

MOVEMENTS

a do-it-yourself deep therapy

by

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As used here, the word "movements" refers to a way of finding the hidden mechanism by which traumatic events from the past continue to make what one does and thinks and feels detrimental to oneself and others.

More importantly, through movements, effects produced by the mechanism are not only changed, the mechanism itself is transformed back into what it once was, as in the fairytale of the prince turned into a frog and then back into a prince again.

By its nature, movements can only be done by its user. It cannot be done by someone to someone else. This fact has widespread ramifications.

Movements is an adaptation of one of the physical elements in the complex last form of the deep therapy practiced by Wilhelm Reich (see particularly a relevant case history in his book: *The Function of the Orgasm*). For movements to work, you don't have to read or agree with the ideas in the book, or the ones expressed here, some of which are not the same. But it is only right that the root of the method and theory used by me in founding movements be acknowledged.

Many practices share certain similarities with movements. They are not the same in method or results.

Movements can be done by itself or with some other practice.

Movements can be done alone or with others.

Some ills can be cured before death.

One starts doing movements by letting the body make any movement or movements it wants to. It knows exactly what to do, and is always ready to do it. Those finding this difficult to grasp, and this difficulty getting in the way of their starting, can begin by making an arbitrary movement, and can then let their bodies move, which their bodies will then do if allowed to. If the body seems to not want to do anything, an arbitrary movement or movements will do (the reason for having done that particular arbitrary movement rather than another will appear later on, in the course of doing movements). The movements can be large, small, or minute; related or apparently unrelated; funny or serious; pleasurable or painful or neither; tiring or energizing; familiar or unfamiliar; slow or fast; beautiful or ugly; meaningful or meaningless; boring or exciting; repetitive or not; can be done while standing, or sitting or lying down or moving around; in one go or in several; and can seem harmless or frightening to oneself or others (but for obvious reasons, you should not do them much in public places so that you won't be taken for mad or dangerous, and taken away).

It is impossible to "pull" a muscle while doing movements (though one may think or feel one is going to), it is so natural and conformable a way of moving for one's body. Nor will anyone go mad, though one may think one is about to, nor will one dangerously lose control, though one might expect to. Nothing is experienced before one is ready for it.

The movements do three things again and again: find a group of tight muscles, position them for pulling, and pull them.

Doing movements uses energy and releases energy.

Some people make sounds while doing them.

One is never stuck irremediably in a bad place, though it may take a while to get out of. One just goes on moving, and sooner or later one gets out of it. There is no such thing as an unresolvable trauma. But movements is not a cure-all.

Now for some theory. Movements will work whether one believes the theory or not. It is only necessary to do it for it to work. The movements themselves will give rise to theory, which the effects of the movements will prove or disprove.

More theory. The movements, which are not directed by the mind or will, sooner or later begin to pull on muscles which are directly or indirectly involved with a trauma whose effects are still active. The continuing effects of a trauma derive from the permanent tightening of muscles responding to the traumatic event, and the further tightening of those muscles or other muscles, in response to the effects of the first tightening, or the next tightening, and so on; till the tightener stops tightening in despair, or after finding a more balanced and less uncomfortable, though tighter state, than the tightened one immediately before, though never finding the better state that existed before the trauma occurred.

Much of the tightening results from what one wants and thinks, in ignorance of how to undo the previous tightening and the effects of the trauma, when the trauma-causing danger is finally over.

The tightened muscles affect all other parts of the body. And also cut down on, or cut out, the feelings of pain and anxiety derived from the initiating event or events. This also cuts down or cuts out feelings of pleasure, and can make the search for pleasure frantic, and pleasure unobtainable. They also redirect energy and prevent it from going into some areas.

Further, over a long period of time, tight muscles shrink. And some illnesses eventually result from the cumulative effect of the disbalances, in energy and organs and so on, resulting from the tightening.

An important side-effect of permanent tightening is the forgetting that one has done it, and this forgetting happens within twenty-four hours. So, often, one has negative feelings and thoughts and even does things as a result of the tightening which seem to come from nowhere or be part of the constellation of oneself over whose origin one has no control, and which sometimes require repression since their existence is so pestilential, either by turning one's awareness away from them or by repressing them by further muscular tightening which in turn leads to more problems.

What one thinks about and the direction of one's thinking is affected, since one can't think of what one is unaware of.

When the release of the tightening occurs, one remembers having the original tightening-up and re-experiences the trauma as feeling, and regains whatever was lost.

Mere mental re-imagining and physical re-enactment of what one believes to have been a trauma does not release the permanent tightening.

The relief, hope and insights, and manifest improvements from re-adjustment of the musculature (which changed after the trauma-tightening to conform with the trauma-tightened muscles) does not release the primal tightening and however useful and effective it may be, has not as deep an effect as the release of the primal tightening.

The fear that an approach to the trauma can arouse is controllable in doing movements, since one always has the power to start and stop the doing of them.

People remember so little of the beginning of their lives because of the trauma-induced tightening that occurred then, especially in their first four years, and, within that, especially in their first year. It is possible by means of movements to remember and re-experience traumas that occurred in the womb.

How much time should be spent doing movements is a question often asked by those about to begin doing movements. Obviously, a minute a day is not going to get one far. A minimum of fifteen minutes a day, for starters, not necessarily every day, is better. The maximum (which can be counted in daily hours) is whatever one can stand. The more you do, the quicker you're done. However, it would seem that the movements themselves will set an everchanging schedule.

The pulling that occurs during movements frequently tightens muscles (before they give way), and the feelings or lack of feeling that result from that are frequently unpleasant. This tends to slow down or stop one from doing movements. However, it is necessary to go on doing them in order to finally release them. If it were not for these negative feelings and their corresponding thoughts, no one would have any traumatic effects. We would all romp our way through them back to square one in no time at all.

Release of the permanently tight muscles while moving is felt in three ways: as a snapping, or a gooey stretching, or a crunching, at different times, and may occur a number of times before the final trauma-related release since not all the muscles involved are released at the same time. Some good effects may occur before release of course, because of the freeing-up of energy, organ stimulation, realignment of muscles, and so on. Even the bad effects (always temporary) of the movements will tell you the movements are having an effect.

The original tightenings suppress not only the memory of the tightening but suppress the inner feeling of the tightened muscles in a way that is not the same as the lack of feeling one gets from an anesthetic or from ordinary numbness. One is not aware that the existence of the tightened muscles is no longer felt. This, coupled with the loss of the memory of the tightening, cuts out all possibility of becoming aware of the cause of the (more or less) known effects of the tightening by searching mentally or by means of feeling for it, from inside oneself. At the same time, all the usual means -- mental, emotional, physical, and energetic -- for alleviating symptoms, while worthwhile when they do that (and sometimes they do so more quickly than doing movements does) do not, ever, release the musculature that is permanently tight, though they sometimes beneficially affect the body, by releasing the pseudo permanently tight muscles that have adapted to the muscles that are really permanently tight, or by providing a usually temporary better alignment of musculature and energy. A healthy musculature can tighten and loosen as needed.

Examples of early traumas. A baby needs physical contact energetically with its mother. If it doesn't get enough of it, it will tighten up in some way. If not breast fed, it will tighten up in some way. Primal needs that are not met lead to traumas. And generally the fear and expectation of the unbearable repetition of an already experienced pain, in childhood, causes tightening as a way of dealing with the pain and constant fear. This is sometimes compounded by the child's additional muscular tightening in response

to the parents' persistent suppression of the to them unbearable crying of the protesting and miserable child.

Because what occurs in the course of doing movements is real change, one's beliefs are sooner or later destroyed, all the pride and humility, and the acceptances and deplorings of one's vices and virtues, as well as the virtues and vices themselves. However, most of them are eventually reconstituted in a different and preferable way.

Because traumas result in the cutting out of aspects of our humanity, in resolving them one "becomes" other people (which is not the same as "feeling for" them or "being possessed" or "feeling invaded") and regains one's heritage, the heritage of being fully human.

And apart from the unpleasant experiences that occur or reoccur in doing movements, there are innumerable insights, so many eventually, that they become comparatively routine and only of passing interest, as anything one has a surfeit of does, and because what they're about, if they are about oneself, changes. Also, one encounters extraordinary pleasures on the way, some of which cannot be comprehended beforehand. May you have them too.

*The above is a revised version of an article of the same name published in London 1964
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