Movement lesson

Angela 2 — Week 3, Day 1, Session 1 — 36 minutes

Summary: Russell welcomes the group and includes those delayed or absent. He guides a short arrival on the floor—feeling contact, opening each leg, and a small movement lying on the front—then a reflection on gratitude, standing, and walking contact, before turning toward a walking meditation.

Welcome

[Russell:] Yeah. Welcome, welcome. Maybe come back a little bit, Felicity. Thank you.

I want you to know that Aaron and Carl and Mesa and Liz are on their way. The snow somewhere was pretty thick, and their rate of movement was very slow. So they're gonna arrive in a few hours, I suspect, maybe a couple of hours. You'll see them a little later, and Barbara Scott's flight was cancelled. And she's very disappointed that she can't get here until tomorrow at around dinner time.

And as you know, Shannon is not with us. Sent her greetings, and Barbara Horwich and Oksana will be here next time. Various stories as to what people encountered. And then we already knew that Donna and Andy were not gonna be with us. I just wanna include all of those folks in our field, wishing them well and many blessings.

Looking ahead

So I'm excited. I've been excited today. I've been — Linda was saying, how you doing? You know, just feel like just a lot more than I usually do, in terms of kind of anticipation or excitement, or feeling people coming. And it was really fun. I'm really kind of bouncing around, went to the dump, did all these different things. I was going, wow, I feel like —

I'm very excited for our week together, all our weeks. When I look at the curriculum over the six weeks, they each have a different theme and a different — you know, they all have the essence of everything in them. I mean, they're the same thing in a certain way, but they're each quite distinct in terms of the dominant theme.

And I don't want to talk very much about it right now. Actually, I just want to say that the third week is always one of my favorites. I think you'll see why once we start getting into the kinds of experiments that we emphasize. And I think I'll say a little bit tomorrow about the context, kind of the progression we've been working from.

And tonight I mostly just want to help us to get here. I know a lot of you have been driving and flying, and I bet you can feel that. I hope you can feel that. I hope there's some indication that you were doing all that.

On the floor

So what I'd like to do is just start by having us find a place on the floor. And yeah, put a mat down. We're not gonna do a whole lesson, but I wanna start dropping down, dropping in.

I'm gonna stay where I am. Oh, maybe I should speak louder. But you can come closer as well. Oh, are your ears plugged?

[Participant:] They haven't popped yet.

[Russell:] Of course, let me know if I need to raise my tone.

Yeah, so just take a few moments to settle down, settle down to the ground.

Feel — literally take the time to feel your contact.

Let the ground bring you into self-connection.

And when you notice a kind of maybe raciness in the mind, or a jumpiness, if that comes for you, or just a tiredness, maybe the other end of the spectrum, you just notice what's there without any sense of struggle, as much as possible. Just, oh, that's part of the organismic state as I'm lying here on the floor right now.

I can sense these sensations of weight and contact, and I also have a feeling of this kind of energetic, this kind of tired, energized, wired combination of things. Feel any kind of buzz in your body, in your chest, in your belly.

Of course, traveling — it's also connecting with so many people, and the hopes and concerns and the wantings and the — all of that. And that's all living in there and can be acknowledged, just even as you're lying here on the floor.

Just lightly let your head turn a little bit. Just feel, okay, give myself something to kind of focus on. I can feel the physical movement of the turning of my head. Feel the head turn. Feel the movement. How the back of the head changes contact.

And in the background, you can sense your breath, perhaps.

Right leg

And let your legs bend. Feel your feet come to the floor. And all the while, as we kind of focus here, we're also noticing where the mind goes when it jumps off into other places, or spaces out, or with just a gentle noticing.

It's not even a trying to notice. It's just a gentle noticing.

And just interlace your hands and bring them around your right knee, and just pause there in this shape a little bit. Just letting the weight and the contact — you're not even so much trying to pull as letting the position work on you. So letting gravity and the position in space, feeling what happens in your back, how your breath responds at times.

And then just slowly, lightly, you can let the leg open out a little bit, out to the right. Let yourself be carried a bit. So it's the right leg we're bending.

Just opening out a little bit, just again giving yourself a chance to feel the ground. Touching different parts, a kind of feeling of releasing, and maybe a little bit exaggerated with the exhale.

Letting — kind of letting go with your exhale. Letting the head go, letting the knee go. Just to sense it.

I'm here. I've arrived. The ground is supporting me. And I can release into this. I can let go into this. That's it.

And let the specific sensations — the change of weight across your left foot, the way the weight goes onto the right shoulder, all of that — let those things be ways of grounding yourself in this moment, right here.

The eyes going right where the head — That's it. Good.

And when you've had enough, you can just lower down. If you'd like doing a little bit more, go ahead, like moving a bit more in this position.

Good, and then let's all lower down now and just rest. Feel the influence. And again, we're welcoming — even when the tired place comes, we're saying, okay, that can be here. Sense of that, or any of the kind of energetics that are occurring.

A simple and profound practice of saying yes. Saying yes to what's there.

Left leg

And engage your legs once again. And interlace your hands non-habitually, so use a different interlacing, and bring them around your left knee.

And just stay. First just stay, letting gravity and the position work on you. Just letting your attention scan through.

Sense of how the breath responds, and then when you're ready, just begin opening slowly leftward and feeling the ramifications throughout your whole self. You just experiment for a little bit.

[Silence 2 minutes]

It's wonderful when the sensations are kind of a way of sensing, oh, I'm here, I'm here too, I'm here too. It's like — sense is like going around your house, and been away for a while, saying, oh yeah, there's that place, and that room, and that view, and smell, and color.

Letting that — home. I'm coming home, coming home here.

And then again, if you feel satisfied, lower down. If a little more movement might feel good for you, take your time.

And good.

Maybe let that stop for now, and take a pause here, letting the influence of the movements be sensed.

[Silence 39 seconds]

On the front

Please find a way to get comfortable on your front, but take your time getting there so you can feel the process. You can feel the change of pressure, and the different, probably familiar ways

you have of kind of shifting weight and — It's something you've been doing for a very long time. Feeling how you find your way.

And then again, how you and gravity and the ground and this position interact, so that you can find some kind of comfort here.

And as you sense how different the ground feels, how different the breathing is, such a different sense with pressure coming onto the front of you, how your whole self responds to that movement of air.

And if you can be comfortable like this, if it would feel okay, bend your left knee out to the side and turn your head towards the left, and just any way that your head's comfortable. So the left knee out, the foot on the floor, just the left knee out to the side. And your nose pointing leftward, your arms any way that's comfortable.

And you're just taking a moment to again let gravity and the position and your breathing work together.

And very lightly, slide your left knee a bit forward and back. And it just feels as if somebody pushes from your hip towards your knee, and then your knee towards your hip, so the leg stays bent. It's just going a little forward and back in the direction it's pointing.

Staying comfortable, though, not forcing anything, but listening to the golden ball moving, as if there's a turning in your middle.

I'm feeling how that goes all the way through your spine, that there's a change of something in your elbows. So it's not sliding the knee up and down towards your head and down towards your foot. It's actually forward, in the direction the knee is pointing. So the front of the left hip gets closer to the ground, and then further from the ground.

Yeah, that's good. Feel that. Good. And then pause.

Lengthen your left leg, and turn your head to the right, and just find a way to let your right leg bend out to the side. And feel — can you somehow find a way to let your bones, let your joints, let your breathing find their peace in this configuration?

And you're free to shift your arms and do whatever can maximize your comfort here.

Again, just this little movement of a forward and back with your knee, as if you're bringing the front of the right hip joint a little more towards the floor, and then as if someone pushes your knee towards your hip, and the hip comes a little away from the floor. So the right side of the pelvis would get higher from the floor, and then flatten more towards the floor.

Really letting the belly, the lower belly, open in that way. Bottom of your pelvis. Yes. Good. Okay.

And let that stop, and just come find a way onto your back.

[Silence 35 seconds]

Gratitude

And just as you're here right now, just take a moment to reflect on the different beings, different people, different, maybe even animals, who were important to your getting here today.

So, you know, we all had — I mean, if you were flying, of course there were many, many beings who were supporting you in getting here. If you're driving, just think of the various people that you're grateful for, or could be grateful to.

It could be very little things. You were stopped and they opened the door for you. Or it could be something larger. They took care of your car, or — Or it could be the people that you left, and they were willing to cover some of the things that you needed covered in order to be able to leave.

That there is so many — every one of our actions is connected to so many, so many people. And if we can feel that interconnection, it can invite a sense of, oh, thankfulness, of a feeling of support.

And of course, there may be instances in there where you didn't feel support, and you can acknowledge that as well. But I encourage you to spend a little extra time thinking of moments. Even the image of a face, or a moment where there was some generosity, there was some kindness.

And just see if you can let that in, and a sense of thankfulness, a sense of gratitude for that.

Just the fact that you've got a gratitude towards your body — towards, if you were sitting a long time perhaps, that you could sit and that you could find a way to do that. That if you were driving, those skills. There's so many things. You know, when they go wrong, we really notice it. But do they have to go wrong for us to just say, oh, thank you for that, and for that. Thanks for that, and that.

How much had to happen for us to get here?

Yeah. Good. Okay.

Sitting and standing

Please just roll to your side and come up to sitting.

You've got glasses there. You know that? You know. Good. Now just come up to sitting. Just feel yourself in sitting. Take a moment to feel the ground underneath you.

I'm here on this spot.

Sense the breath as you're here on this spot.

And let's come to standing together.

Take a moment to feel ground, and the space above you. Can extend consciousness up and down, down. Include the space.

And include the space behind you, the back space. Separate your feet a little bit. Let your hands kind of open back. And if it's safe behind you — you can look to make sure it's safe — just take a step or two backward into the back space.

With your eyes closed, come forward just a step or two into the forward space. So you begin to extend your consciousness, your sensing, into the space around your body.

Okay, and begin with just that space right around you, within an arm's distance, or a foot, or that space right around you, and let that be included. You can move any way you like, just as long as it's safe around you. You can shift. You can let your arms reach in each direction. But extend attention to include — I'm here in this body, and around this physical body.

My functioning is bigger than my physical body. It's based on inhabiting.

Sharing the space

And with your eyes open, just begin to move around the room. And you're not gonna be speaking, but you can make some contact periodically with people. You smile. You can say hello with your eyes. And you can feel that even without your body's touching, your spaces interact.

There are different distances at which we feel the space of other beings. Maybe backwards as well. And if you happen to bump into somebody, it's a little bump. It's not a big deal.

I'm going to pick up these glasses. If you have glasses on the floor, I recommend taking them off. Your glasses are up here. Thank you.

Shifting around, so you're not always going in the same direction. Be kind of playful. Maybe you're not going to whip around, so you're not going to ram anybody, but it's okay if you bump a little bit. Go backwards, and let your knees bend. So you kind of inhabit the space. You know, we're not just in our own space. We're sharing the space.

And you can say hello with your eyes, and intentionally, as you pass, let a hand touch. Just kind of let your hand somehow make some contact, and feel the moment of contact. Feel it in yourself. Feel how it goes more than just to your hand.

Pause for a moment with a hand, and just a light touch, very light. It's not a shaking of the hand. It's a light touch, and let the hands move with each other. And feel how your — is it too much to say that your heart is connected to your hand?

Can you feel something in your chest that has a resonance to your hand?

And walk some more. You can say hello as you walk by. You can give a little wave. Hello. Looking at you.

And feel, where does the hand resonate throughout your whole body — your feeling body, your physical body? Where do you feel that influence?

Wow.

[Silence 52 seconds]

Closing

Let's come back to our places here.

Okay, so this — I don't really want to be much in words tonight. What I'd like to do is go right into a walking meditation. I'll set up the room for meditation. We're going to do a little walking and a little sitting, and then a little sleeping.

And just so I don't forget: tomorrow, for those who like to do the early meditation at 6:30, we won't be doing that tomorrow. So you can sleep in, and tomorrow we'll all start at 7. And then after that, for those who like to do the 6:30 meditation, I'll be starting to do that on Saturday.

So, let's stand.