Movement lesson

Angela 2 — Week 7, Day 5, Session 2 — 42 minutes

Summary: Russell presents differentiation and reintegration as the essential movement of systems, from nations to the nervous system, then leads a lesson that frees internal rotation of the hip. Knee and foot circles, a judo-like roll, and side-sitting connect that freedom back into the pelvis, so the whole can reorganize without collapsing into a merged mass.

Opening

We'll have some time later, in the afternoon, to look at some of this threesome process, and explore it in any way, learning from that. And there are a couple of other questions that have come up from people that we'll get to.

We're gonna be a little bit late on lunch — probably about ten or fifteen minutes late — just so you know, so that I can get through this.

Someone looked at the menu and says, I think she can only eat vegetables. I'm gonna get some chickens. So you get first dibs on chickens.

Differentiation and integration

Okay. An essential principle that you can work with. In my opinion — I've been working with it for so many years, from Auger — I think I'll work with it the rest of my life.

I think it's the essential principle of systems work, from his point of view. And that is nothing new, but maybe you haven't seen it as relevant to everything — to relationships, to movement, to the development of anything.

It's the movement from a moment of integration to a further differentiation, to a reintegration, to a differentiation, to a reintegration, to a differentiation. And this is the evolutionary process.

You can't integrate what you can't differentiate. You can't go further in development unless there's a further differentiation.

So a couple, or a family, or a nation, or a body, is always looking to integrate, is always looking to create a whole. We always end up in wholes — W-H. We end up in wholes.

We are — but we're always moving through these integrations. And the less differentiated, the less sophisticated the integration.

A great current example, of the last twenty years, is when the Soviet Union stopped being monolithic and became differentiated into countries again. That liberates energy. It also moves toward potential anarchy, which is what the integration is worried about — is there too much energy to bring together into a cohesive whole?

So there are these impulses, in biology and in social structures, towards creating a whole more quickly, which doesn't allow the system to realize its full potential. But if you let it go too long without its new whole forming, it can be too much for it to integrate, and it becomes chaos.

So systems are always looking at what's the degree of differentiation that can be reintegrated into a functional whole.

When relationships don't have enough differentiation, there's a sense of merging. And that merging can be very harmonious, but usually the individual elements in that system won't realize their ultimate potential.

So we're looking at these creative breakdowns in order to have new integrations, and creative breakdowns to have new integrations.

Moshe saw this through movement, and through the development of the nervous system, very clearly.

So, you know, like in this movement, where we're learning to connect the deep functioning of the pelvis, lower back, and hip joint, so that they're integrated — what we have to do is get more possibilities. More — you could say — energy liberated, which means we need more differentiation, which then reintegrates.

So this lesson we're gonna do, similar to the lesson we did two days ago, is about further differentiating the hip joints, so that there's more potential energy for the reintegration. Does that make sense to you? Because if you get that picture, it helps in so many situations, I find.

Okay, let's not talk.

Okay, so in this lesson we'll begin — I'm pretty sure we did this lesson before, but maybe I didn't. It begins with very simple movements, clarifying the rotation of the hip joint. And then there'll be some movements where we begin to see, can we get a really smooth rotation, even into the internal aspect?

Remember how we were running into this area, and it was hard to get that freedom? Well, we're gonna see, can we get a circling — first of the knee, then of the foot — that really includes bringing the knee more medial, and the foot more distal. Distal, external. In this kind of direction. And then you run into all sorts of interesting experiences.

And then we'll start taking that differentiation and see, can we begin to move the whole pelvis, so they begin to integrate together. We're maximizing as much differentiation as we can, but get it connected to the rest.

It's much easier to do than to hear about. So we'll be doing a number of movements where we're differentiating, integrating, differentiating, integrating, like that.

I think that's all you need to know. Okay?

So it might look like — okay, I'll just leave it.

As the nervous system gets more complex, more cells differentiate and then begin to specialize into functions. So specialization is an example of differentiation, but then they need to create wholes by creating organs.

First the cell has differentiated parts that then work together. Then those cells can begin to form collections that create organs, and organs can begin to create systems in the body that work together. But they're differentiated and integrated.

But if that begins to break down, then the health is compromised, because maybe some part of the breathing system is not integrated anymore. Does that make sense?

Right, so it happens all the way through evolution — phylogenetically and ontogenetically. It happens all the way through.

Yeah. Okay.

Circling the knee

Excuse me? Yes, we are. Lie on your back. And that stuff I was showing you, with the hip joint, has something to do with the lesson we're gonna do.

Just enjoy lying on your back. Have an image of your left hip joint, and where your hip joint and the pelvis come together. Your left leg. The angle of the foot. Any of the differences, left to right — any of the ways you experience differences.

And now you can get that, you know, kind of standing outside, in your consciousness, and observing. Get a kind of visual reference that can be helpful. And I also encourage you to go into the interior of yourself, to learn how to shift the attention in those ways.

And bend both legs.

Lift your left foot off the floor, and interlace your hands just below the front of your kneecap. And slowly experiment with making a circle with your knee, and gradually feel when and where the circle stops being a true circle.

Where are there any places — so I can say, just even observing you, for many of you it's moving the knee to the right that is not as round as the left side of your circle. So see if you can be really in there, listening to the real roundness of your knee, and how that goes to your hip.

And it's simply the reverse direction, so you get your impressions both directions. Do you need to move your right foot in order to give yourself space?

Go slow enough that you can really feel if the circle is a circle.

Okay, and leave that. Lower down for a moment.

Notice if there's any repercussion as you're lying here.

Now bend your legs once again, and this time interlace your hands non-habitually around your right knee. Again, take your time, so that you're not just being mechanical, and you're listening.

[Silence 34 seconds]

Reverse direction.

[Silence 37 seconds]

Lower that leg.

[Silence 41 seconds]

Go inside and feel the inner sense, in terms of the proprioception, and also in terms of your image of your hips and pelvis. The shape of your legs.

What I was talking about this morning, in terms of valuing inner experience. If there's anything we can do to help people value their own perception — that the doctor is not the only one who knows something about their body. Not that they can't learn from their doctor. They can use them as a consultant, or something. But how your hip joints feel to you matters. Not just whether they hurt or not, but how you perceive, and what your body's telling you.

Bend your legs, please.

Circling the foot

Interlace your hands around your left knee. And this time, feel if you can make a true circle of your foot in space — not just your ankle, but the whole foot moving around.

It's an interesting movement, because your knee is more or less staying in the same location. It's not an ankle movement. The whole foot is moving in space.

How can your foot go to the left of your knee? How can — I mean, your knee can move in space. It's okay for your knee to move in space. Actually, you're making a movement with the knee and the hip.

How can your foot go leftward? Left of your knee. What would have to happen in your knee, and in your hip, for the foot to find, smoothly, the space outside the knee?

It can be a very small space, and then feel the circle that would continue that. So don't go too far to the right. Don't go so far to the right that you can't have something more or less similar to the left.

Breathe sometimes.

Can you get a feeling for what your hip needs to do to allow this movement?

This is a movement that comes directly from judo. Look at me. That's exactly the way. One of the ways you get somebody to roll in judo is to turn their hips. Because anybody who's gonna feel that is not gonna stay lying there, if they value their own skill, right? They'll find a way to roll.

You can see, many of Moshe's movements came from that experience. And he'd go, okay, how does this pelvis need to get integrated, so that the hip is differentiated, and then the pelvis responds, and the whole movement can go through — not as an undifferentiated mass, but also not just articulating in the hip joint.

Just — you might — I'm sure you can go a little bit further.

Now, put both hands around your left knee, and slide your left hand down in front of your shin bone, along the front of the shin. So the right hand will be around your knee, and the left hand will travel down wherever you can get to. Yeah, yeah, that's right.

And then slowly pull with both hands, so that your left hand pulls your shin bone to the left, and your right hand pulls your knee to the right, and that will begin to roll you to the right. So you can feel that.

If somebody were actually on a judo mat, and took your knee to the right and your foot to the left, that would roll you to the right. Foot left, lower leg left — and hold.

What do you have to do in order to move in this direction? You feel?

So you want to feel, how can your whole torso get the message, so it can follow this movement? If somebody kept pulling on your lower leg, how could you follow that movement?

And listen to how to dissociate that hip joint, and then how to integrate the whole torso with that knee.

And eventually, the back of your right hand would go to the floor on your right side, and your foot would be kind of towards the ceiling — the sole of the foot. The lower leg would tend towards the vertical, and your knee would be resting on the back of your right hand. Your knee would be on the floor, and the sole of your foot would tend towards the ceiling. It probably won't be completely vertical, but it would tend in that direction.

See that most functional sense, inside the body.

Slow and smooth, and let it have a flow to it. It's not easy.

Good.

And come onto your back. Lower down. Leave it. Notice how that influences your lying here.

[Silence 52 seconds]

And bend your legs, and lift your right foot off the floor. Interlace your hands non-habitually around your right knee, and begin to experiment, just circulating that foot. Move that foot, feeling how you can differentiate that hip.

At some point, the foot will go right of the knee, and the knee the other way.

[Silence 32 seconds]

Okay. Slide your right hand down. Right hand down, left hand up.

And of course, you don't want to be moving abruptly. These are challenging movements. If you can really go inside and get this inner relationship of that leg to the hip, to the pelvis — how that rolling would occur.

And it can be interesting to do a back and forth, where you really identify some of the differences in the hip joints, in the legs. It can be revelatory.

Of course, you know, Moshe is the only one I know who even thinks about this direction of the hip. Everyone else is interested in opening the hip, right? Getting the legs really open. And that's great. I love the openness of the legs, but getting this internal rotation seems very important for the functioning of your legs and pelvis.

And so when you come down towards the side, the back of the left hand will go towards the floor, and the sole of the foot will tend towards the ceiling, the direction being towards the vertical, even though you won't be one hundred percent vertical.

Let's let that get smoother.

Okay, leave it. Lower down.

Just enjoy lying here. Roll your head a little bit.

[Silence 51 seconds]

Hands apart

Bend your legs. Feel how your pelvis is as you're lying down. Bring your hands to your left knee. Slide the left hand down once again.

And this time — so your right hand is on your left knee, below the front of the kneecap, and the left hand is down the shin bone. And this time, begin to feel how you might be able to make a circle with your foot in this position.

So it's similar to the movement you did before, but now you can have a little bit more — a little further differentiation. So at some point the knee, again, is gonna go to the right, and the foot is gonna go to the left. And you need to feel what has to happen in your hip to allow that.

Listen for jerkiness and jumpiness. Take your time, and pause if you need more pauses than I'm giving you.

And once you get a feeling of even a little bit of a circle, where the foot goes even a little bit to the left of the knee, then reverse directions.

It's very easy to get holding your breath with this movement, so let it breathe. Think of your yoga.

[Silence 33 seconds]

Yeah. Lower down. Notice the influence in your perception.

And then bend your legs. Hold your right knee. Lower your right hand down, and feel that circling of the foot.

That means really pay attention to the image of the circle. Let the image help you, so that at some point the foot needs to get further from the ground. It can't be at the same distance from the ground throughout, if you're making a circle.

And think of differentiating, so that at some point the knee goes left, and the foot is right of the knee. You get some feeling of that.

Good.

Leave that. Pause for a moment.

Side-sitting

And now, sitting. Sitting with your right leg long and your left leg bent back.

And you're gonna be free to adjust where you put your feet, as you feel what we're doing. And if this position is unworkable, we can adjust it.

Right leg long, left leg bent back. Sitting.

Left hand under the knee. Left hand under your left knee. Yes — left hand under the inside, the part that's on the floor. So your left hand is between your knee and the floor. You're leaning on your right hand.

You're free to adjust the angles of your feet. Make it okay for yourself, and bring the knee to standing.

Feel into your hip joint, and into your pelvis. Lower the knee down. Get this movement really free and light.

Feel where you need to put your foot, where you need to put your hand, so that you can bring that foot to standing. If you let your head turn, that might help.

If you feel like you're really putting all your weight on your right hand, remember how you can get some proximal support. So the right hand taking weight is more of a guide than it's actually supporting your weight. Your weight is still supported by getting a little taller, and you're activated in your pelvis.

Now you can feel free to move both feet, come through the middle, and come to the other side. You can come off that right hand if you like. And then come through the middle, and come to the other side.

I find it helpful to look around yourself. The turning of your head — that differentiation will help the integration through your pelvis.

So get lighter. Freer in your jaw. Let your eyes help you. Feel where your foot wants to be, so that it doesn't need to move so much, that it can be almost in the same place throughout the movement. That you found a good location for it. That the foot moves minimally as you go from side to side.

Let your eyes look around. As you come onto the sit bone, get taller.

Okay, pause and sit, please.

Let me see you.

Okay, what were you curious about?

Okay, so as we come across — that's a great example. That will be many people's tendencies, to come down as they come across. What we want to do is come out of your pelvis.

What we want to find — it's similar to the movement that we've been working with, coming up from here — is how to have your length. How, as someone here would say, how to come out of your pelvis.

Okay, let's bring the right knee back. Left leg long.

Okay, now first just find a way up to the vertical. So don't rush through that, 'cause you want to make sure you're not crushing your hand, that you're getting some internal support, that ultimately you can do it without your hands.

But for now, let's get the hand support, and lift, and look, and turn, so the turning can help.

Mobilize your pelvis. And that turning — if you're ever teaching this with people — that turning is a great ally for people who have really lost so much differentiation in their hip. The turning really helps.

Right. Yeah. Sitting on cushions. Good place for that foot.

Right. This is happy.

I won't sit. I won't sit.

Good. And just come to sitting, and feel how the sitting is — even just on the floor. Even if that's not your preferred way of sitting, it might be a little bit more — right?

Right. You have changed so much over this course. I remember you sitting on the floor at the beginning. It was a real struggle. Wow. It's really — huh?

Can you feel how settled you are in your body? It's beautiful. You have your length and your ground right now. Beautiful.

Closing

Okay, well, we're gonna stop there for now. There are actually a couple of other variations, but this feels like a really good stop, and I'll show you the other variations later. But everyone's in such a good, settled place, and lunch is still warm, so.