic, whatever you want, you want your client to be able to relax. For example, and **you will do this with great patience, you will never rush, you will never expect results, you will never evaluate negatively what has been done. you will only comment positively that something was achieved, even if you are bored to death, you have to find that buddha in you.**

**Great patience and loving repetition.** With great patience and loving repetition we make sure the clients stay inspired and they don’t lose their freshness and willingness to explore and to discover. That is our job. And if you don’t lose this freshness and willingness to discover, your clients will not lose it either. Because you being in this state of being in the lesson will always inspire someone. That is the muhabbet, you have to be active. We open the way.

That was the theoretical part, and before we go into the practical part of the lesson, I would like to clarify one kind of structure:

The spatial structure of the lesson. Be it individual or group, there are many ways of spatial structure: The floor, the middle level, and Standing position.

The horizontal plane, the in between and the vertical plane.

The floor/on the floor, in the middle level and in standing position as a posture.

THe horizontal plane, the vertical plane and everything that is in between and around/ the space I call it  the floating middle.

In the body these three spaces correspond to:

Horizontal plane: gravity and weight

Floating middle: muscle tonus and volume

Vertical plane: independence, the expression and the relationship to the space

**The practical lesson**

Welcome to the lesson today. Our lesson will be concentrating on the spine. THe exercise is very simple. I would like you to connect to your spine and then move from the spine. You will move because your spine will move. Whatever you do, everything needs to be initiated in the spine. The spine is very long, and you can initiate it anywhere you want, but it has to initiate from the very center, from your spine.

You will be exploring your spine and how it influences the rest of your body. And how the body needs to organize itself so that the spine can wake up, can grow, move and dance and communicate to you.

We will do it in three spaces: I will give you three pieces of music one after the other. The first piece of music is a time for you to explore the spine on the floor, in the horizontal position not getting up. The second music is for the middle level, not lying or standing but in the middle, and the third piece will be instanding position, so you need to organize yourself to get into the vertical position and move from the spine.

Our first first focus is entirely on waking up the spine and connecting to it. You will have to manage the time for yourself.

I will let you prepare and will start the music. I wish you a very nice exploration.

Beautiful. THank you very much. Very good. Just take a breath and we will go to the second round.

We will do exactly the same thing, again the three planes, again moving from the spine, focus that your spine is on the floor in the horizontal plane, floating in the middle plane and vertical in the vertical plane. It can of course change within the movement. I would like you to put your focus on remaining inside of your body. So you imagine your body as a volume and you imagine the spine with a beginning and an end that is inside the body.

Let your spine express itself inside of the body in the three planes. Try to respect the time of the music and freely make the transitions.

Enjoy.

Beautiful. Thank you very much. That was very very good. We will continue. And we will stay with the same principle. Letting the spine express itself as an independent being, that has a head and a tail. I would like you to put your focus on relating to the floor and the space around you. Letting this independent being express itself and lead you into the movement. And enjoy the music.

Ok good. We will do the last exercise as a closure of this lesson. It will be a short improvisation in which I would like you to travel through the three levels. Moving from the spine, from the inner space, relating to the outer space, going into the floor and really using the spine like an independent being that makes you travel from the floor, through the middle level to the vertical and back and forth. As you wish.

Such a lovely group of dancers. You guys, it was really great. Fantastic. Good.

So I hope you have enjoyed the class, this is a structure of class that I can assure you that works very well with all levels, you can do this with people who have never danced before and also with professionals. It always works because it is a celan structure to which you can attach focus, and this is the principle that we would like to work in when working with improv. I put you through the experience of guided improvisation:  it is a clear structure a clear task, you have switched through different focus, you have traveled through different qualities of movement, you have traveled through different dynamics and during all this I have been able to observe you in such a way that I was able to create feedback after each improv. If we would work in a private lesson, after each time you do this I would give you feedback, so that you can work with that feedback in the next exercise.

Now as a group I have general feedback: we all have the tendency to keep the head away from the spine. Sometimes it is necessary because you are focusing on something. But in general it should be integrated as part of the spine. remember the spine finishes in the head and energetically, intentionally and movement-wise the spine actually continues through the head and reaches into the space. Then, also we need to work on, and this is a constant work on, the head-tail connection, the tail and head, meaning also the head and pelvis as a volume, and how it can influence the movement. Alos, be aware of the volumes that are connected to the spine, three centers and the spaces in between the volumes. And really when we were working on the third focus, when we were working on relating to the outer space from the very inner space, you really have to go through the space. like cutting the space. Really travel, let your spine take you, so that your legs activate, that you can travel. Relate to the space not like an empty something, but a space through which you travel.

I would like you to analyse this lesson that you have just done.

Have a lovely evening.