

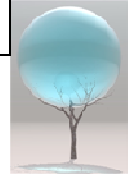


As Featured in *Healthy Times*

Connecting Relationships

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Recently I had the opportunity to roll freely around on the floor exploring physical laws of gravity, momentum, resistance and flow with a 93 year old Alexander Technique Teacher in a Contact Improvisation Workshop. This activity alone places her in the above average category for her age. How does one maintain agility, flexibility, balance and such amazing coordination to this degree? Upon completing the workshop she said that it felt as if we were two kittens playing. I've been experimenting with this idea as I connect with all things throughout my day. In observing my habits I've noticed a tendency to tighten muscles unnecessarily in various activities. Does this tightening habit allow me to be as fluid in motion as my dear 93 year "young" colleague?

Consistent with "*Healthy Times*" and this being the transition period into a new year it seems appropriate to reflect, remember and release habits that are not contributing to our overall life quality. We are ultimately in relationship to everything all the time; the sound of a siren, the contour of a cup to our hand, the toothbrush to our teeth, and our feet to the floor. In each instant, we can work with gravity and use the support from surface contact to increase momentum, decrease resistance, tighten, release and/or flow. Exploring balance, flexibility and agility in our bodies and our lives can be open to a continuum of potential all of the time.

Here are a few things to observe or "play" with that can easily be included throughout your daily activities. In your exploration, please note that there is no right or wrong. There is simply the opportunity to observe and then decide if this habit serves you or can you allow a new opportunity or orientation to occur in relationship with your own internal structural support and contact to surfaces?

1. In standing, do you put more weight on one leg than the other?
2. Do you put more weight on the inside, outside, front or back of each foot? (You may want to note where your shoes wear.)
3. How much effort do you use to hold a pen, spoon or toothbrush? How heavy are these objects?
4. As you sit in a chair or a vehicle, do you allow the surface to support you or do you collapse into it?
5. In carrying a purse or briefcase do you tend to carry it on the same shoulder or in the same hand? If so, what happens with the rest of your body in supporting this weight?
6. As you answer the phone or begin to speak, do you find yourself gasping for air or holding your breath?
7. Which position are you in as you go to sleep? As you awaken?
8. Do you tend to carry things on your left hip or right hip?
9. How does your weight effect your movement or posture?
10. After eating, do you feel full and/or satisfied? Do you notice the difference between the two?

The above patterns are basics to play with and ponder to connect our fluidity in relationships. Generally, we unconsciously repeat patterns because we are unaware of other options. In observing ourselves, we tend to wake up to habits that may be limiting our capacity to shift, change, grow and develop fresh perspectives, or just be spontaneous and play or move more like kittens. What do you want and where do you really want to be in each moment? Although the above observations might be categorized as body awareness patterns, they are really connecting relationships that cross many spectrums in how we relate and move. Do you want to hold the same patterns this year or would you like to be surprised by new ones? Sometimes the difference is between having pain and not having pain, hitting a golf ball consistently or finishing first in a competition. The choice is yours. How agile and flexible are you in connecting relationships and exploring new options? How mobile do you see yourself being at 93 years young?

Christie Johnson helps people discover their unique patterns of thinking and moving in relation to all that they do. She helps executives and performers mitigate stage fright, seniors and surfers improve balance, gardeners and golfers improve range of motion, pregnant women and their partners expand their comfort, and riders and runners to release muscle tension. Free your Form, Function and Flow.

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