Movement lesson

Angela 2 — Week 3, Day 2, Session 5 — 54 minutes

Summary: A movement lesson in sensing the body as a doorway. Standing, then lying down, attention extends through each arm into the space beside you, and the light of awareness turns around so you can be perceived from that larger field. It ends with a short exchange on dual perception.

Standing

[Russell:] Stand. Stand. Standing at your mat, please.

Find yourself on this spot. Feel yourself right here. We need to reorganize.

[Participant:] Can you move? I can move over a bit?

[Russell:] Yeah, we've got plenty. It's so interesting. As you have less people in the room, it's more difficult to find space.

[Participant:] Yeah.

[Russell:] It's so interesting.

Okay, so, sensing yourself. I can't emphasize enough, although I'll say it a million times, this grounding in your physical body can allow you to have what's really living in there, the totality, that you can have the bigness of yourself, that this body is a doorway.

Shift your weight a little bit. Let the simplicity and directness —

Is it possible that finding out who you are has something to do with feeling your right foot on the floor? It's probably not the totality of who you are, but it has something to do with that. It's not some mystical otherness. It starts right here. The doorway.

Feel your height. And just putting your arms up. We did this morning, sensing that bigness, that tallness, that tree-likeness, that branching up and down. You have roots, and you're reaching up and down.

Once again, just feel that long verticality. Let your head look up this time. Thinking down and up, having this long vertical. Slowly come down.

Then begin to bring your attention to the right side of yourself, and begin to include the world to your right. Including — how do you bring attention to the space to the right of you?

Shift a little bit of weight into that space so there's a little bit of movement. Let your arm kind of just be light, though, almost like you're in water. And it kind of floats out a bit. It's not actually lifted as much as floating, as you shift weight right and you open into the right space.

Maybe you can have a feeling that you can move from your golden ball, from the middle, and we can come left as well and let the left arm float out. Of course, we continue with the ground and the length upward. We're moving from the middle, but we're now investigating, can I feel the left side or right side of my body? And then can I feel into the space?

And feel into the space is not some sort of mystical imagination. It's extending attention. Your attention actually becomes tangible. You extend attention into that space.

And let your hands come to your chest for a moment. Just as you're standing here, open the hands out towards the sides, extending your attention into the space you're opening into.

So again, we feel from the physical body into space by means of attention. Come back, feeling the air, feeling the space. And coming back to the center of your chest, right hand on the left, I recommend, and just feeling the center of your chest. This.

It's like we have the golden ball in the tanden. There's this ball in your chest, image of a ball, and radiating out, coming out, out, out.

And then as you're out, can you experiment with turning the light around and perceive back towards this one standing here? And at first, that might make no sense. It's an attentional practice that over the week is likely to become a little bit more familiar. Let's come back in.

Let's explore this beginning of inhabiting this left-right space lying on the ground. So come onto your back.

On your back

Begin sensing the ground is here.

The sense of the length of your vertical axis — coffee, glasses — the length of your vertical axis, so there's a feeling of covering some space. Not only that you're sensing the ground, but you sense through your spine, through the top of your head, including the space above your head, and traveling down through your legs, through your feet, and including the space under your feet.

And bend your legs to standing. And put your arms like we had them this morning, lengthened above your chest with your hands touching, so long arms. And palms are touching, so that prayer-like position.

And just remind yourself slowly of that upward movement towards the floor — above your head. At any point, lifting your pelvis would be helpful to help the arms move. Let your pelvis support your shoulders and your arms. And then you can lift your pelvis off the ground if that's helpful for you. And then as you lower your pelvis, also lower the arms back down, footward.

Lifting your head is helpful to help the arms come down, feeling that whole folding in your chest.

And we begin by radiating from the body out into space, and begin by including, in addition to the sensations of your body, the space around your body, the space you're moving through, and the space you're pointing into. You can keep contact, so that you have your body and this space.

And then the sense of this. You can think of the friend, or the larger self, or another being looking back from out in space, from the edge of the room, perhaps, back towards the one on the floor.

Or for some, the language of the larger self, or present self, the true self, some the friend, or some a guardian angel or another being. It's all good. The sense of extending the boundaries of your normal perception.

And as you come back, pause. That feels right for

[Silence 31 seconds]

you.

[Silence 37 seconds]

Right arm

Bring your right arm on the floor out in space to your right. Right arm out to your right, and shoulder height, palm towards the ceiling.

And just extend your interest through the shoulder, the arm, almost like you can travel through or feel both the contact with the ground and something in the interior of that arm that lets you know it's alive, that you're alive in that arm.

And letting the sense of that forearm and wrist and hand, fingers, listening to signs of life, how you know you're there.

And extending attention through the fingertips out into the space to your right. Notice, how do you do that? How can you include space? Please send your mind out there.

And then notice as you continue out, maybe to the corner of the room, maybe further, maybe closer, experiment with turning the light around and looking back towards the one there on the floor. You have some even momentary flashes of attending as if from the outside in.

Slowly, slowly. Turn your head towards the right, and as you turn your head, let your right arm just slightly lengthen into the space. So it's very slight. It's not a stretching. It's almost like space within the shoulder joint. The shoulder blade moves a bit as you come out. The fingers might come out a bit, as if you're reaching toward that space.

You're both in here and, when possible, observing from the outside in, as if you're reaching towards the one who's observing, and the one who is out there is with you, noticing from out there.

Turning to the right and back to neutral, and turn back. Let the arm also come back a bit, so feel into that space, turning towards.

And then as you come back this time, just pause for a moment. Lower the arm if you want to. And coming back to this position.

Good, and bring your right arm out to shoulder height. Right hand is out at shoulder height, palm is towards the ceiling.

As you reach gently and think of the space to your right, turn your head to the left. You're thinking right, and your head is going left.

Notice if you can have a little feeling of lengthening that right arm into the space to your right. You're thinking out to your right, and your head is going left, and then you come back to neutral. Do that a number of times.

Inviting, at a micro level, some movement in that joint, in that shoulder joint. Feeling of extending that right arm out into space.

These next few movements, everything's the same except the eyes go towards the right. The eyes go towards the hand. Right arm lengthens, sending attention rightward into space.

And leave that. Pause for a moment.

[Silence 53 seconds]

And have your right arm out at shoulder height, and palm forward towards the ceiling. Left hand resting on your chest. Now put the palm of the left hand somehow on your chest.

And begin to slide your left hand towards your right arm, and if comfortable, down your right arm a bit. Let the head turn, the eyes turn. Just feel. You're not straining. You're feeling the movement as it travels through you, and you feel the quality of contact across your chest, the left shoulder coming away from the floor a bit, how your pelvis and lower back are responding.

Now letting your left leg go with it, and roll, and now the same movement. Notice if you could include the sense of the space out to your left, and as if you're going — there's a being, or you in that larger sense, perceiving back towards the one sliding.

And there's a kind of meeting where your consciousness has two locations, actually. It's out there, and it's in here. And it can be thought of as another being, can be thought of as another aspect of self.

Notice if you can have — you're in there, reaching out, sensing your body, sensing the movement, and there's this receiving from that larger exterior space.

And pause for a moment with your hand on your chest, and bend your left leg to standing.

And as you slide your left hand, have the feeling that the golden ball is immediately connected to that left hand and begins to turn. The knee is vertical. And you can get support from your pelvis turning, or the sliding along that right arm.

And everything else is the same, the sense of consciousness extending out, and the light being turned around. Continue that journey.

Inviting and encouraging greater and greater intimacy with your own movement, your own perceiving, your own touch.

[Silence 48 seconds]

Once satisfied, pause for a little bit. Feel the influence of that quality of sensing and attending.

[Silence 31 seconds]

Notice your sense of space to your right and left.

[Silence 58 seconds]

Left arm

Bring your left arm out into space with the palm forward, shoulder height. Begin just extending your interest into that shoulder and arm.

Feeling of this arm being awake, being present, being here, and a sense of allowing its aliveness to be sensed. You know the arm is there, and in the fingers, the pulsations, the temperature, the ways that it's alive, that you're alive.

And begin to let your head turn leftward, letting the arm lengthen a bit, and sensing through the arm into space, through space, out into the room. Not sliding your right hand yet, just working with the left arm. And turning towards it.

And as you sense more clearly and intimately the presence of this arm moving through space and your head turning, begin to also experiment with turning the light around.

Larger perceiving, unconditionally welcoming perceiving. Out there, in.

So the arm is on the floor. The arm stays on the ground. Just reaching out gently a little bit. And just the next few times, let your eyes go right as your head goes left. So the head still goes left, but your eyes go right, and the arm gets longer. You feel that all through you.

It's actually amazing to know ourselves this way. To know that we're knowing ourselves.

Good. And then, as you come back, pause once again.

[Silence 48 seconds]

Bring your left arm outward, if it's not, and as you're extending attention leftward and letting that arm get longer — left arm's on the floor outward — you're letting the head turn rightward, but you're still finding a way. As the head goes right, there's a space that opens where that left arm can get slightly longer, and listen to where in your shoulder that happens.

So the head turns right. As the left arm lengthens, the head's going rightward. And then you come back to neutral. Let the head go to the right as the arm lengthens just slightly.

But the most important part is that you're within yourself, that consciousness is alive throughout your body, and is the sense of looking back from space, turning the light around. Awareness knows awareness.

Bend your right arm. Bend your right hand so that it's on your chest, and just pause there with your right hand resting. Let your elbow rest on the floor if that's comfortable. If it's easier for you to have your elbow off the ground, that's okay. Have your hand touching the middle of your chest, in the middle of your sternum. Middle of your sternum.

It's important, because there are actually neurons, sensory neurons, one thing to be in touch with under the sternum, around the heart. And so come high enough that you're in that region.

Rest your hand. Your fingertips at least are on the left side of your chest. And just lightly exaggerate the exhale a little bit, and begin to slide your right hand across your chest, towards your left arm, and feel. Feel where you go comfortably. Let your hand have contact, so it's not just in the air. You're sliding. The touch is a component here. Touch is a component.

And don't immediately go as far as you can. Feel into the movement. Feel into the touch, the lengthening, exhaling, this quality.

Very healing. Tomorrow you can find me to speak about how we activate the parasympathetic. Talk about it another time.

Right now, just feel the sliding across the chest, the exhaling, lightness, and letting the head turn leftward, letting the left arm get slightly longer, and thinking out into space and back.

And then bend your right leg to standing, so you can roll your pelvis from the golden ball, and get that real support for the sliding. Maybe you'll even touch your hand. Only if that's comfortable. The head turned.

Next few movements, let your eyes go rightward as everything else is oriented leftward. Your head goes leftward still, just your eyes go rightward.

Non-habitual movements are very helpful for disrupting the stable pattern of our self-identity, an interrupter.

Head goes left, eyes go right, slide across. Right foot stays on the floor. The head still goes left, just the eyes going right.

And then as you come back, pause.

[Silence 38 seconds]

Both arms

You can bring both arms out at shoulder height, palms towards the ceiling, and feel your width, and sense how you know your arms are there. The arms are on the floor, extended out to the sides at shoulder height.

And you're sensing. It's an experiment of moving attention, both left and right. Notice. One way to sense that is, notice how you can alternate. You can sense out to the right, then bring your mind back out to the left, that you can shift your attention that way. Do that a number of times. You might notice that your eyes likely track as you're doing that, maybe.

And then begin to notice, what happens if you invite extending right and left simultaneously? Just experiment a little bit with that, as if you're including both arms in the space they're reaching into.

And don't work hard at it, but rest into that possibility.

Bend both your legs. Bend your left hand so that it's touching your chest, and slide rightward with the hand. Send your right arm out into space, letting your head turn, your eyes turn, your knees can go, and can perhaps go towards your hand, letting yourself really turn, but extending your attention out, out, out, and as if you can perceive yourself from way out there on the right.

And then coming back when you're ready, letting that left elbow come to the floor, and then the arm, then the right arm would bend, so you'd reverse it. But take your time. I want you to also feel the hand across the chest. Feel the contact.

You might pause a moment when you're out to one side to allow the sense of, well, can I really have a feeling as if consciousness or a being is gazing back toward me, is including me from out there, that I'm connected to a larger something? That's just words, or is there some felt sense of that.

[Silence 2 minutes]

Come back this time. Just pause. If it's comfortable to have your arms wide, let them stay wide. If that's challenging, then don't force it.

[Silence 33 seconds]

One senses something like, I'm here on this spot, and I'm in this larger space, and this can even perceive back towards the one on this spot.

So one can perceive out into space, feel the body, extend the attention out, and then be perceived from out in space.

And bend your legs, and let the long arms reach forward towards the ceiling with the palms touching. The palms find each other. And there's a feeling of the arms and the space towards the ceiling.

And then slowly lower down towards your right and feel how you can keep these long arms. And elbows may want to start bending, but feel how you could organize your legs and pelvis and head so that the arms could be long as you lower down.

And then you come back up and come to the other side. Go slow, because the most important thing is sensing yourself, yourself out into space, and then from out into space back. The movement is just a way to help you attend to that.

The hands are touching as you go, all the way through, so you need to figure out how that shoulder is going to come away from the floor, and the one will roll on the floor.

[Silence 46 seconds]

And as you come back, lower your arms. If you want to lower your legs, go.

[Silence 2 minutes]

Just the subtle sense of being alive right now. Notice how that is.

[Silence 34 seconds]

Coming up

And as you come up, let yourself be in this little bit different consciousness that might be there, and don't jump into your usual. If possible, include the sense of the body, space around you. Maybe experimenting with the sense of being perceived from an outer, larger space.

If you feel right, you can come.

[Silence 51 seconds]

You're noticing how you are here. Feel free to move. Sense yourself. How it feels to be you.

[Participant:] I'm moving and I'm not moving.

[Russell:] Can you say more?

[Participant:] My physical body is moving. That space that I am, not moving.

[Russell:] Yeah, yeah, yeah, dual perception, yeah. I get that.

Oh, time for dinner. Thank you. Wonderful step for us.