

# BEING IN MOVEMENT: INTENTION AS A SOMATIC MEDITATION<sup>1</sup>

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I have heard it's possible to whip a tablecloth out from under a table setting without disturbing all the dishes and cutlery -- if the tablecloth is snapped out in just the right way. If we could somehow whisk away the physical body in just that same manner, what would be left? Imagine that a complete, detailed holographic image of the body would be left hovering in midair.

What I mean to suggest by this is the difference between the material body itself and the underlying body image or self-image. If the body is thought of as computer hardware, then the body image is the software or programming, which organizes the body for doing and being. The essence of the body image or self-image is *intention*, which is the commitment to carrying out some action, and an individual's body image is the sum total of his or her acts of choice.

It is possible to experience the body image and its functioning directly. However, just as a sponge can completely absorb some liquid so that we don't see anything but the sponge, so the bones and muscles "soak up" the body image, and people do not ordinarily notice the separate existence of the body image and the way it functions to organize the body. In fact, of course, the body and the body image are not separate, but since it can help us understand and improve how we function, it can be very helpful to examine the body image as though it were something that existed in its own right.

This article is a description of a systematic means for investigating the way intentions operate. (I call this movement study Being In Movement® mindbody training.) Starting with an exercise for experiencing how intention leads to movement, I will go on to describe exercises for gaining skill in constructing clearer and better-formed intentions. Working with intention has practical benefits in improving the efficiency and

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effectiveness of our movements and actions, but its most intriguing aspect lies in its function as a meditation which uses body and movement to reveal the self.

## **INTENTIONS INITIATE ACTIONS**

We can begin by trying an exercise which focuses on the difference between movement and the *will* to move (or, to say it another way, the difference between the physical body and its programming for action). Stand up with your eyes shut and imagine that you have come up to an elevator. You have a large package in your arms that you cannot put down so you can't push the elevator button with your finger. Imagine the elevator button floating in the air an inch or two to the side of one shoulder, and imagine that you have to lean over sideways and push the elevator button with your shoulder. Actually intend to push the button. Create a real desire to push the button and intend to do so. This does not mean voluntarily moving to lean over and push the button, nor does it mean becoming stiff to prevent any movement so as to keep the exercise purely “mental”. It also does not mean merely thinking *about* pushing the button since “thinking about” is a symbolic process which implies a separation between the thinker and the subject about which s/he thinks. In the same way, it does not mean going into a dissociated daze and picturing yourself pushing the button. It simply means to relax, be natural and create an authentic feeling in the mindbody of desire and intention to push the button. (Most people can create this feeling when they focus on it, though many need some guidance to home in on it.) Once you establish this feeling, you will feel yourself “involuntarily” tipping toward the imaginary button.

This is an experience of how just intending to do a movement begins the actual process of movement on a very subtle level. First there is the thought of what to do, then a desire to do it, and then there is a commitment to acting on that thought. That intention leaks over into slight muscular changes which set the body up for the movement, and after that would normally come the execution of the large movement itself. Whether we are conscious of it or not, this very subtle process of imaging and willing underlies every movement. This process is what shapes the physical body and its movement, and the elevator button exercise is a way of separating into two noticeable stages a process that is usually completely undifferentiated. Normally people are so intent on the external goal of a movement that they do not pay attention to the internal processes of movement. Moreover, the initiating intention is so subtle, and so blended with the feel of the physical body, that it generally escapes all notice.

The point of learning to discriminate between the experience of movement and the experience of the intention to move is that it gives you a radically different experience of the self in the world. To begin with, the involuntary feeling of the tipping movement points toward a means of achieving much greater efficiency and ease in movement. The tipping felt involuntary because we normally distinguish between an involuntary and a voluntary movement by whether it felt as though the movement *happened* to us or whether we had a clear experience of using effort to *do* the movement. Here we were loading a program into the bio-computer, and the movement proceeded all on its own from the program without our having to do it. It was not an involuntary movement since

it was a thought-out, planned event, but it lacked the feeling of effort usually present in a movement which we voluntarily do. Effort is what we feel when we tense opposing muscles and fight our own movements. By cultivating a clearer sense of the intentional initiation of movements, it is possible to focus our intentions more precisely and eliminate this conflict, thereby reducing the effort of all our movements, saving energy and improving our performance.

In addition to increasing economy of movement, differentiating movement and intention also focuses our attention of the role of choice in our actions. Learning to see how choice operates in every movement leads us to notice our desires and intentions. It can reveal much about the meaning of how we act in the world, and it leads to powerful methods of personal change and growth.

I started developing this way of working with intention and movement about seventeen years ago. The initial impetus for the exploration came from a difficulty I found in my Aikido practice at the time. Aikido is a non-violent Japanese martial art related to jujitsu. Its techniques are primarily throws and joint locks, and they are based on the principle of going along with rather than stopping or resisting the power of the attack. I'd been practicing a couple of years and I remember thinking to myself that I knew I was supposed to go along with the attacker, but I didn't know where the attacker was going. In order to learn to detect the attacker's path of movement, I began to examine balance and motion, working with very light movement, trying to discern as soon as possible during the inception of a movement what would be the total path of the movement in space. Soon I began to feel that the attacker's muscles shifted into action just as the person began to decide to move. Also, I noticed that even when the momentum of a person's physical movement was going in one direction, if they obviously *wanted* to go in a second direction, they were more easily sent in that second direction. So I set out to experiment with how I focused my interest in different directions and how that affected the organization of my body and my movement. I began to devise step-by-step experiments for trying various patterns of attention/intention and watching their results. As time went on, I realized that I had needed to develop an intuitive feeling for the functional unity of the mind and body and that I was discovering a linear, rational method for cultivating a non-linear, intuitive, holistic way of perceiving the human being in movement.

## **SHAPE PROJECTIONS**

I spent a good deal of time examining how the shape of a movement is determined by the shape of the intention which forms it, and I did this by studying one dimensional lines of intention and three dimensional volumes of intention. One exercise which illustrates what is involved in gaining control of lines of intention involves willing different points of the body along different trajectories. Standing up, you pick a point and a trajectory, say, the left hip and a line from the left hip curving forward and to the right. Then you intend moving the point along the trajectory and examine all the interconnected changes in muscle tone, breathing, balance and posture that occur throughout the body.

Ideally, I should have been able to turn my attention easily to any part of my body or surrounding space, but I often found that certain directions were unclear or that I could not clearly focus intentions with/through certain areas of my body. In addition, I found when I took the intentional exercises into large-scale movements that the areas of unclear intention were also areas of unclear movement -- movement that was tense, off-balance, imprecise or weak. In order to develop a clearer and more unified experience of my body as a whole and how I could will it with precision into different movements, I worked with a number of intentional scales.

These scales were like piano scales. They were systematic exercises in which I could practice basic elements of intentional projection in a regulated, repeatable way. I found that joining intention with breath was often helpful in making intention more tangible so that I could focus and direct it more clearly. In one scale, I would sit quietly with my eyes shut, settle my breath into the core of my body just below my navel, and then employ a regular progression of breathing outward into the six cardinal directions (down, up, forward, backward, left, right, and all six simultaneously) to practice the basic process of intentional projection.

I discovered that lines of intention were specific actions. They had a direction and a degree of force applied in that direction. They moved toward or away from something, strongly or weakly, in straight lines or curves. For instance, a line moving toward an ice cream cone is about getting it to eat. A line moving away from a putrescent fish is about getting away from the smell.

However, one day I found myself doing the six-direction breathing scale with a focus on two opposite directions simultaneously. Focusing one hundred per cent of my energy into a specific line of intent produced a narrow beam of thought and perception and dulled my experience of the whole rest of the world. Practicing a projection in which I focused in two different directions simultaneously began to teach me how to enlarge my world.

Gradually, meditating on lines transformed itself into meditating on volumes. Projecting outward from the center point, I worked first with radii and then with diameters, but as I gained facility in simultaneously projecting a large number of diameters, I found that I began to experience them as defining a volume. This volume is the self, and the lines are specific actions the self undertakes. Working with volumes is a way of focusing on states of being and learning about the form of the self.

Once I began to experience movements and states of being as shapes, I started to understand in intentional shape terms what makes certain actions more comfortable and effective. Two key elements are symmetry and expansiveness. Asymmetrically shaped intentions lead to weak, off-balance, distorted body organization and movements. For example, people have hurt their backs pulling open stuck drawers on tall chests. They grasp the stuck drawer, lean back, and put everything they have into yanking on the drawer. However, when it loosens suddenly, the full weight and movement of the drawer hits them in the chest. They arch back, straining the lower back, and fall. Doing an action

with a one hundred percent commitment to one particular direction of intention is really a narrow way of being in the world.

The way to maximize the effectiveness of a given action is to ground it in a symmetrical state of being. Thus adopting a form of physical organization in which the intention to pull back on the drawer is counterbalanced and enlarged by an equal awareness of the forward direction and all other directions produces a lively, balanced way of pulling which is just as ready to move forward as back. (Of course, there are also specific patterns of body alignment and functional positioning which are crucial for safe, effective movement, but I'm not discussing them here since the focus is on the intentional processes involved.<sup>2</sup>)

This readiness to move in all directions is a state of non-attachment. You may be pulling back, but with such delicate fluidity of intention that when the drawer pops open you instantly give up the now non-productive intention to move back and substitute an intention to move forward and stop the drawer's movement. It is not really intending two directions simultaneously. It is, instead, staying anchored in radiant symmetry while additionally and simultaneously doing one particular line of action. You are poised on the center point ready to intend/move easily into any direction, and you stay poised on the center point even while moving off it in some direction.

The importance of symmetry of shape goes beyond just producing more physically functional movement patterns -- though that in itself is certainly important. Symmetry of intention is also important because it is a clue to a state of spirit which is balanced and powerful. This can be better understood by looking at expansiveness and thinking of it as a symmetry radiating outwards from its center point.

Expansiveness is another aspect of shape. Moving in a state of either collapse or constriction, that is, either passive or active smallness, is uncomfortable and ineffective. By working with breathing and intentional projection, you can feel how areas of smallness are held small by an intention to be small, and experiencing this is the first step in deliberately moving toward substituting an expansive intentional pattern. Letting closed areas relax open is the first step, and beyond that is the practice of actively widening them and maintaining them in a state of expansive, radiant power.

The difference between smallness and expansiveness can be felt in learning a new movement skill, for example. Whether it is a difficult piano passage or a new tennis serve, people often begin their learning in a small state. They may feel klutzy and intimidated and move in little, weak ways. Or they may use effort and concentration to try to squeeze new movements out of themselves, thereby tightening their muscles and interfering with their movement. In either case, as they learn the skill, they get more comfortable and begin to open up and let the movement flow. However, it is much more

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<sup>2</sup> For detailed instructions on how to do some of the basic structural exercises I teach, see the file *A Downloadable Script for the Eight Core BIM Exercises* on my website, [www.being-in-movement.com](http://www.being-in-movement.com).

efficient to start the learning by opening and widening the bodymind until you are comfortable and fluid. Then applying that feeling of expansiveness to the new movements, you will find them much easier to learn and perform. In other words, being able to read your intentional programming, you can eliminate counterproductive strategies and improve your basic learning process.

## **QUALITY PROJECTIONS**

Expansiveness and symmetry seemed like the key aspects of intentional projection, but as I continued experimenting, I found that another element in addition to shape was important. Aside from my Aikido practice, a second major impetus for my development of this approach to working with intention and movement was a serious neck injury I sustained about ten years ago. In regaining movement, I worked a lot with intentional initiation of posture and movement to find out just where and how I originated the stiffness and pain that plagued me. I found that a good deal of the tightness was protective armoring. It was an attempt to keep my neck stable and safe, but of course what it really did was keep my neck tense, immobile and uncomfortable.

As I played with the intentional initiation of the armoring, at one point I had an experience of knowing just how to stop doing it but of not being able to bring myself to make the choice to do so. It became clear that examining the shape of the intentions was necessary in order to pin down just what I was doing, but that by itself it was not enough. I needed to examine not just my choices were but also the underlying motivations which guided my choices. I could feel that a lot of the armoring had to do with fear of the pain and the injury. And there was resentment of the injury and the restrictions it put on me. I began to examine the meaning or feeling of the intentions and muscular actions in addition to their configurations, and I found I could do this through exercises involving the projection of intentional qualities.

Quality elements have to do with the tone or feeling of an intentional or movement pattern. Just as projecting an intentional shape affects the body and sets it into motion, projecting an intentional quality (such as an emotion) affects the body and shows up in movement. For example, stand up in a relaxed position with your eyes shut and your arms down by your side, and imagine that you are standing in front of someone at work who has been maliciously attacking you and getting in your way in everything you do. Again, this process of imagining is not an abstract, visual, symbolic action but a lived experience in the body. Imagine that you are really seething inside but you cannot afford to express your anger and you have to stuff it back down. Then examine the changes that take place in your breathing, your neck and throat, your chest, back, and belly, and in your posture and balance.

We often deal with feelings as though they were some kind of ethereal mental gas, but in fact they are solidly rooted in the body. There are specific physical changes coinciding with the emotions, and learning to notice these physical events gives you a precise, concrete handle on otherwise hard-to-grasp inner patterns. In addition, learning how to think in terms of primary physical language instead of secondary non-physical

language gives you a helpful means of clarifying communications. Since one person may experience anger very differently from another, bringing the experience down to a more basic, physical vocabulary offers a way of getting a more precise awareness of the content of another person's experience.

Another exercise: standing with your eyes shut, imagine that you are standing in front of someone who has been very kind and helpful to you, someone whom you love and respect. What physical changes occur, and how do they compare with those you experienced when doing anger? As another example, imagine you are standing in front of someone rich and powerful, someone you're kissing up to, someone you're showing “love” to in order to get something you want. Notice what physical changes occur. Negative emotions are physically small (constricted or collapsed) and off-balance, and positive emotions are open and balanced. These physical differences are obvious with such grossly different emotions as, for example, love and anger, but there are also very specific physical differences between different shades of the same emotion. When imaging an honest love, you will stand in a relaxed, grounded way and face the image of the person you love, whereas imaging a dishonest love, you will stand in a tense, pulled in manner that will twist slightly away from the person.

In addition to words denoting emotional qualities, there are other interesting ways of specifying intentional qualities. For example, imagining filling yourself with a deep, rich cobalt blue light will produce a very different quality of movement and being than filling yourself with a clear, bright canary yellow. In teaching, I have found that once everyone has in mind the particular color I am focusing on (either because I have actually shown them an example of it or because I have taken care to ensure that the verbal description is clear and complete for everyone), people experience the color the same way. Cobalt blue is experienced as sinking, condensing and producing a feeling of stability and power. Canary yellow is experienced as rising, expanding and producing a feeling of lightness and free flow. (An interesting book to look at for help in visualizing and understanding color scales is *The Elements of Color* by Johannes Itten, a Bauhaus color theorist.) Color scales offer a powerful means of making subtle, precise gradations of quality change. Geometrical forms, sound, and tactile elements can also form the basis of quality scales.

The effects of quality projections can be experienced and described in shape terms, and that reduction is important because it provides solidity and precision in perceiving the actual content of some quality term -- this goes back to the use of primary physical language as a means of specifying and clarifying the actual content of an emotion. However, once you are used to basing your thinking in physical experience, it can also be very useful to stay on the level of qualities because one quality projection organizes a whole complex of shape elements as an integrated gestalt and because the quality element is directly comprehensible in human terms of feeling and meaning. For example, the single projection of kindness and generosity will create a coordinated series of changes in breathing, muscle tone, posture, perceptual field and movement. Doing all these changes individually as shape projections would be much more cumbersome. Moreover, “kindness” and “generosity” have meaning to us in our ordinary human way of thinking whereas specifications of shape changes seem empty of human feeling.

I started investigating intentional qualities by experimenting with simple projections of qualities and then went on to practice combining quality and shape projections. Saturating a given shape element with quality elements enabled me to make fine adjustments on the basic shape pattern. As with shape projections, I found that having systematic scales enabled me to gain better awareness of familiar elements and also an awareness of elements that I had not been in touch with before. Certain qualities were more me than others, and I worked at substituting positive qualities for habitual negative ones and at exploring qualities that were new to me.

Just as with shape practice, I found that projecting in two “opposite directions” led me to a better understanding of center. For example, power without compassion is brittle and brutal, really a form of weakness not power. And compassion without power is limp and ineffective, another form of weakness. But fusing together power and compassion produces true strength and true gentleness, one aspect of a Centered state.

Symmetry and expansiveness may be thought of as two more qualities that define Center. As I continued working with shape and quality projections, I found that I was not working just on the specifics of posture and movement (the basic elements that I needed in my Aikido practice in order to tell where my attacker was moving). In going to deeper levels of body image/intention, I was working toward experiencing and understanding the Centered state of being, the fundamental, underlying state which is the source of balance and wholeness in the self and its actions.

The centered state of being is symmetrical and expansive, powerful and compassionate, calm, alert, flowing, rooted, focused, free and unbounded. And more. Any activity offers the opportunity for investigating the shapes and qualities you bring into play as you act and for learning to act from the Centered state. And acting from Center improves whatever actions you may undertake.

## **SOMATIC MEDITATION**

The investigation of intention through the use of shape and quality scales formed the foundation for all the work I did on myself. I played with taking these basic elements into various areas of my experience, but whatever the particulars I was experimenting with, in essence I was working at learning how to perceive and how to act. In working with movement, the intentional perspective allowed me to perceive more fundamental aspects of structure and function at the same time as it allowed me to grasp the higher aspect of movement, which is its *meaningfulness*. By adding the intentional level to work with body alignment and movement, I found myself using movement as a somatic meditation.

I was looking at energy, posture and movement as being fundamentally elements of *choice*, and I was experimenting with a systematic way of describing, defining, analyzing and modifying these choices. Once I could clearly feel the choices I made in particular situations, I found that I had certain general strategies of choice-making which I employed

broadly in many situations. More and more I felt how the movement choices I made, which constituted my style of moving, were really the same choices I made in other areas of my life. I learned to experience my body image as expressive of my choices. My body and the way I used it/myself were what I had made myself into, and I found that by changing patterns of movement and intention I could change my whole self.

## **CASE STUDY**

As I learned how to use this approach to movement on myself, I also began to use it in my teaching and teach it as a way of moving. The final section of this article describes one example of the application of the intentional approach in teaching. A woman with severe, recurrent backaches came to me for movement lessons. She had had a number of medical exams, and nothing physically wrong had been found to account for the backaches. Chiropractic and osteopathic manipulation relieved the pain, but it always returned. My starting point was with the axiom that movement is intentional. She was choosing to do movements which resulted in back pain, so we had to begin by exploring her movements and discovering what dysfunctional choices she was making.

Starting with some simple movements in one arm -- a totally non-threatening situation since it had no apparent relation to her back pain -- I helped the woman experience how intentions lead to movements. Once she experienced and accepted the concept that her body was organized according to her ideas of how it should move, we had to go on to discover precisely what her blueprint for movement was. In other words, we were developing her skills in perceiving intentional shaping.

Using intentional projection exercises, we went on to discover which areas of her body were sharp in her awareness, which were dim, which she held tight, and which were slack. We continued with a number of minimal movement exercises that were completely safe for her back. These involved trying out small movements of isolated parts, or moving one part in relation to another, or simply noticing how her body parts perceived my touch or any passive movements that I did with her. She began to feel that the right and left sides of her body felt very different from each other and was surprised that she had never noticed that before.

In structuring movement lessons, I watch for the imbalances in a student's body image/movement and choose movements which will highlight these imbalances. By working with a limited movement situation as a representation of the unlimited scope of real life, the student has a safe opportunity to watch his or her customary choice strategies unfold in action and then test out unfamiliar choices. The key to picking out movement exercises which will be effective and meaningful for a student lies in the skill of *seeing* the person who is in front of you. The intentional scales lead to systematic ways of observing and analyzing patterns of intention/energy, and learning to experience yourself as an intentional being also allows you to experience other people this way.

By working with exercises focusing on the sensations of being inside another person's sphere of breath/energy/intention or having them inside yours, it is possible to

bring into conscious awareness very powerful but normally unnoticed elements of non-verbal communication. There is a sense of participating in the other person's body image, and this gives a teacher a lot of important information about what the student is doing and feeling. More than that, it allows a teacher to impart information to the student and affect him or her directly on the level of the body image.

However, more than just sensitivity to intentional projection is needed in doing intentional work. In this paper I have chosen to focus on intention and the body image, but a detailed understanding of posture and functional movement is also necessary. In life, intentions are realized through movement, and movement is the practical extension of intention. Knowing how to analyze imbalances in movement is important in being able to discern intentional imbalances. In addition, understanding centered movement is important in forming centered intentions. Though intentions initiate movements, movements can also call up intentions, and helping students into new postures or movements is a powerful method for helping them discover new intentions. As a Feldenkrais instructor and a black belt in Aikido and Karate, in my teaching I draw upon these particular systems for movement practices to focus on relaxed, fluid, balanced, powerful, compassionate and integrated ways of moving through the world.

As the woman became familiar with how her body felt and with how she went about feeling her body, we began to practice larger movements involving pushing and pulling. And she discovered that before doing any movement that involved application of significant force, she turned slightly towards her right and leaned back a bit -- a movement which produced an unstable and compressed alignment of the spinal column over the pelvis and legs. She frequently had to lift heavy weights at work, and it was this off-balance body alignment (asymmetrical projection of shape) that led to her backaches.

At this point she knew she was *doing* her backaches. Rather than simply having backaches happen to her, she assumed responsibility for them. The assumption of responsibility can be scary or depressing for people, but taken the right way it is very empowering. The fact that they can *do* such things to themselves leads people to realize that they have far reaching powers of choice and that they can choose much better ways of doing things. Their very mistakes are a sign of their ability to function without their mistakes.

Wanting to help her notice more clearly how she felt when she organized herself for a movement involving force application, I had her hold an iron bar first in one hand then in the other. She prepared to take the iron bar with her left hand by “sending” some vigor into her hand, but when getting ready to take it with her right hand she shrank away and wilted. She was right handed, and I thought it especially curious that it should be her manipulative hand which was without power to deal with weight. Here we were moving from the consideration of intentional shape to the examination of qualities of intention.

Wondering how the issue of power and efficacy might fit into the weak use of her right hand, I decided to see if the effect could be magnified by having her hold a heavy piece of metal which was an explicit tool of power. I had her hold a double-edged

Fairbairn commando knife, and I showed her the diagram in his manual detailing the placement of cuts and how many seconds until death each cut gave. As she gained a clearer and clearer sense of what the knife really was, it became transformed for her from a mere hunk of metal into a manifestation of power, and she became less and less able to hold its weight in her right hand.

When I pointed that out, she told me that she had once been raped and severely beaten, and that the image seared into her mind was the instant in which she turned to the right, shrank back, and raised her arms to try to block the first blow. She then realized that that turn to the right and the feeling of her own weakness and inability to define her own space had been incorporated into her body image and that she replayed it every time she had to exert any physical force.

In order to help her resolve her movement difficulty, we worked on reprogramming her total movement package. To bring out the specific ways in which her feelings, images and memories were structuring her movements, I had her identify the physical components of her feelings. Rather than using secondary descriptor words like “angry, confused, afraid,” she learned to pin down the precise content of these feelings in herself by describing the precise constellation of changes in breathing, muscle tone, energy focus and posture that each feeling produced. Then she watched for the intentional organization by which she called these changes into play. By learning to notice the particular shape organization of her quality projections, she arrived at a better understanding of the actual content of them. In addition, reducing the quality elements to shapes drained much of the emotional power out of them and made them more manageable. Once she felt and understood what she had been doing, she practiced substituting a different intentional organization.

In learning this, she first worked on developing a centered, symmetrically voluminous projection as a resting place. Next she practiced performing specific actions while simultaneously continuing to project the centered state, and then we went on to spend a good deal of time on actions which involved power and resistance. In particular, we worked a lot with confrontative situations in which she had to exert her power against mine in pushing or pulling. In these situations, she had the opportunity to revert to an intentional organization based on powerlessness or to continuously monitor her own intentional/physical patterns and substitute the new way of being and moving which she had learned.

Once she could hold herself in the projection of the open, symmetrical state before and during specific movements utilizing strength and power, she no longer created the back problems she had suffered. Once she understood how she was *doing* her backaches, she learned to refrain from doing them. More importantly, the backaches were a particular, physical manifestation of her way of being in the world, and dealing with her physical dysfunction led her to finding her own awareness and power in an overall way.

This is one example of the combination of body/movement work with intentional processing. It is an interesting example because it shows how different levels of personal

functioning are woven together into an overall pattern. Lessons may be this complex or they may be about relatively simple elements such as the alignment of the pelvis for efficiency in such tasks as using a sledge hammer or playing the piano. Movement lessons can span a broad range of human concerns, but it is *intention* which is the thread weaving together all the different aspects of human functioning. By tracing movement back to its intentional origins, every level of physical organization becomes an opportunity to come to new understandings about the way we have created ourselves and about what we may become.

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