**Term 3 Lesson 3**

**6.10.2021**

We will start with the 2 improvisations: caressing the floor and relating to gravity.

Followed by surface caressing and giving your body the touch it needs today, and moving into the touch.

* Filling yourself with the present moment, and connecting to the state of your being and body now
* Connecting to your rhythm, to your breath, to the life and movement that is happening in your body now
* Gently calling your mind and thoughts to tune to your body.

Thank you very much, and I let you slowly come back to your screens. It was beautiful. Take your time…

It was beautiful to observe you all, all very different, and I feel the connection is starting to work well…

Would anybody like to share something about the week?

Have you had time to dive into the surface/self caressing?

Have you discovered something?

How do you feel now to open yourself to this subject?

Take a moment to recollect yourself, and connect to your sensational memory…

Was there difference this last week, compared to the first one.

Pedro: *It was a very strong week. There were real real heavy obstacles to go through, the times I would just lie on the floor, and couldn’t do anything. THere was extreme resistance, I think for the first time I had such feelings. But this morning was very beautiful. I did it for half an hour, and then it came automatically, and I was happy. I just found myself doing it and without forcing myself, without giving myself a score to activate the xercise. It just came. And it was beautiful to witness. And now it was also very different. so there was an evolution. I am lacking in words. This last week has been very windy. Thank you for listening.*

Berrak: It is like the movement, it is fine to lack the words.

Buse: *I tried to do it every day, some days 10minutes and some 30 minutes. But I did it everyday. It was something for me. In the beginning there was a resistance too, but I don’t know really what this resistance is for, what am I resisting. But this week I have slept too much, like 10 hours, 12 hours, it is related, I also work on a new mediation technique, but I think both practises are related to this. First I feel so out of this exercise, like I am touching but I am not there. But then through the touching I came back into my body, something changed and I feel so intense. And then I feel a strong energy and I start to dance belly dancing, and it really helped me, to remind me that I do not need to push myself to do something. I just really tried to stay in my feelings. It was good for me.*

Katrin: *I really enjoyed myself this week, and my wish would be to have this homework for one more week, because I did not have time to do it every day, I have a feeling I am getting dependent on this. It brought me to a very special mood, I felt tender, open and full at the same time, caring and loving for myself. I felt that if Ican give this to myself then I can give it to everybody, so I felt that as a facilitator  this is like our ground.Because when we have this we can give it to others. And I really felt very good about this. And in my classes this week, I was touching the people all the time. I really enjoyed it and they enjoyed it too. So that was nice. Somehow it reminds me of pranayama practise. Our teacher works often with the idea that the air that we breathe in and out is always caressing us. It is caressing the inside of the nose, the air passage, and this gives me also the tender caring loving mood.*

Berrak: It is true, you will remember that everything in our body, all structure, and inner movement caress each other, we are constantly and innerly inthe caressing movement, with different pressures of course.

Eliska: *My experience last week was also better, and I feel I am so grateful because the real life is growing inside my body, my belly, and it was really nice because then I caress myself, I felt I caress my baby, and it was really nice. And I enjoyed it, I felt I took care of myself, during this exercise. It is a really nice week.*

Steffen: *I did it everyday, and for mostly quite a long time, and it is good to make it for a long time. Something is getting smoother in me, it changes the way I move, and it breaks some movement patterns. To have the hands somewhere and the feet somewhere, it is not so easy to be in the automatic normal way of moving. It is really good to feel the touch, it goes deeper into the body, sometimes I can move the skin, and the the muscles, and move the muscles with the skin, and the tissues in between, and it can go even deeper, and it reaches to the other side, and if I use both hands, as one on one side and the other on the other, then I feel the flow, and what happens in between, like a connection. and it is nice to go with it. And we had some time with Katrin together, and it was nice to work alone and then to have some connection with her, it was a good way to communicate with each other, and have this time without doing anything. And yesterday Nisan invited me and we did it over zoom and it was very nice too.*

Berrak: Very nice that you can feel the structure, like skin, muscle, and tissue level and the bones. You can even access the feeling of the bone marrow, through the touch the mind is able to access the structures of the body. Beautiful journey.

Tomas: *I just want to say that Pedro is often beginning the feedback and I appreciate it, and I am telling myself that I have to be more active, because usually I give myself time to think and take my time, and I think it is interesting to just start and change my dynamic. But to come to your question, I got ill during the weekend actually, I tried to do the exercise but it was a little more difficult, I was more closed, it was harder to approach myself, I found that I was doing a self massage, and going into the structure, and I suddenly found my hands working on my body and I observed. So this kind of state, which was much needed, and I just navigated with my mind, to have discipline in this nice caressing, but it was what my body needed. It was not like the last times, with this exercise, that I could create this bubble and go really deep, this didn’t happen, and it was another process, because of illness and other things. And there was this question about self healing, which I discussed with Berrak, so I was also observing what this infection in my sinuses is doing, and how I can observe it during this exercise… how I can navigate.. I did not come up with a smart suggestion or idea, but just sharing my questions, and observations.*

Nisan: *For me, when I do the exercise in a way that I am used to, I can make it flow and I can feel the fluidity and the caress, but when I do it in a way that I really focus listen what my  my body what it needs, it is like, this week I got really stuck, it seems to me that it was different than the exercise, and I was massaging myself  found these points, like I was going around them and doing different pressures. And when I fond these points that are blocked and it doesn’t move, and I stay with it and I keep listening and listening, and then I feel that I am not able to move anymore, but I also feel that something is trying to figure out a way to move by itself. It was not easy, because I just wanted to be free, so although it takes half an hour, while you wait there, for something happens, that was it.*

I said last week: we would need to have the openness to see where the touch can lead us. When I listened again to what you have shared in last week’s lesson, and when I see you doing this exercise, and listen to those who expressed themselves,  I can only say: verbalise your discomfort or frustration, the joy and the ecstasy, AND keep on working, let them not stop you from going deeper, let them not stop you from refreshing, renewing yourself. These are just things, as we focus on such precisou and deep things, that we start to create images, art, thoughts and everything.. but it is only the beginning. the best way is to verbalize them, to write them down, paint, but mainly to verbalise them, because you will have to talk about them as a facilitator, and then continue to work. It is extremely endless.

This week I would like you to reflect and meditate, and/or experiment on two questions:

* What happens in the presence of the touch?
* What happens in the absence of the touch?

Here I would like to share some technical remarks and observations (please feel free to add or share yours too), I would like you to become more active from now on, and the reason why I make you talk more and more is, to prepare you for it, as a facilitator you will have to talk about these things, and you have to work also on your patience and your ability to be able to follow someone’s very intimate and personal experience. Because most of the time, as you also experience yourself, it is not so clear to talk about these things. And most of the time the client will need to speak to you, because we are mostly trained to speak, and then you cannot tell the client not to speak, because they will be frustrated, and we don’t want that. So when you are listening to them it is as if you are putting pieces of a puzzle together, and trying really to understand what is going on in that person. That’s why I am always inviting you to talk and express yourself, even if you feel clumsy or uneasy about it, it is part of the practise. :

* The touch and contact with the floor enables to activate the body in the “right” way: depending on how the body is.

What does this mean? How do we activate the body in the right way?

Does anybody have an idea? What do I mean by this?

* *so the movement starts from the centre? the core and the whole body activates and moves together??….* yes but this comes after a while, because not everyone will activate the core and move from the centre in the beginning.

* *the moment before I started to dance or have a contact with the floor, I realised that I was anxious, I was ahead of my head, so the contact aligns my body, the alignment happens by itself.. the moment I dive in the water my body know that it has to swim, so when I lay down on the floor something similar happens.. something very complex, an intelligence starts to work, that I cannot comprehend even, but I know it when it happens. That’s what I can say.* very nice, so some kind of an archaic reaction that starts in the body.. very good.

* *we can give ourselves to gravity, we start there, no? like children, like babies, we don’t have fight in the vertical, we are not distracted…*yes but giving yourself to gravity is not for granted right? it is the result of a long term work

* *to realise what parts are touching the ground, and to scan where the weight is…* yes that is already closer, to become aware what is touching the floor, yes, and what else? What makes this the right way?

* *starting from pleasure?* yes but that’s also the result of a long term practise. I can assure you that you will meet people, that when you lay them on the floor they will feel anything but pleasure. But the practise will very naturally lead them to pleasure and they will even forget that they were feeling bad lying on the floor the first time.

* *the body is becoming more permeable, because it becomes softer and lighter and you can move in another way, it is the gravity of the body that have a different reaction, everything reacts very different…* Yess! And why?

* *It is the pressure as well, because when we are standing the pressure is more, and when we lie down the pressure spreads out.* Yes that’s true too but why?

* *because the head and spine are aligned.* yes we said it already, and why??
* *and you rest into gravity, the earth, the ground…* yes and how and why does this happen.. it is soo easy…
* *because we let go….* yes that’s what we do. but we learn how to let go..

I will tell you: because the floor is always straight. and it is always the same. And the straightness of this clear reference, it is the clearest reference we can get, and as we are reactive animals, so the floor teaches us.. if we get the task that we have to remain on the floor. The floor and the gravity teaches us how to adapt, adjust, to become more permeable, to soften, to let go, to have the pleasure, all these things that you have mentioned happen.

It shows you in the first five minutes, where your client is, where his/her problems are. It shows where the stiffness is.

Everyone has the same perception of the floor, everyone will say it is straight, and it is hard, it is cold or warm, it will always be the same. If the body is stubborn to move towards the floor, if the resistance is there to give in, then the floor is so stubborn that it will force us in time to change, because it will not change so you will have to change. or the client will have to change. And you have all changed.

And we will have to melt. so the melting can start there.

So this brings us to the movement. For example, I have a client, very athletic, and she is in the beginning of her journey with me. ANd we are only doing floor work. She is able to move her arms and legs, because she cannot move only legs and arms in caressing she was obliged to turn on the floor. But she was turning in a block, she was turning to her side, and then to the back etc. But because her reaction, that when I move I have to hold myself. When I have to hold myself, then I have no more motion in my body, it is difficult to move a holding mass, away from gravity and make all the weight transfer to another position. it is an enormous effort, for the body and the soul and spirit and not much pleasure. And I also noticed very quickly that she has a tendency to arch her lower back while on the floor or while turning away from it. So I used the metaphor of saying try to touch the floor with the parts that are not normally touching the floor. so she started to straighten the lumbar spine, which moved her solar plexus and brought motion to her ribcage, and to lower the sternum, then she continued and then little by little I managed to make her find the floor each time, with a different part of her body. And in three sessions she discovered the spiral. She started to roll and spiral and all sorts of things, and her torso slowly opened.

* if the body cannot move towards the floor, the floor is so stubborn and it will force us to break our stubbornness, and we will have to melt.
* So the rolling and the contact with the floorand the touch prepares the body to the rolling and brings us to the activation of spirals on a basic level. We need the spiral movement, in order to access our own spiral movement. I am talking about our natural spirals, not the spiral movement that dancers learn to do. because everything in the body functions in spirals.
* The rolling and activation of the spirals contributes to the feeling and understanding of how the body functions. It is not an anatomical understanding. If every client would start to experience the pleasure of the spirals, he/she will innerly understand how she/he functions. But understand it in the body.  Also it opens the space feeling in the body….

Beliz: *When you were talking about some of the dancers and spiraling… I think with my work with some of the dancers, even though they know very well how to spiral, they have these micro falls, when they are just on the floor, because they are so used to be in control, they do not care about the micro level differences inside, they don’t really feel it, and actually it adds up, especially when they are up. And even the work finding the natural spiral feeling on the floor then eventually changes the dancer’s movement in the space. The very small difference between the smooth transition in the spirals versus the micro falls makes a big difference later on . When I was training as a dancer I was doing a lot of these micro falls, and I was used to it, but then when my body started understanding the different levels, it became different when I was movement in between the levels. And this understanding of the spirals has many echoes in the movement.*

This is the outcome of working on the range of movement. THat’s why the floor work is so important. When you discover the micro range of this turning and opening, then you will be standing will have a big effect. The sensation of your movement in standing position will be more subtle. As a performer this adds to your quality of movement, but even as a non-performer, just the sheer sensation of this movement, which enables you to move your body in space, will give you such a feeling, that you will feel great. You will feel the movement travelling through your body. and this is called ecstasy, without any drugs, just a little bit of sweating and regular work.

**Improv**: still working on the touching and caressing of the floor, but this time in order to introduce and work on spirals, on rolling on the floor, spiralling of the bod parts without losing the connection of the touch, also letting the hands and arms and other body parts caress the body and not only the space. As if we were blind but needed to roll on the floor, and we didn’t wish to lose contact with the floor,  so that you are melting through the stages…Experiment…

Beautiful…

Please this exercise is something for you to add to your bank of exercise.

This openness, the feeling and the sensation of the possibility of movement is very attractive. For us as facilitators it is important because it unites our body, and prepares us for working with the contact. And for the clients it is extremely liberating and motivating, that they will be more inclined to experiment more complicated stuff. We need to give this first. the sensation of pleasure so that they feel attracted. The bodily satisfaction and the attractiveness that the spirals cause in our inner space give confidence to us and the client to experiment more, and to start playing. That’s what you have just done after a while, you started playing.

It connects us to something that we have maybe forgotten: you can ask the question (to your client, but also to yourself) When was the last time you have just been rolling on the floor like a little child?

And it is not without reason, what you have all said in the beginning today, and what Yigit so nicely pointed out, that the touch is like this intelligence of the body, that I know, when I dive into the water I swim.. so this is like an instinct that we all have. This need to caress and to touch is like an instinct. But we somehow forgot that.

Last week I said: “Take a moment to feel this immense landscape, of your body and with it of your entire self, now”

This is something you’ll need to remind not only yourself but also your client.

* This is an inexhaustible practise. The more we do it the more subtle we start to be. It also is an immense source of health.

Of course I cannot confirm this 100%, or even scientifically I cannot prove it (although I am sure that somewhere crazy scientists are making scientific research about this) and probably most doctors will laugh at me, but I just know it is true. And I wish that you will be able to put this practise into your life, and maintain your health. I believe that the healing and care is not when we get ill, but it is so that we do not get ill. I think that when we have this daily connection and this relation with ourselves, then if we get ill, we have the chance to accept the illness more truly and start the treatments, and have harmony within the healing process.

This practise is powerful in the sense that maybe it cannot treat illness (like medicine), but it can prevent the illness from settling into our body and spirit. It creates something within us that prevents the body from getting ill.

Would anyone like to have a moment to share something?

Katerina: *I think this is really connected with our development, when we are in the womb, and it is already known that the touch during the birth, it is important to press and touch each part of the body, in order to activate some hormones for the development, and also during breastfeeding it is important that you change the sides so that touch develops the brain. It is quite logical that we can give it to ourselves, it reminds us to restructure our body, and build the structure again and again, and it sounds really clear and logical.*

It creates something inside of the body that is like a protection. (Berrak gives an example of an accident and how she then healed herself)

Katrin: *My experience of working with this practise is that I was doing it a lot and my old injuries came up again, they were there but they were there in a way I could work with them. I cannot say that they disappear but they open up and they force me to be more gentle and more understand what is going on there, instead of covering it. And this feels not always pleasant but actually healing. it is really not  that the issues disappear but something is changing, and this feels really good, and healing. So also the old stuff comes up again, 30 years and older.*

Berrak: That is true, and the more we do this, the memory of the old stuff dissolves.

Beliz: *this is really also one of the feedbacks from the client, because as they do it, they get scared, the pain comes back, some things that they were feeling, things that were put to sleep awaken.. and this frustrates a person, and then discussing what real healing is, is it to cover up things, or to open up and bring it to a level to live with it. And we as people working physically we are more used to it, but normal people who come as clients, it can be really shocking. THat healing goes through this path, but it also shifts the relationship with the client, it becomes really real within the session.*

Pedro: *I feel that it is not only on the physical side, but also in the emotional pain and the trauma, that comes out through the work, and suddenly you find yourself in a place where you thought: well this was gone, I don’t want to go there anymore, and it comes and finds you, and it is very nice to see that one can work also on this level, the body, the mind and the spirit…And we see again how everything is connected..*

The parts of our being unite, and come together. And we as facilitators we need to be united with ourself.

Tomas: *During the springtime, I had these old memories from teenage times came up in me, due to this practise, and I realised, how much I can keep on opening these things while I am working and performing…so i lose the focus on opening, all the while I am performing and working a lot, and I was wondering how I can balance these things. just this observation and question… When there is too much stress it is harder to get deeper, and open the space, because you need to hold yourself and execute, it is hard to work on openness while you are preparing for a performance for example.*

because maybe it makes you feel more fragile and vulnerable. But if you would be able to practise this, you will be able to go over this threshold of vulnerability and fragility, and it turns into strength, and then the mindset changes, the mindset of coping with stress, when you are open the stress has a less impact on your functioning. When you are holding the stress can knock you over even more. Keep on going, this openness will change your approach to the stress and even to the performance. THe more you open the stronger of a performer you will be, and when you are more united with yourself it is easier to focus on what you need to perform.

Beliz: *I would like to add something to Tomas, I found it very helpful for me*, *in my experience and in the people I work with. That’s why this kind of work, like when you become a facilitator, that’s why the purpose of you being there. Working with someone, having a witness, as you are going through something like that.. as a professional having a supervision session or having a session with someone, for them not to really do it, but for them to be there for you. That also really helps and strengthen and find that strength to go into the deep diving.*

And it is difficult this deep diving, I am aware of that.

Yigit: *surprisingly in the sessions and also in the second workshop that I had, that it just came out, I didn’t know, I was hiding away and it came out, and it was based on fear, I was shaking inside, but the exercises of these tender touches, on one hand they open us on receptivity, or let me just talk from my own experience… it opens up sensibility, sensuousness and openness, and on the other hand, I become more vulnerable, but the more I touch myself, and becoming vulnerable on the long run is not easy, it is hard, but the more I go deeper in the practise of the touching, and tender contact with the floor, help me to comprehend, what I can do when these things pop out, how I can tenderly take space for myself, and take care, and first define my own needs. Create that bubble, gently, around myself and for myself and let these things happen, and in that sense, maybe I cannot release that stress all of the sudden but if I release my body, I know that I will let it flow through my body, and it takes me to the place where I am flowing through the fear, and I am gently caressing my fear., when I am going through it. It is very hard, it is interestingly painful that happens on the inside.*

Yes, because it forces us to overcome something. This overcoming is not always easy, but you know… this inner perception, and this opening of this depth, what we call depth, of course it has its heavy sides. Yes it does make us vulnerable, it does overwhelm us with information and emotion…but doesn’t stay like this. All these sensations, and experiences bring you to another place and then they fade away. It is not that you become immune to sensitivity, it is not that you become not vulnerable anymore, but it is just that you are full already. You already fulfil certain voids, needs, you bring light to the dark sides, you make soft what was hard, you tonify the sleeping parts, etc, and then you move on. Because otherwise you would not survive. But as with everything, we transform, we grow because this experience changes us. And then all of the sudden, you are not so much touched anymore, but then you get touched by someone else who is allowing himself to get touched, or you are touched because someone is getting in touch with their vulnerability…and this is how life is. So it is normal that now you will have periods when everything feels too much. That’s why I said, verbalise it and keep on working.

Yigit: *it sounds like a transformation in and of itself…*

Yes, that’s true, that’s why this is work, we keep on working. It is something that both facilitator and client keep on working.

Katerina: *And maybe it is also that in time both start to get used to looking forward to this, that it will come again this difficulty, they get used to be really happy to be able to recognise the different states, and they want to go there to the dark sides, and they take initiative, and know they can work with it, and then it doesn’t become so heavy anymore. And it takes time.*

Thank you very much and have a lovely evening. And if you have time, now do this exercise one more time. Enjoy it.