

Somatic Patterning
Supplemental Instructor Materials
Chapter 11: Integrative Movement Modalities

Note: Numbered points in the chapter's reading list, objectives, and summary are correlated and focus on topics that I think will be most relevant for massage students.

Please contact your education director for answers to the chapter questions.

Chapter 11 Suggested Readings

Chapter 11 Objectives

1. Describe head righting and its somatic benefits in the Alexander technique.
2. Name and define four Laban analysis effort qualities of weight, space, time, and flow.
3. Briefly discuss how the effort qualities affect touch and movement characteristics.
4. Describe seven movement concepts from Laban analysis based on space harmony.
5. Discuss the applications of spatial clarity (gesture or posture, emphasis, simultaneous or sequential movement, central or peripheral initiation, shaping and carving movements, spoke-like or arc-like, personal or shared kinesphere) to hands-on work.
6. Briefly describe each of the six Bartenieff movement fundamentals exercises.
7. Discuss hands-on applications for each of the Bartenieff exercises.
8. Explain Feldenkrais's theory of consciousness in habitual movement.
9. Name six features of the awareness through movement technique.
10. Define ideokinetic facilitation and identify three key concepts in the process.
11. Name three factors essential to changing movement through imagery.
12. Describe the constructive rest position, discuss why and how to use it in patterning, and describe a patterning exercise in this position.
13. Describe the process of sensory awareness.
14. List the body systems and developmental movement patterns taught in Bainbridge-Cohen's touch and repatterning work in Body-Mind Centering.
15. Describe the body-mind centering process and its applications to hands-on work through automatic movement and cellular touch.
16. Discuss how the fluidity of Emilie Conrad's movement work in Continuum affects the body-mind system.
17. Define the basic premise of the Pilates Method and discuss the role of controlled movement in the process of exercising with core support.

Chapter 11 Summary

Alexander, Laban, and Feldenkrais were all prolific writers.

1. The Alexander technique is a somatic postural therapy based on the intentional and correct positioning of the head and neck in the moment prior to movement in order to initiate an effortless movement sequence. Initially developed by Australian actor F. M. Alexander (1869-1955) as a cure for his laryngitis, the Alexander technique developed

into one of the first somatic therapies based on head-righting responses and deliberate corrective action. It is still widely used to improve body awareness and performance, relieve pain, and to change faulty postural habits.

[maf commentary] - head-righting is extremely importance for postural alignment as well as head and neck comfort. In addition, I think head-righting initiates the postural chain of muscles along the spine, as well as efficient spinal movement. When this mechanism is locked in NM tension patterns, which are common in the head and neck, the physical discomfort can perpetuate the psychological discomfort. The fundamental challenge to working successfully with head-neck tensions is to get the client to trust you enough to yield the weight of her or his head to your hands.

The second most important thing is to release suboccipitals from the dura, a key muscle/nervous system interface in the body that underscores the importance of correct head-righting mechanisms.

Rolling versus sagittal nodding in neck. Rolling for NM release and relaxation. Sagittal nodding for patterning head-righting.

2. Labananalysis is a complex system of movement analysis developed by the brilliant athlete, gymnast, choreographer, and artist Rudolph Laban (1879-1958). Probably the most well-known applications of Labananalysis are the applications of effort-shape studies to personality assessment in dance therapy, and the space harmony studies in dance.
3. The Bartenieff fundamentals, developed by a protégé of Laban's named Imgaard Bartenieff, are a series of six basic movement patterns that all movements can be analyzed and repatterned through, which include the thigh lift, forward pelvic shift, lateral pelvic shift, arm circle, body half, and diagonal knee drop. When practiced with an awareness of spatial tensions and effort qualities, the Bartenieff fundamentals can be used to fine-tune the NM mechanisms in the body in order to improve the organization of firing patterns along a kinetic chain.
4. The Feldenkrais Method, which was developed by Israeli physicist Moshe Feldenkrais, is also called also called "Awareness through Movement," because it is practiced using slow, deliberate movement exercises designed to break habitual pathways and to restore sensory-motor awareness. Feldenkrais also developed a hands-on technique called Functional Integration, in which a practitioner gently guides a client's body through a passive range of new movement pathways to improve body awareness and ease of motion.
5. Ideokinetic facilitation is the process of improving movement in physical education and dance through the use of visualizations, which was originally developed at the Columbia Teacher's College by physical educator Mabel, author of the classic text on movement, the *Thinking Body*.
6. A protégé of Todd's and another physical educator, Dr. Lulu Sweigard, researched ideokinesis in posture labs and further developed the process with a series of anatomically correct images to use in movement education and dance trainings.

7. Sweigard identified three conditions essential for the success of ideokinesis: a student must know the exact location and the exact direction of the movement, and a student must have the desire to move. [MAF notes - These same elements are essential for success in using active movement techniques for NM patterning, only substitute the word "client" for "student."]
8. Ideokinetic exercises are often practiced from the constructive rest position (CRP), a supine and neutral spine, bent-knee resting position. To release extraneous muscular effort prior to an exercise, a person gets into the CRP position to relax the body, allowing the spine, feet, and arms to sink into the floor. The arms are laced in the most comfortable positions, which ranges from lying by the side of the body to being folded across the chest or extended overhead.
9. In the practice of Sensory Awareness, a process developed by Charlotte Selver becoming more fully aware of sensory perceptions and refining this awareness, a person focuses on expanding an awareness of one's experience, slowly, carefully, and systematically noticing the subtle body sensations as well as colors, scents, and textures of the surrounding environment. Sensory Awareness has a meditative effect, bringing a person more fully into a quiet, relaxed present-moment experience and was popularized when used in Gestalt therapy, one of the first body-centered psychotherapies.
10. Body-Mind Centering is a study of experiential anatomy, and developmental movement patterns and reflexes developed by occupational therapist and dancer, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen. It is called BMC because a student practices centering one's consciousness in the experience of the body, which is viewed as an expression of the mind. In a BMC class, the student's body is the primary learning laboratory. This educational system is applied to a wide-range of somatic disciplines, including yoga, dance, massage, and occupational therapy.
11. Continuum is a meditative movement and breathing practice developed by ballet dancer and choreographer Emily Conrad, who using fluid, organic, and unstructured body explorations to dissolve physical boundaries and reconnect a person to the expansive biological pulsation of life.
12. Pilates is a system of core muscle control and strengthening developed by Joe Pilates (1880-1967) that is widely used in physical therapy, as well as dance and sports trainings, to improve posture and form in exercise and injury rehabilitation.
13. Contact Improvisation is a dynamic, exciting movement practice in which students work in pairs to explore safely and effortlessly lean, sink, and roll each other's body into the physical contact of each others' body. As they explore physical contact, a fluid, organic, and dynamic improvisational dance emerges.

Chapter 11 Questions

*Note: Make sure to pay attention to the italics in some of the questions because they ask you to identify the statement that **does not** refer to the topic of the question.*

1. Which of the following statements *does not* describe muscular armor?
 - a. It develops to help an individual cope with and control overwhelming emotions.
 - b. It is a pattern of muscular strength that is important to maintain at all costs
 - c. It manifests in a pattern of protective muscular rigidity and character structure.
 - d. It can be extremely resistant to change because of its role in defense mechanisms.
2. Seven bands of muscular armor are the
 - a. ocular, oral, neck, scapular, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and pelvic segments.
 - b. ocular, oral, neck, chest, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and pelvic segments.
 - c. ocular, oral, neck, chest, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and foot segments.
 - d. ocular, oral, neck, chest, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and pelvic segments.
3. During a massage, a client may experience a deep yet spontaneous emotional release
 - a. when the client can talk about and figure out personal problems.
 - b. when a practitioner works on the client's painful trigger points.
 - c. when muscular armor relaxes and underlying emotions come to the surface.
 - d. when sympathetic tone increases in the autonomic nervous system.
4. Which of the following statements *does not* apply to grounding?
 - a. Grounding can be achieved by visualizing the body floating.
 - b. Grounding is the process of energetically connecting with the earth through the feet.
 - c. Grounding can center a practitioner when a client has an emotional release.
 - d. Grounding is a process that can help a person maintain a sense of self.
5. When working with a massage client who has hypervigilant tendencies marked by a paranoid, frozen posture, it is important to
 - a. provide a deep tissue massage that takes the client beyond her or his pain threshold.
 - b. provide a quick, vigorous massage that challenges the client to let go.
 - c. provide a slow, gentle massage that evokes the client's trust and relaxation.
 - d. provide a hands-off energy treatment that pulls toxins out of the client.
6. The three stages of the formative process, which describes how the body continually reshapes around a person's psychological experience, are the
 - a. expansion phase, the contraction phase, and the relaxation phase.
 - b. expansion phase, the containment phase, and the expression phase.
 - c. expansion phase, the containment phase, and the dialogue phase.
 - d. exhalation phase, the containment phase, and the expression phase.
7. Which of the following statements *does not* apply to Gestalt therapy?
 - a. It is unique because it was the first psychotherapy to focus on body awareness.
 - b. It addresses the present moment experience of the body and the therapist-client dynamic.

- c. It restores the totality of experience, or “gestalt,” by addressing rigid behaviors.
 - d. It helps the client process psychological issues through expressive dance.
8. The felt sense in the body-based technique of focusing is
- a. a vague, overall body feeling that accompanies a psychological issue.
 - b. a strong body sensation that a client gets when being touched.
 - c. a visualization process that a client uses to resolve psychological issues.
 - d. a style of touch that a practitioner uses to access muscular holding.

Chapter 15 Suggested Learning Activities

Note: Any exercise titled “Patterning Exercise” can be found in the current edition. Page numbers for these exercises (inserted in parentheses) are included to help instructors utilize activities during lessons that may be based on other segments of the book. “Skills Exercises” are not found in the current edition but will be included in the 2nd edition of SP.

Skills Exercise: Grounding

Objectives:

- To develop an energetic connection with the earth through the feet.
- To have a tool to stabilize the body when emotional responses are occurring.

Exercises:

1. Practice a slow, barefoot walking meditation in which you feel your feet connect with the ground. Slowly roll from the heel through all five toes. Sense the weight of your body sinking through your feet, as though it were so heavy it would leave a footprint under each step.
2. During the course of your day, notice when you feel your feet on the ground and when you do not.
3. Whenever you feel emotions arise, in yourself, your friends or family, or in your massage clients, gently press both feet into the ground and notice if it helps you keep yourself centered.

Skills Exercise: Focusing Exercise for Self-Development (p. 331)

Objectives:

- To develop body-centered problem solving skills.
- To increase your awareness of the depth of the body-mind connection.

Exercise:

1. Pick a problem or psychological issue that you want to work on. Then clear a quiet space to sit or lie down with your eyes closed.
2. Focus on your issue and notice what happens in your whole body. Get a felt sense of the problem on a body level. Feel the whole problem at once, using a soft focus. Scan your body as you feel the problem.
3. Find a “handle,” a word or image that accesses the essence of the felt sense. You may sift through many words in your mind before you find the right one. (*When the handle accurately fits the felt sense, a deep bodily shift occurs.*)
4. Check your handle against your felt sense, to see if the two resonate. If they resonate, you will feel a deep bodily shift, or change of state, such as a sense of relaxing. If they do not resonate, go on to step 5.
5. Ask your felt sense what it is. The premise here is that your body never lies. Receive and accept whatever information comes from the body without judging it.

6. Make a short journal entry about your experience and what you discovered. Practice this exercise once a week for several weeks, making a journal entry about each exercise. At the end of this time, discuss your experience with a classmate who is exploring the same process.