**Term 2**

**Lesson 01**

**The Chest**

This term is about analysing and discussing each of the exercises in depth, and also doing them. Each week we will analyse one or two exercises, and then I would like you to practise what we have analysed during the week. Everything will be easier because you’ll have a clear task.

Today we will start with the three centres and the waves. This is the base of this practise, it is the very core and base of the body, where actually everything happens, and then the arms and the legs are just an extension of what is happening in the centre.

We will also get closer to the notion of touch, and therefore I would like you to do your personal research about the touch. If you have the time, just think about it, meditate on it, what does touch mean to you in your life. What kind of place it has in your life, and what is your personal experience of the touch. What interests me is your relationship with the touch. In every lesson we will come back to the touch a little, and we will experience it mainly in the workshop.

 Let’s start with a little exercise of the surface caressing. In any position you wish (sitting, standing or lying), take time land into your three centres, by using our hands and by caressing the surface of your torso, from the head until your pelvis, wherever you can reach, and I am sure you will be flexible enough already to reach practically everywhere. You are also allowed to do it, if you wish, you can open your eyes and look at us, because it is very beautiful to see. The beauty has an amazing impact on the watcher.

Improv….

I would like to invite you to one more exercise. The waves and the three centres are always together. It is very hard to separate them, and it doesn’t make sense to separate them. I would like you to go into your three centres, and take the time to move them really from the inside of the centres, and imagine that inside of your torso all the structures and organs are constantly caressing each other. There is no other movement going on inside of the body, all other movements are the variation of the caress. Inner caressing. This is a term I would like you to adopt and explore, because this technique’s healing aspect is based on this inner caressing. Already when we only think about it our relation to ourselves changes. This is something to use in the future, especially when you will need to explain it to your clients.

I would like you to connect to the inner caressing and then like a scientist, explore the movement of each of the centres. And please do it in  standing position, and only if you have a problem you may do it also in lying position.

Improv….

You all have your own way of relating to the 3 Centres, for some of you it is easier to relate to the chest, for other easier to the pelvis, for some it is difficult to relate to the head… there is no right way, there is always the way that is for you. But there is a way of becoming aware of that, and to work with it in the gentle way, the soft way. Because then we can feel where it works, how it works, and where it doesn’t work yet, and how it can work better. So that you can connect to the sensation of the movement. For example, a very important thing that happens are the shifts, the gentle shifts that happen between these centres, in all the directions, lateral ones, cross lateral shifts, up and down, the circles, spirals.. This is one of the most difficult ways of moving, but it is one of the most strongest and healthiest ways of moving. It really has real healing powers, because the intelligence of the body alignes everything and tunes everything, and this is very powerful.

What is really difficulties to find the starting point of the movement. Because we have to find that point somewhere inside of the 3 centres, for example let’s take the chest area. It is an area that is not so obvious to move, because we tend to use the shoulders first, they are connected to the chest.. I suggest we always focus more on the sternum, which is a central part of the body, in the chest. And in relation to the sternum are all the rest, the neck. Clavicules, shoulder blades, rib cage and finally the shoulders…. And when we fix one point in our body, and we try to really gather and start the shifts from there, you will see that you have a completely different focus.  I will demonstrate. Stand on your legs, keep the hips stable, put your hand on your hips and start exploring the shifts from the bottom part of the sternum. Just by doing a little shifting, I have relaxed my lumbar spine, and I have discovered a sensation of space in my inner ears and head. You will fix that point and gently sift that point and move your chest around the axis, and observe what is happening inside.

Improv in silence. Because when you do it you may hear something inside you when you do it. We put the arms on the hips, it is because we prevent them from moving and it opens the ribcage a bit. Observe the movement in your pelvis but try not to move your pelvis, find an anchor in your pelvis and really put your focus to your chest, to your sternum, just shifting from side to side, or from front to back… or slightly twisting…try to find your axis, and try to move your chest out from the axis, breathe, remember the caressing, it is a very gentle shifting… Now without changing what you are doing, put your awareness to your feet and feel the floor under your feet, and put the awareness on the top of your head, and inside your ears and feel the space opening, but move your chest and not your head.

This movement is not very easy. It is one of the most difficult movements because it is the very core of our chest, and it is difficult to find it in order to move it because we tend to move around it mostly.  And that is actually the most difficult thing in this practise, how to create the central movement.  So that the movement starts from the very core and then reaches through the body to the periphery. We are mainly used to moving through life from the periphery of our body, by taking, grabbing, doing, manipulating… and we are more and more cut off from the very central part of our being, our body: I first relate to my inner part and then I relate to the periphery.

Beliz: I think one of the things that I find very helpful, sometime, when the periphery is free it still comes in, but when it is put somewhere, like on the hips, then it becomes easier to feel the centre. So really the constraints like keeping the arms calm, relaxed but on the hips helps in this exercise, and serves the purpose.

Berrak demonstrates and talks: I am doing lateral horizontal shifts, I am shifting my sternum and a part of my ribcage away from my axis. I do it now in isolation. If I would let the other centres free then it would look like this, the head would follow the movement in the chest..the first centre directly connected to the chest is the head, the chest moves and is followed by the head. Now I continue. I give the direction in my head and my ears, so that I create more space in my torso, and I engage my ribcage, so I will front, centre, back and I will fall, I will lift the chest again.

You need an anchor in your pelvic centre, in your floor, then find the opposition and the space and shift the very core of your chest, which is the sternum. Once you have found that you can add to it your ribs and your breath, which will help you, and keep the rest of the body very calm. This is just an analytical exercise for us to know, it is very nice to do it, because it makes your chest centre very strong, and creates space in the torso. This is something to explore. That is the starting point. Let’s try to do it one more time.

2. Improv in silence. Try really to put your hands on your hips but keep them alive, so that they are not in tension, so that they can feel your hips moving, because with your elbows to the side you can open your chest, and then anchor in your pelvis and try to stay calm there, calm but active. Check also how your head is, when you keep it still or when you let it move…then you become aware of your lungs…

It can be that you start to feel tension, because it is not a very comfortable exercise, and it is an area that we do not use much consciously.

We have bones. We have muscles, then organs, the connective tissues and the fluids in between… it is very important that we think about these structures moving together.. not really anatomically but sensationally. Feel how these structures are moving together inside the body, and how we relate the mind to them. Let's just hear what is there. Just connect now to that area after having done the improvisation, and open your microphones and just say what is there structure wise: (when you hear the word, try to relate to it in your sensation and find that place in your body now and see how it feels)

The sternum, lungs, heart, hot, ribcage, space, breath, blood, air, tissues, spine, shoulder blades, lots of different muscles, (rhomboids and pectorals, trapeze…and many more, we all suffer from these at times), architectural dome, glands, diaphragm… so many ribs, clavicle, three dimensions, volume… even just with these notions which you have named now, the movement has increased so much…. The oesophagus, the tubes. The Psoas on the other side… our connection to the floor starts there… It is very important to come closer to that area anatomically, it is a very important area. It is one of the main areas that we work with. This area is also one of the most important places for emotions. And it is a very intimate area.

In English it is called the chest: a chest is like the box in which you keep the treasure.

I have to admit that it is one of the most complicated places in the body, because it is in the middle of the other two centres, which are peripheral centres,(the head and the pelvis), and somehow our relationship to them is more clear, than to the chest. Because coordination wise it is also more complicated, because the chest carries the head, and it is not easy to find mobility in the chest, and it suspends the pelvis, and also it is related to our first appearance of the “I” for example, in standing position, we show how we are through the position of our chest. A chest that is falling down communicates something, and a chest that has the shoulder blades closed says something else, a chest that is sleeping is different from a chest that is alive. Also we can feel our heart beat there and our breath, so there is a lot of movement to feel.  It is easy to feel it when you hug someone but it is also important to be able to feel it on your own. Now after doing this exercise for 30 minutes you can all feel the area of the chest better and it will have consequences for how you feel afterwards.

The chest is also a place where we are hard, and I feel that the allowing starts there. The allowing is how much we are able to melt in our chest. Melt and not collapse. We can also collapse when we need to , but we do it when we have too much on it, or when we have to much stress, too much weight on your shoulders, too much work on the computer, or when we are afraid to show our fragility, and our being, then this part is closed.  It is just a shop window, but you can’t go in. The access happens through that area.  So it is very important to remember this in our daily life, how many times I catch myself during the day when my chest is stuck, or it collapses. And I have to remind myself of the volume and become aware of my breath and let my chest melt., and remember that life is in me, and then everything goes well. … but also when we become facilitators, and work with people, you need to relate to your client from there. So it needs to be a receding and welcoming chest that is nicely nestled into you.

Beliz: I think it is also the chest that has a lot of capacity for accumulation, working a lot of capacity for social and personal accumulation, so when working with the chest it is a good way to find out how to work with accumulation. Because it is not a trauma point, but it takes time to accumulate and it takes time to work with it. So it is a part of our body that shows us how the process works in our body.

Berrak: Yes, that’s absolutely correct. We say, ouff I have a heavy chest.

Pavla: when I was watching you it seemed that the starting point of this movement was in the solar plexus. How is it connected with the solar plexus? So when I was watching you it looked to me like that part was an open gate to enter the chest. Because every time it starts from the solar plexus. Can you say something about that?

Berrak: The solar plexus is also an image of an energetic term situated in the same area of the body, and it is also where the sternum ends, the lower part of the sternum, I just imagine that the starting point is there. The solar plexus is an important area, we will also work there with the contact work,  because this is where the diaphragm is and where the suspension starts, and it is like a gate. We can lift it , open it, and put it down and close it. If it helps you as an image to work with the solar plexus you can work with it. But it is important to think about the part we talk about, because it is a little above the solar plexus, and the solar plexus is like at the base of the sternum. And you will see later that it also relates to the legs, because the movement of the legs starts from the solar plexus. So I don’t know if it answered your question. But you have given the answer in your question because you said the gate and that is.

Katerina: I think that is a very visible part of you, your solar plexus, because you are very accommodating, in physiotherapy, the solar plexus is the centre of accommodation. When you are working with the chest that is the strongest part of you, and that centre is very alive in you.

Berrak: that is the part where we are relating to the space and to the earth, it is a place that is like a gate and a place that is very alive and it is a place of rotation, and it is a part where the movement starts because through that part we relate to the floor and we grow into the space.

Yigit : when you gave direction while we were moving the chest, you spoke about inside the head and the area.. can you repeat that…

Berrak: connect to your palette, go to the back of your palette and then find the inside of your ears, and the back of your throat, and the occipital space, right there is the middle. Imagine that there is a little suspension, like a little pyramid with the strings and it is suspended there. If you think of it you will do the Indian head movement. And if you relate it to your sternum it will dialogue with it really nicely. But you need to turn your attention inwards, Yigit. The occipital point is also to remind us that we are not front, that we are also a little bit back. It gives the opposition. And also the ears help you. The direction and sensation of space to the sides.

Yigit: I am actually a more pelvic person, but when I keep the pelvis calm, and they to move the chest, in relation to the head space, I have a difficulty to make the pyramid there in the top… is there a trick to make the connection.Berrak

Berrak:  so thank about a triangle starting from the sternum and going up to the ears, like an upside down triangle.

Don’t expect that your chest will move immediately. But the principle of this movement is important, it gives us the sensation of floating. That we are able to float in the volume of our chest. It is a sensation that is very important. We said melting, but also now floating.

I strongly advise you to do this for one week.

I will not continue with the chest now, because I wish to go to the head and the pelvis. Because I wish you to have a relief working with the three centres. Because working too much on the chest can make you feel very heavy. And I would prefer to keep the heavy stuff to when we will work in person. If you cannot work well on the chest don’t panic, don’t fix the movement, search the sensation and meditate on it and find the floating sensation.

Let’s continue with the head. That is the most directly connected 2nd centre, that is the head. The natural way we move it always first the chest and the head.  This will help you with the chest. First chest and the head. So what is in the head?

Pedro: nothing!

Berrak: what is in the head? We just touched it: the jaw, the skull, the ears, the mouth, the tongue. The teeth, eyes, nose, part of the spine, the atlas that helps us move the head, and the face, the masks, the facial expressions, and areas of great exploration to work with somehow. Innerly also. When you connect to the volume inside your head. So I invite you now for 4minutes to work with this inner space of your head. Jaw, mouth, tongue, the space of our nose, the inside of your ears, the space we talked about, the eyes, even when your eyes are closed, your cervicals, and see how it relates to the chest.

Improv: if you need to make noise you can make noise…the facial muscles also, gentle movements, your eyebrows, breath, yawning, the backside of your head, this beautiful perfume coming from the back, your nose, smelling, your eyes, see how much it changes when you use them, how the muscle tones is changing in your neck, when you engage your eyes.how does this all influence the chest? And the breath…melt into your chest, let your sternum be soft…

It is like a little bit letting the head surf on the waves of the chest. Now if you have done this intensely you will feel warmth and heat and tickling and itching happening here in that area. It helps a lot to regulate everything in the head, especially when you connect it to the chest. It helps us also with the balance, when we open the ears, the eyes, and connect it to the chest, the smelling and then relate to the space, it helps with finding the balance in the space, and improves us to relate to the space,  when we are able to work this and the energy floats there it opens our ears and eyes and eyes, and these directions, then we can improve our balance. Someone with balance problems can use this method well. That is my personal experience.. I discovered that my balance centre was damaged and that I am an out of balance person, and it helps me quite a lot. It is all how we find the space inside.

So please explore the head centre, first alone, then in connection with the chest. It is a lot of fun, because there is a lot to do in the face, and it liberates a lot. It is fascinating to work with the head. The face is a part of the head.

Are there any comments:

Yigit: it feels like there are lots of holes inside and that there is a constant air flow circulation happening constantly.

Buse: time bending, when I do this I totally lose the time and space sensation.

Berrak: It takes us to another time.

Pedro: I went immediately to the empty space in the sinuses, these places are empty and they somehow serve the circulation.. it was interesting to go from there, it to me into myself, there was a moment that my mind drifted, of course, I am dealing with my brain, and then when I connected with the sternum, and I felt a hug stretch that happened that felt really interesting, from within, not something… not easy to describe, but it was very interesting sensation, I never felt it before.

Berrak: in the very core of our body there are these tiny tiny little muscles that support the spine, erectus spinae muscles and also in our cervical spine.. you can look it up.. that’s it , our practise is to go more and more in the very core of your volume, with your mind and not the intellectual knowledge but your mind that connects to your sensation,,so that you find your space and develop your capacity to feel and to perceive. And the more you will work this way you can find these places from where you can start the movement. And actually when we move from the very core, then we don't need to use the surface muscles. So your body will become soft but very strong from the inside. Because if we work with power, without the strength in the centre and softness in the surface, we’ll brake, because gravity is stronger than us. So it is fine to be soft, with time it will hang and be soft, but inside this vertical movement will be stronger and stronger, and the sensation of space inside of you will be stronger and stronger.

It is the fountain image, like the chocolate fountains, imagine this verticality going up and everything else is melting down, and continuously this is where the waves come in and the pleasure comes in.. Find your chocolate fountain in your torso. With the head, the chest and the pelvis.

Speaking of which, let’s have a quick look at the pelvis. It can be very difficult to connect to the pelvis, a lot of your clients will have problems with the pelvis. Maybe they will be able to tame the pelvis, because they are used to physical movement, but to connect to the pelvis area from the inside, and move it from within will be a challenge. Where all the genitals are the magic muscles, the Psoas, gluteus, all those guys that make our loves easy and at times difficult, we need to feel them all. And also all the organs such as the intestines.. etc.

We will not have time to reach into the pelvis today. Try just to think about the pelvis. Try to connect to it. Because this week I need you to focus and work with your chest and your head, and in order to do that you will need to anchor into your pelvis.  We always need an anchor in order to free something else.

Do you have any questions?

Pedro: A little note…I just got unto get the charger, and wow I felt so grounded on my steps, I felt my weight. There is a lot of holding of that weight, and that doesn't allow it to go down.. just an amazing drop of the holding.The shoulder blades, the shoulders and the trapeze are connected to the feet. The grounding happens through the communication both. When you open your feet and you let the reach into the floor and have a good connection with the ground, then the upper body relaxes.  When this is happening and  you are working on this region (the chest), what happens? You circulate the heat, you organise the connective tissues, they are activating and thus relate and you liberate emotions, and your relationship to the floor will be different. That’s why I asked you to do it in a standing position, like this it connects and the weight starts to fall into the feet. The up is connected to the down, the ways and multiple and infinite conditioned all by our history. Depending on how you have lived, what you have done, what you are doing, your body moulds, shapes. That’s why our work is so concretely fascinating. When you start to work on these tiny little areas  and you allow the mind to go there, in a loving way in a feeling way in a sensational way, you bring the solutions. And it really works because you feel it immediately. So when we close this session you’ll get up and walk and try to feel how you feel now. We just need a little time and a little care. And that’s where the magic happens.

Lina: Did you say, we hear through the chest?

Berrak: We heal through the chest. But Lina, how nicely you have heard.. yes it is possible also to hear from the chest. And I wish that we all will be able to get there, when we can really hear what goes on around us and in us through the chest.

Lina: You talked about the meaning of certain positions of the chest, what do they mean?

Berrak: There are a lot of interpretations in different practises, I cannot name them all, but what is interesting for me is to discover the sensations and the feeling each of these positions bring. Because when you are in an extreme posture in the chest area, it makes you feel certain things. It conditions your emotional state. It imposes a sensation of you and changes the way you are. So even if you become aware that you are constantly aware like this (with the shoulder blades closed and the sternum pushed out) and you just become aware of this because someone puts their hand there and you can reach into that hand and create space in between your shoulder blades, then your sternum will fall maybe into the right position and you will feel better. Other tensions will stop and you will start breathing in a better way. Or if your chest is collapsing to the front and your back is curving, it means that you have no more support from your belly , and if you work with the space in the front and the suspension upwards, you will start creating space in your organs, and it will activate the connective tissues and your belly muscles and with time your digestion will improve, for example. And already you will feel better. It is very important to feel these different things, and then each one has different emotions related to them. It is a discovery for a lifetime. I discover something new with each client. Because every client’s history is very different but there are still very common points in there. For example, when you work on the chest, try to think about opening and closing, because when you open your pectorals and your ribcage , then you close your back at the same time. When you close towards your sternum and your ribcage, you close but at the same time you open your back. And when you work like this, your relationship to the space inside of you changes, but also the relationship to the space around you changes.

Nisan: I was thinking about shrinking, there is a space and you go into the space, and it touches more and more to the space and then extending from there, it helps me, because I get to feel the space inside. Shrinking and growing…..

Berrak: Yes, retracting and expanding is what our lungs are doing.. every movement has an oppositional movement happening at the same time. When you shrink somewhere you expand in the periphery, all this happens simultaneously. Retraction and expansion, activation and release, being strong and soft happens simultaneously, central movement and peripheral movement should happen simultaneously, being inside and outside.. all this should happen simultaneously. That’s why we are working. Please work this week only the chest and the head, and when it is too much, roll on the floor.

You can of course look it up anatomically etc, but I would like you first to really go through the sensing, how you feel all this space inside and how you relate with it.

Have a lovely week with your chest and your head.

Thank you all.