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Encounters between practices: Bartenieff Funda- mentalsSM and Body-Mind CenteringSM

*Encontros entre práticas: Bartenieff FundamentalsSM
e Body-Mind CenteringSM*

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the meeting between two somatic lineages in dance practice: Laban-Bartenieff System and Body-Mind CenteringSM, or more specifically, the Fundamentals proposed by Bartenieff and the principles of the Basic Neurocellular Patterns, according to Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen. In both lineages there is an indication to relive the developmental phases as a strategy to reorganize the body connectivity to undo blockages, automatisms and to support the creative movement elaborations. Both approaches have influenced and continue to fuel changes in the ways of teaching and creating dance. In this work, I share a somatic narrative constructed by certain connective principles of this vast field experienced from utterances (guided imagination) and previous movement sequences guided by the two approaches. The narrative indicates linked processes, from internal movements to transitions of form in space, from the floor to locomotion, in connections with kinespheres (internal, personal and external), in the integrated sharing between body and environment.

KEYWORDS: Bartenieff FundamentalsSM; Body-Mind CenteringSM; dance; somatic practices; somatic narrative.

RESUMO

Este artigo aborda um encontro entre duas linhagens somáticas influenciadoras da dança: Sistema Laban-Bartenieff e Body-Mind CenteringSM (BMCSM), ou, mais especificamente, os Fundamentos propostos por Bartenieff e os princípios dos Padrões Neurocelulares Básicos (PNB), segundo Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen. Nas duas linhagens existe a indicação de reviver as fases de desenvolvimento do movimento humano como estratégia de reorganização da conectividade corporal para desfazer bloqueios, automatismos e como suporte nas elaborações criativas de movimentos. As duas abordagens influenciaram e continuam alimentando mudanças nos modos de ensinar e criar danças. Neste trabalho, partilho uma narrativa somática construída por certos princípios conectivos deste vasto campo experienciado a partir de enunciados (imaginação guiada) e sequências prévias de movimento orientadas pelas duas abordagens. A narrativa indica processos em elo, de movimentos internos até mudanças de forma no espaço, do chão até a locomoção, em conexões com as Cinesferas (interna, pessoal e exterior), na partilha integrada entre corpo e ambiente.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Bartenieff FundamentalsSM; Body-Mind CenteringSM; dança; prática somática; narrativa somática.

Encounters between practices: Bartenieff FundamentalsSM and Body-Mind CenteringSM

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1. Connective stories between Laban-Bartenieff System and Body-Mind CenteringSM (BMCSM)

This work starts from encounters between principles delimited in the practices of Irmgard Bartenieff and Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, inserted in a somatic proposal not only to indicate procedures to be performed in classes, but seeking to comprise ways of understanding the movement and its development in relation to other beings and the environment, and thus constitute (and why not), a political response against the training of the body (and of oneself).²

This study approaches some possibilities of encounters between two somatic lineages that influence dance practices: Laban-Bartenieff System and Body-Mind CenteringSM, or more specifically, the Body category of the Laban-Bartenieff System, with the Fundamentals of Movement proposed by Irmgard Bartenieff (Bartenieff FundamentalsSM) and principles of the Basic Neurocellular Patterns (BNP) contained in the BMCSM Human Movement Development Patterns.³

Connections between the Body-Mind CenteringSM approach and the Laban-Bartenieff System have occurred several times through teachers who traversed these two fields of knowledge. Despite their specificities, these studies and their practices dialogue with mutual approximations and influences. These characteristics of expansion and welcoming contained in the two somatic lineages allow this communication to be based on the time-space of my experience, with the transit and porosity immanent to

² Part of the content of this article is adapted from the final paper for the specialization course on the Laban/Bartenieff System at Faculdade Angel Vianna/RJ/Brazil, which deals with the Body Category in the Laban-Bartenieff System.

³ These two somatic systems remain alive in updates and expansions of the experiential and theoretical fields. Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, who is 80 years old, currently offers online courses and has been uninterruptedly engaged in the systematic study of the BMCSM since the 1970s, along with collaborators. Bartenieff passed away in 1981, but the Laban-Bartenieff System is also alive and receives contributions and updates from accredited practitioners in different regions of the world.

the systems, through my training and studies carried out in the southern hemisphere, in the warmth of the tropical climate, with water and bodily affections in abundance throughout the process, constituent and structuring elements of my somatic learning.

Thus, I bring in this article some elements of literature review and practical crossings felt in my being body by the joint and simultaneous experience within the two somatic approaches (BF and PNB/BMCSM). I come to an end with a somatic narrative built by the intersecting, overlapping and amalgamated fundamentals between the doings brought by my experience in these two approaches within one research of writing from somatic practice⁴.

2.Irmgard Bartenieff and Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen

Irmgard Bartenieff (1900-1981) was a German dancer, who met and began studying with Laban at the age of 25 in Berlin. Married to a Jewish Russian dancer Michail Bartenieff, she migrated to the United States to escape the Nazi rise in Germany (BARTENIEFF, 1980). In the new country, marked by the dance of Martha Graham, Bartenieff introduced Labanotation studies. Besides the support of Labanian theory, Bartenieff was interested in research related to body-mind integration (Body-mind research) (BARTENIEFF, 1980). He is familiar with the studies of Mabel Todd, Lulu Sweigard, Mathias Alexander, Moshe Feldenkrais, Josephine Rathbone, among other practitioners in the field with muscular awareness approaches with a balance between relaxation and action through meditative or sensory awareness exercises.

Around the 1940s, Bartenieff began to work in the field of motor rehabilitation due to the search for body approaches to recover movement functionality because of the great poliomyelitis epidemic in the United States. She intensified her action during this

⁴ I am an audio descriptor in the field of dance with experience in the construction of audio description scripts for dance performances. Besides the analysis of movements, I reflect about listening to movements not exclusively bound by the external description of the movements, but by the description of the internal and moving impulses, of the intentionality that provokes the movement and its processes. The indication is to listen to what makes one move and not the visible traces left by the movement.

period in the health area, working as a body therapist, was always connected, and imbricated with the art of movement and dance. Being a dancer, her studies with movement facilitation in the recovery of patients were influenced by expression and movement composition.

In Bartenieff's exercises, the basic activities of the body are lying down, sitting, crawling, kneeling, standing, and walking. Locomotion is built up on all the preceding levels, from lying down to standing up. Locomotion gradually assumes orientation with external space, in various directions, and in relation to the environment.

In her classes, Irmgard organized the basic exercises to allow the return to locomotion developed in the two streams: concentration and body awareness in pause (without movement) and kinesthetic awareness leading to movement (BARTENIEFF, 1977). This is related to one of the great themes of the Laban/Bartenieff System: Mobility/Stability. In the exercises proposed by Bartenieff, there were indications of pauses, transitions, and action, with orientation in anatomical bases and references in muscles and bony landmarks of the body.

Initially part of the proposals to exercise were called Correctives and later organized as Bartenieff Fundamentals Exercises. Therefore, Bartenieff is considered a pioneer in creating her own somatic approach, the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM (BF) translated into Portuguese as *Fundamentos Bartenieff*[®]. According to Eddy (2018), Irmgard is part of the 1st generation of somatic creators and her background as a dancer, physical therapist (with studies in biomechanics, neurophysiology, orthopedics, and anatomical dissection), as well as in-depth knowledge of the Art of Movement proposed by Laban, shows us references to understand her somatic approach.

Bartenieff displayed the ability to link the theoretical contributions of exercise physiology and movement development with some concepts from Laban's theory, drawing parallels between the fields of movement study. For her, anatomical knowledge did not provide the full description of the movement experience (omitting some sensory motor connections and integration of complete pat-

terns). She proposed ways to teach with references to internal muscle support, bone landmarks and from Effort-Shape concepts because, for her, Labanian concepts could translate functionally “correct” anatomical realizations into images that would evoke the realization of adequate and expressively movement.

Bartenieff not only disseminated Laban's teachings in the United States, but also contributed qualitatively to the expansion of the Labanian field. As Fernandes (2010) indicates, Bartenieff's “work created yet another category-in addition to Effort, Form, and Space called Body”. This category is present within the Laban-Bartenieff System and is spread by the formation of LIMS (Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies) in New York, an institute founded by her in 1978 disseminated in other international schools developed from this lineage. Thus, within the Labanian field, as proposed by LIMS in New York, Bartenieff's studies are the basis for the Body in the System category.

The expansion of Bartenieff's work to the dance community in the U.S. and Europe brought important contributions to classroom procedures and exercises, with contemporary dance being marked by her suggested body position of “a big X” on the floor, with body connection by central radiance, even if many teachers have no concrete knowledge of this early influence (Eddy, 2018).

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (1941-) was born into a family of performers. Her parents worked for the traveling circus company Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, billed as “the greatest show on earth”. In addition, her mother was a dancer, which enabled her to “dance before she could even walk.”⁵ (JOHNSON, 1977 apud PEES, 2016). Since the young age she traveled with the circus and lived with people with unusual abilities and different ways of living, which made her “grow up believing that the extraordinary would be normal” because “the magic of the circus made nothing seems to be impossible.” (MILLER; ETHRIDGE; MORGAN, 2011, p. 401).

⁵ In reference to the intrauterine movement as a dance, which Bainbridge Cohen can experience inside her mother's belly before birth. “A dance permeated by the touch that the amniotic fluid and the mother's movement exert on the baby and that favors the encounter of dancing and being danced, touching and being touched, moving and being moved” (PEES, 2016, p. 84).

“They were always dancing,” as Bainbridge Cohen reports, so her dance lessons began at the age of three, before she even began to speak⁶.

Her connection with teaching movement began at a young age; at the age of 16 she volunteered in a project to teach dance to children with cerebral palsy, with dance and movement practices always being present in her life and integrated into therapeutic processes. (STRAZZACAPPA, 2012; EDDY, 2018).

Bainbridge Cohen graduated in Occupational Therapy at The Ohio State University. She studied dance therapy with Marion Chace, Labanotation at the Dance Notation Bureau, and Laban Movement Analysis (CMA) at the Laban Institute of Movement Studies in New York City in the program created by Irmgard Bartenieff, having studied with Bartenieff before and during the program. (MILLER; ETHRIDGE; MORGAN, 2011; EDDY, 2018).

She also has several studies in the area of movement, dance, and health, such as certification in Kestenberg Movement Profiler by Judith Kestenberg, as a Neurodevelopmental Therapist by the Bobath method, studied Action Profiling with Warren Lamb and Ellen Goldman, yoga with Yogi Ramira and dance with Pauline de Groot, Jim Tyler, Mieko Fuji, and Eric Hawkins, who introduced her to the theme of moving without effort and “the art of doing without doing” (MILLER; ETHRIDGE; MORGAN, 2011; PEES, 2016). With Hawkins (1965-1975), she had contact with Ideokinesis and, through this study, “came to make use of the guided imagery technique to propose an expression or create a movement” (PEES, 2016, p. 87). For both Hawkins and Bainbridge Cohen, the role of the teacher was to help students discover themselves through singular bodily experience.

She also studied Craniosacral Therapy and Zero Balancing. And with her husband Len Cohen, both influenced by Zen Meditation, they lived in Japan, where she practiced Aikido and had contact with Oriental Medicine, Tai Chi Chuan, and Katsugen-undo.

⁶ Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen constantly says that her first language was the language of movement and that she was never very good with words.

Back in the United States, with Len and their first child, she integrates the varied experiences between Western and Eastern approaches, methods, and body techniques, founds the School for Body-Mind CenteringSM and names her somatic approach as Body-Mind CenteringSM or BMCSM.

According to Eddy (2018), Bainbridge Cohen is part of the 2nd generation of somatic creators, with studies coming from dance, occupational therapy, arts, Western anatomy and Eastern medicine, psychology, philosophy, and other sources, with a broad lens of references that allows us to reflect on the breadth of her somatic approach. Artistically, Bonnie directly influenced the development of the research foundations of Contact-Improvisation, taught at dance festivals, and institutes, and offered courses in dance departments at colleges across the United States. The creation of the BMCSM somatic system has influenced many procedures in the teaching-learning relationship in dance, artistic creation, and academic practices.

The study of BMCSM embraces cognitive and experiential learning of the varied body systems, studies the senses, the dynamics of perception, breathing and vocalization, includes attention to cellular and subcellular structures, embryology, ontogenetic development, neurocellular patterns of movement development united with the art of touching and repatterning. Supported by experiential anatomy, there is a triad of study procedures in BMCSM consisting of visualization, somatization, and embodiment. These procedures can be sequenced, alternated, cyclical, and even overlapped.

The first procedure, visualization or guided imagination (PEES, 2016) is the process of imagining aspects of the body and informing that it exists. There is a guide to this process: inner kinesthetic vision (BAINBRIDGE COHEN, 2015)⁷.

⁷ I will only go into this first procedure because it is directly related to the indication of pedagogical proposition that I tested an experiment on in this text, that of building somatic experience through guided imagination, but in this case, an auditory experimentation through somatic narrative, a slight variation of the "Visualization" proposed by Bonnie for "Audition".

To this day, Bainbridge Cohen works uninterruptedly on the systematic study of the BMCSM, and states the contributions received by a team of professional faculty, students, collaborators, and supporters in the complex organization of the materials of body systems, embryology, and patterns of human movement development. From time to time, discoveries are added to the BMCSM material. Likewise, within the Laban-Bartenieff System there is also constant expansion.

The encounter between Body-Mind CenteringSM principles and the Laban-Bartenieff System may have existed early on, with the experiences shared between Bainbridge Cohen and Bartenieff when they lived together and practiced research in New York. This contact was enhanced by dance professionals who conducted training and studies in both approaches, which allowed reverberations in both.

In the BMCSM training course material there are Labanian vocabularies and indications, and, within the Laban/Bartenieff System, we find some nomenclatures and somatic references from the BMCSM. In these mutual contributions, we can notice the performance of professionals such as Peggy Hackney, Martha Eddy, Ellen Goldman, Sharna Traver-Smith, who have studied and worked with influences from both systems (EDDY, 2018).

The interest of the study for both materials is aroused by the communion of areas that the creators aggregate. Both Bainbridge Cohen and Bartenieff have worked professionally as teaching dance as well as in the health field, simultaneously and alternately, with deep dedication to the study of the body in movement, supporting artistic creation and healing processes.

3. Encounters between BFs and PNBs

Bartenieff highlighted in her “fundamentals” the basic activities in the transitions from lying down to sitting, crawling, kneeling, standing, and walking as the basis of all body training (1977, 1980). The demonstration of exercises in the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM somatic approach goes through these basic positions, and Laban concepts are part of the principles contained in the exercises she

proposes. As a dancer, Irmgard organized exercises with concentration and awareness of the body in the pause and the kinesthetic awareness leading to movement. And also with relations between stability and mobility, always influenced by the intentionality and expressiveness of the movements. (BARTENIEFF, 1974).

According to Hackney (2002), the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM are a body approach that deals with patterns of connections in the body according to principles of efficient movement within a context that encourages personal expression and full engagement of the person in their psychophysical aspects. Thus, the study of Fundamentals brings ease to learning the complex language of movement, offering possibilities for movers (dancers, artists, performers, athletes...) to expand their movement possibilities by mastering connective patterns, learning to combine them, and paying attention to the transitions between key realizations in movement.

For this author, an interesting facet in the Fundamentals is its direct relationship to Laban's Movement Analysis work. This includes the recognition that movement contains a dynamic and form that are attitudinal. The exercises have the intention and spatial path and can be guided by Laban's theory. In Fundamentals, one can enter movement from either of these perspectives: anatomical aspects or Laban concepts.

In the exercises and educational proposal created in the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM⁸, we can highlight principles governing human movement: the bony landmarks, gradual rotation (scapula humeral rhythm, pelvic-femoral rhythm), postural dynamics, kinetic currents, respiratory support, internal muscle support, counterweight, initiation, and sequencing of movements, spatial intention, support of the impulse/effort elements (Effort), weight transfer for locomotion, development patterns, and body organizations.

Within the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM, six patterns of body organization were brought to the dance medium by indications in the exercises. These are: Breathing, Center-extremities Connection,

⁸ Based on written materials by Irmgard Bartenieff (Bartenieff, 1977, 1980) and also by the researcher-dancers HACKNEY (2002) and FERNANDES (2006).

Head-tail Connection, Top-Bottom Connection, Right-Left Side Connection, and Cross-Side Connection.

Peggy Hackney (2002) points out that in Bartenieff's studies, functional skills are the basis of expressive skills. That is, one must know how to move well and appropriately in order to express oneself with skill and aptitude in variations and intensities required in scenic performance. To create dances and express oneself artistically in movement, one must be able to rely on the foundations laid by movement development patterns. Once the connectivity patterns are structured, the intentionality of expressiveness can be worked out concerning form and qualities of momentum moving through space. The developmental patterns are initially established in a specific order and sequencing, from the most primordial for survival to the most elaborate with integration of the previous ones.

Practice and awareness of the patterns provide the organization of the whole body in action, and it is possible to express oneself with full integration and a vast repertoire. For example, suppose there have been some restriction, blockage, disease, or imitation of inappropriate motor habits during life. In that case, it is possible to restore body integration and connectivity through conscious practice so that inefficient compensations do not occur that persist and hinder the development and quality of movement.

Besides, Bonnie also organizes neurodevelopmental patterns brought into the field of dance, aggregated with other references by her studies and from the empiricism of her somatic investigation. In BMCSM, the Basic Neurocellular Patterns (BNP) that constitute our movement vocabulary, are neurologically related to ontogenetic development (human being) and plus to phylogenetic development (animals), connecting us to the aquatic and terrestrial environment, opening for a "non-anthropocentric" cosmology, in my point of view⁹. Currently, there are nineteen neurocellular patterns

⁹ This subject deserves a specific discussion about the relationships between humans with other beings and the environment within somatic experience. While producing a digression on the topic, I would like to highlight that within my somatic experience with BMCSM, embodying the pre-vertebrate neuro-cellular patterns provided me with a deep connection of interaction and interde-

of development, with seven corresponding to the pre-vertebrate movement (vibration, cellular respiration, sponge, pulsation, umbilical irradiation, Mouthing-analling and pre-spinal. There are also twelve corresponding to vertebrate patterns and their unfolding (spinal, homologous, homolateral, and contralateral) in a combination of initiation and sequencing in the two sub-patterns *Yield & Push* and *Reach & Pull* (BAINBRIDGE COHEN, 2018).

Bonnie points out that experiences with the *Yield & Push* patterns provide a sense of self and personal space (Kinesphere). And the experience of the *Reach & Pull* patterns “change our level of perception and provide an immediate and effortless transition from prone to hands and knees and from hands and knees to vertical postures (kneeling, sitting and standing)” (Bainbridge Cohen, 2018, p. 418). This transition allows us to aggregate the sense of self brought about by the pattern of *Yield & Push* to guide to outer space (outer Kinesphere) beyond our Kinesphere, connecting us to others and our environment.¹⁰

The Bartenieff FundamentalsSM and the BMCSM have connections between art and healing. In both, there is an indication to relive the developmental phases as a strategy to reorganize the body connectivity to undo blockages, and automatisms and to support the expansion in variations of creative movement elaboration. Moreover, both approaches have influenced and continue to fuel changes in the ways of teaching, practicing, and creating dances.

The relationship between internal and external movement, respect, and care for the other is also a common denominator. The two creators are part of migratory transits between cultures and possess intercultural relationships, a characteristic that can be felt is the

pendence in relation to other beings (marine and aquatic), broadening my relational experience and shifting my centrality as a human in the lived world perception. My experience brought empathy, connection, and deep attunement to diverse forms of existence in correlation with other living beings, a non-hierarchical or dominant perception of our joint existence on this planet.

¹⁰ Bonnie added to Laban's concept of Kinesphere, two other concepts, the inner Kinesphere, from within the body, and the outer Kinesphere, space beyond the personal Kinesphere, which comprises the space that can be reached with the extension of the limbs. (Bainbridge Cohen, 2018, p. 418).

interweaving of information and sources about cultures and movement, also present in both approaches are the interconnections between the internal and external, which can be derived from this mobility of being in one place and another, turning inward and outward.

4. Somatic narrative

The final part of this text is a study-oriented essay on the two somatic approaches of these two great creative dancers. In the last years, I have been dedicating myself to enter into the somatic experiences integrating the concepts contained in these practices. I end this text with a narrative in somatic perspective constructed by the embodiment of some connective principles from statements and movements. The narrative indicates a process generated from images and actions derived from the embodiment organized in writing as a somatic script of audio description in dance.

The narrative contained in this script points to a path of somatic fruition in which there is the proposal of reading guided by audition-imagination. Based on corporal experiences, the text is written so that the audition-imagination is not directly linked to capturing the external description of movements but can capture internal and moving impulses, not only the register of visible traces, but the intentionality that provokes movement. If you wish, I suggest a reading aloud, listening to the words and the reverberations they provoke in your being-body.

Through my moving experience as a dance artist and audio descriptor I propose an imaginary dialogue between Irmgard Bartenieff and Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, through my own experience. I report processes in link, from internal movements to transitions of position and form in space, from the floor to locomotion, in connections with Kinespheres (internal, personal, and external), in the integrated sharing between body and environment in search of a creative construction of possibilities to move and dance with kinesthetic awareness with the intentionality to undo automatisms to open a path of flow to the immanent expressivity of each body being.

5. Imaginary dialogue entre Bonnie e Bartenieff ¹¹

All our cells know who we are.

Vibration exists everywhere. The rhythmic phenomenon of condensation and expansion in waves permeates our universe through the ability of particles to attract or repel. The colors on the wall vibrate, the floor vibrates, my body resonates. How do you feel the vibration in your surroundings?

Every cell of the body breathes, the soles of the feet breathe, the back of the neck, the top of the head breathes, the belly breathes, the whole being breathes... Cellular respiration is at the base of our state of presence. It grows and shrinks. It widens and narrows. It inflates and withers, in fluid form the body is in connectivity with survival. I live, you live, we live.

In the fluid medium of the body's interior, exchanges take place. The force of the internal fluid movement through my membranes widens between the inside and outside of the cells. As a result, there is fluid movement throughout the body, like the ebb, and flow of the ocean within us. In the beginning there were three layers: endoderm, mesoderm and ectoderm, or the front body, middle body, and back body. Thus begins a transition from a state of being, of pure presence, to a state of doing, with the intention to engage.

The center, core, and navel emerge, radiating to the extremities: head, coccyx, hands, and feet. Movement can arise from each end and connect through the center. Right hand, left hand, right foot, left foot, head, tail, navel form a starfish, and the outer movement of the body arises in space. Space is formed from within.

Gradually a vertical axis begins to form, through the soft column of the central notochord between the digestive and neural tubes, the way between mouth and anus. The desire arises to reach through the mouth, and to seek satisfaction by the internal urge to express, and the support for spontaneous, emotional, and automatic movements arrives by pre-vertebrate patterns. Next comes a soft,

¹¹ Text is freely created from embodiments with the principles contained in the two somatic approaches by the author and is treated later as material to be narrated/read/listened to. In this imaginary dialogue between Bonnie and Bartenieff, premises from both systems are put together, alternately and overlapped from my personal experience of moving.

smooth, flexible movement of the spine from the head snaking in sequential thrusting and undulating movements that spread throughout the body with internal focus.

In BMCSM, the search for centering body and mind is a process that is based on experience: experience of feeling, perceiving, and acting in discovering dialogues and relationships between internal cellular movements and external expressions of movement in space. The guide in this process is the inner kinesthetic vision. Our first language is movement.

Both BMCSM and Bartenieff FundamentalsSM share a view of movement in conjunction with a neurodevelopmental approach. In BMCSM, the Basic Neurocellular Patterns (BNP) make up our movement vocabulary and are a series of movements that typically emerge and integrate during infancy. They are the foundation on which our movements emerge; the patterns guide our interaction with space, gravity, and enable the discovery of our sense of self and our relationship to other beings and the environment around us.

Movement patterns present themselves sequentially in each of us, within our stories. Each pattern is contained in latency in those that follow. After the pre-vertebrates, the vertebrates: spinal, homologous, homolateral and contralateral. Head-tail connections, upper and lower limbs, right and left sides, cross sides of the body. Within each are present the intentions to yield and to push. Giving way to the head on the ground and pushing, giving way to the legs on the ground and pushing through the feet. A sense of self and personal space settles into being and moving. Pausing.

Then come the arrangements for reaching out and bringing back. Reaching with our hands and bringing back to the center. We add the sense of ourselves and take ourselves into outer space, into an outer kinesphere, beyond our personal space, the personal Kinesphere, enabling us to connect to each other and to our environment. Floor. Effortless transitions appear from lying position to hand and knee support, from hand and knee support to standing upright. Crawling, kneeling, firm support. Intentionality in acting.

The ground is the first support, landing. The air, constitutes space to advance and reach... Gravity and levity...

Along with the developmental patterns are the exercises of the Bartenieff FundamentalsSM in the experience of the body in movement. How does the body move? Why does the body move?

Bone marks contribute to dynamic alignment in alternating pause and movement. Breathing guides transitions: the body opens from a large X through the floor to collect the lower unit. Ischium and heels in imaginary lines connect hip to lower limbs, trochanters of femur lead to a lateral shift of weight center with transfer to sitting, skull and sacrum-coccyx guide to change limb supports. Hands glide across the floor, gain speed in arm circles, and promote a trunk shift on the floor with hands that draw the horizontal plane of the table with attention, receptivity, and communication. The connection between hands and scapulae and the impulse to reach out with the hands projects the intentionality to the external space. Space calls, and with it the desire to move to the right-back-bottom diagonal. The space dynamically organizes the whole body.

The basic exercises are performed on the floor in a *seemingly* simple raise and lower, flex and extend limbs or trunk segments. Focusing on internal changes, functional actions are performed with minimal effort and a determined space with diagonals, axes, planes, and spatial intention.

The body goes through different forms varying its relationship with space until it reaches locomotion, progressively, procedurally. The eyes open and move from the recognition of the image of oneself through hand gestures, from the encounter with weight and the action of pushing the ground nearby, to the desire to reach for objects in outer space and open up to the environment with sounds, temperatures, and colors. Red, soft, warm. There is also the encounter with the other, and a relationship begins.

Touch. To give and to receive. You and Me. We know who we are.

In somatic practice, we are encouraged to validate our unique experience and venture into the discovery of the self-regulating and survival intelligences of the Body-Self. Through them we can perceive and act on changes and transformations. Entering the experimental anatomy connected with the dynamic space around us in-pulses and activates the way of moving-being-in-the-world. It

allows us to recognize patterns, reactions, and sensations integrated in structures organized by the life history of each one of us, in a singular way, but woven in the historical network shared among all of us, in each time and place. To each one, knowing oneself in feeling, perceiving, and acting opens up choices to resignify and continuously transform the corporal existence to create, dance, and life.

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