



Somatic Expression® - Jamie McHugh Body Wisdom for Modern Times



Ocean Mosaic (2021) www.naturebeingart.org

"Healing depends on experiential knowledge. You can be fully in charge of your life only if you can acknowledge the reality of your body, in all its visceral dimensions" - Bessel Van der Kolk

"In sum, one might describe the healing arc of trauma therapy – at both personal and communal levels – as a movement through different somatic stages. One could put it like this: wounded by a foreign body (a common trope for trauma), we become a nobody (dissociation) that requires connection with another body (healing) in order to become somebody again (recovery). Moving thus from traumatized nobody to reintegrated somebody is an empathic opening to everybody who has suffered pain." - Richard Kearney

Dear Friends,

As many of you know, Stephen Porges' Polyvagal Theory is currently quite popular in therapeutic circles with its neurobiological understanding of how trauma impacts our autonomic nervous system (ANS). Below the threshold of awareness, the ANS automatically reacts and responds to inner and outer stimuli, either ramping us up or calming us down. This cannot happen solely as a mental exercise, *talking* ourselves out of stress and into calm; we also need to be *touched* and *soothed*.

Richard Kearney (above) has posited an eloquent summation of a therapeutic process based on this understanding: a benevolent, trusted being (often a therapist, but could be anybody) creates the conditions for healing to happen through empathic connection. This emphasis on relational healing is spot on - and there is also another relationship that can be overlooked, that of self-restoring and recovering self.

Sometimes, the connection with another body to become somebody is the benevolent contact we give ourselves. When we meet our body on its own terms as an element of nature that moves, breathes, sounds out and settles in, we recover our birthright as a sensate, curious, evolving creature. We become once again a part of the **native** world. (Middle English *natif*, from Middle French, from Latin *nativus*, from *natus*, past participle of *nasci* **to be born**.)

Centralizing attention in our breathing body, slowing time down with the extended exhale, relaxing into our structure and receiving the plenitude of calming sensation de-escalates high alert muscles, coheres scattered thought and spreads contentment throughout our inner landscape. By inviting in and savoring comfort, ease, and support, we become the reality of the body we are designed to be: solid as mountain, fluid as river, spacious as sky. This is the magic of being a human creature in a material form on the planet Earth, being born over and over, becoming native once again.

I hope you can join me online in exploring somatic self-relational practice in the safety and comfort of your own domain.

Warmly,
Jamie

June Offerings

The Power of the Pause: Breathing Room

Sunday, June 13: 9-10am or 4-5pm PDT

Saturday, June 26: 9-10am or 4-5pm PDT

Experience 360 degree breathing and individual variations in any of these FREE hour-long sessions. This practical somatic tool for dissipating anxiety and stabilizing attention is simple, accessible and easily repeatable. Open to all, these sessions are a good introduction to basic somatic practice and [Embodied Mindfulness](#).

REGISTRATION & FUTURE DATES/TIMES [HERE](#)

Thinking Body, Sensing Mind

June 28- July 21, Mondays and Wednesdays, Group E (10-11am) or Group F (4-5pm) PDT

A progressive sequence of journeys into the inner landscape of the body designed to increase awareness, relaxation, and presence by highlighting sensory experience with the basics: breath, vocalization, alignment, self-contact, and subtle movement. This month's series is focused on Becoming Breathing Rock: sitting upright with ease and support for enlivened and relaxed stability. *Pay What You Are Able Sliding Scale: \$60-250/Series*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / REGISTRATION [HERE](#)

SOMATIC MOVEMENT SKILLS LAB

June 27, July 11 & 25, August 8 & 22
9am-Noon PDT

Over the past 20 years, I have curated a template of simple, accessible, and effective somatic practices for tending and befriending the soma – the body of nature. These practices have arisen out of what I have identified as the five somatic technologies indigenous to all bodies - breath, vocalization, contact, movement and stillness. Each session, while related to the larger topic of movement, will have a distinct focus and a repertoire of specific practices:

Breath - June 27
Contact - July 11
Stillness - July 25
Vocalization - August 8
Integration - August 22

Included: All live sessions (recorded for future playback and download) plus 2 individual online consults + compendium of written practices. Group size limited. *Pay What You Are Able Sliding Scale: \$325-650 Registration/Additional Information* [HERE](#)

INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

I am offering individual somatic coaching sessions online as a one-time consult - or in an ongoing way - with a "pay what you are able" sliding scale in light of the current global financial uncertainty. More about individual sessions [HERE](#)

30 minutes (\$45-90) or 60 minutes (\$80-160)
Reply to this email to schedule a session.

Jamie McHugh is an interdisciplinary artist, somatic movement specialist and the creator of Somatic Expression® - Body Wisdom for Modern Times. His somatic-expressive practices for re-wilding the body, mending the mind and restoring the spirit have been developed through intensive study over time with Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Emilie Conrad, Anna Halprin, Thich Nhat Hanh and the wild places of the planet, and through working with diverse groups of people internationally for over 40 years. Jamie continues to study and research the mystery of the body as an element of nature and as an expression of our humanity.

FEATURED VIDEO: [Movement and Stillness \(2021\)](#)



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