

Movement: A Space for Passion

By Peter Kane

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If you're not moving you're dead.

The key to immortality lies in the mind and it rides on the breath.

Be with what you're feeling and add movement to it.

The purpose of life is to be in a state of movement.

As a counselor and teacher I have always sought the deepest and most experiential work. In breathwork, we go deep to the core of our issues, while also expanding into bliss. As my career grew I felt the need for more movement than just breathing, spiritual and emotional work allowed. Emotional work helps us accept and embrace taboo emotions like anger, sadness and fear and involves moving on a deep level. I have found physical movement and dance to be the perfect way to create the space for moving into another taboo emotion — joy.

Movement therapy or dance therapy are alone great vehicles for working with the whole spectrum of emotion. I have also found them to be an important addition to balance the other more spiritual, mental, psychological, and emotional work I do. In the late 80's I began to incorporate a form of authentic movement in my work. It usually looks like people dancing without partners to up beat music, but it is more than just that, it is a space and invitation to move feelings, and a place for connecting with and expressing joy, passion and aliveness.

In emotional and psychological work we need to be willing to step into a feeling. When we allow a feeling to surface, we're trusting it, but we are also choosing it. If we suspect that we are angry we need to begin to give it voice and in doing so, our anger will more easily surface. Contacting a feeling is like pulling on a thread and seeing what unravels. An even better metaphor is that we are letting go and allowing ourselves to roll down hill and see what is there. The same is true with feelings of joy, aliveness, love, and passion. We can't expect to know these feelings fully when we avoid activities where we are more likely to feel them. Moving our bodies is such an activity. Moving our body can connect us with our passion about being in it.

Stagnation

Most people's lives have become increasingly stagnant and sedentary. This is much the same as our emotional stagnation or suppression. We are not only in denial of feeling and emotion we are in denial of our aliveness, love and passion. We maintain this suppression by avoiding the physical postures that would give these emotions the space to be felt. In my life movement is one of the easiest ways to create that space. To dance and move, is to roll with, and pull on, the string of passion and aliveness.

All movement is good. Walking, physical labor, exercise, and dancing all create increased movement in our core. The value of movement is increased when we give ourselves space to move authentically with the feelings in our core. This is what Authentic Movement is. It is expressing our feelings in the way we move. It is moving honestly instead of moving to look good. In doing so we can learn more about how we feel and we can tap feelings we have avoided including joy.

Moving authentically

Authentic Movement has two definitions that I know of that are used in psycho-spiritual communities. Perhaps most popular is the work of Gabriel Roth. She works similarly to how I do, by playing music and encouraging participants to move authentically. She also defines and encourages people to move in what she has discovered to be five natural rhythms, which are: flow (feminine), staccato (masculine), chaos, lyrical and stillness. She plays mostly instrumental music that inspires these rhythms. Authentic movement is also frequently used to describe the work of therapists who are trained in Movement Therapy. This work would usually incorporate similar things but would also include other tools, movements and perspectives about the psychology of movement. This work is done individually and in groups and sometimes would be done without music.

Five rhythms meets rock and roll

I sometimes describe the movement work I do as Gabriel Roth meets rock and roll. I teach the five rhythms and invite all emotion, but given that breathwork gives such a beautiful opportunity to connect with our flowing, lyrical, and stillness aspects I use movement to bring in more of the passion piece. I play more than just rock

and roll, but the music I select tends to be up beat dance music with positive lyrics. I also add relationship elements that help people use movement to connect with relationship, community or tribal issues.

Describing a process as masculine or feminine can serve to elaborate on some of the subtleties of it. I don't believe that anything is purely masculine or feminine but using those words to describe both sides of our emotional process, I would say that both our masculine and our feminine aspects have been suppressed. Our masculine power, passion, and instinctual emotions like anger have been taboo and so has our feminine, flexible, and flowing side. I think it is interesting to note that most good psycho-spiritual work addresses both. Breathwork helps us embrace our masculine emotions and be here more

powerfully in our body and it also helps us transcend and know spirit and bliss. Movement is similar; it helps us give voice to our power and our delicate nature.

Movement connects us with so much ... endurance, breathing, life urge, space, and abundance. I wonder, is sweat masculine, feminine, or just human?

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