

## **Refined Processes for Pain**

After creating the initial somatic processes for pain, I engaged with a deeper, embodied exploration building on the primary question: **what specific somatic principles support the pain and discomfort of my condition in practice?** I then investigated each process and principle in more depth in the studio through movement explorations, being witnessed in the space by others, and gaining further insights into the applications of somatic principles to others. This ultimately provided a further insight and better understanding of each principle in relation to my embodied experience. Upon reflection, it was important to pick out and analyse some key aspects of my experience in direct correlation with the self-reflective processes of mark-making and poetic reflection. By describing my experience through language and abstract drawing, I was able to gage my own experience in the moment. Language such as flow, minimal movement, jagged, jittery, uncomfortable, fluid, expressive, tight, tense, and release were central descriptions of my experience and contributed to an understanding of whether these specific somatic principles were supporting my pain.

As a result, I identified that not all principles improved or supported my pain or discomfort, and some in fact made it worse. From this experience (whether the experience was positive or negative) I then unpacked each principle through practice and devised a refined set of principles that support my body and my pain. Each principle is an outcome of my practical explorations, meaning that they are applicable to my pain experience only, but further investigation involving others in pain could potentially reach similar conclusions. This is where my small-scale investigation could be expanded and applied to others within the community who also experience pain or discomfort.

Furthermore, the somatic processes that I have created as an outcome of my movement investigations are therefore a practical offering devised from my own body experience in relation to somatic processes already existing within the field. The refined set of somatic principles for pain are The Breath, Movement Economy, The Skeleton, Rotation and Flow, Embodied Rhythm, Stretch, Extension and Elongation, Dynamic and Light Self-touch, Noticing and Addressing Habit and Rest and Active Stillness.

### **The Breath**

- *Find a comfortable position lying, sitting, or standing and make yourself a space where you can dedicate the time to tend to your body.*
- *Allow your gaze to soften and your eye lids to release. If it feels OK, allow your eyes to close.*
- *Take a moment to notice your breathing.*
- *Notice whether you are breathing deeply, or if your breath is shallow.*

- *Allow a moment for you to consciously become aware of the way you are breathing.*
- *Does your breath move in your body? How is your breath moving in your body?*
- *Notice the pathway in which your breath is travelling.*
- *Perhaps your chest rises or expands with each in-breath, and then softens or releases with each out-breath.*
- *Notice how your body responds to this minimal movement, and how breath may open a sense of space in your upper body.*
- *As you exhale, allow your breath to slowly exit your mouth as you release your weight into the ground.*
- *Notice if you become aware of that release on the out-breath.*
- *You may want to place a hand on your chest or diaphragm to become more aware of the movement of your breathing.*
- *Where does your breath travel within your body?*
- *Notice if there is any pain or discomfort present and try to breathe deeply.*
- *You may notice discomfort in your shoulder, your hip, your head perhaps. Allow your breath to open space to this area of your body.*
- *Notice whether you simply want to rest into the sensation of breath filling your chest and your diaphragm.*
- *Notice whether you wish to focus on one area of your body, or whether your attention shifts in focus.*
- *You may notice that you want to move as you continue to trace breath throughout your body.*
- *Allow your body to explore this relationship with your breath, exploring its pathway, openness, and vastness.*
- *Playing with movement and rest, allow yourself to move freely, staying in contact with your breathing pattern.*
- *As you begin to bring your movement and rest to a close, notice if there is a shift in your wellbeing.*
- *Perhaps you feel more energised, or maybe there is a sense of release?*
- *Notice whether you wish to transition into self-reflection, engaging with the process and experience through mark-making, drawing or simply writing a few things down.*
- *How are you feeling in the moment?*
- *Engage with this practice in your own time, allowing the time to rest afterwards if needed.*

## **Movement Economy**

- *Find a comfortable position anywhere in the space, and notice whether you wish to stand, sit or lay down.*
- *You may wish to have a blanket close to you.*
- *Begin by bringing your awareness to your breathing.*
- *Notice how your breath is present in your body.*
- *Are you breathing deeply or is your breath shallow?*
- *You may wish to place a hand on your torso to notice the movement of your breath.*
- *As you rest into the position you find yourself in, try and become aware of how you are feeling at this present moment.*
- *Notice whether you are experiencing any tension or discomfort. You may wish to adjust your position.*
- *Begin to move a specific part of your body very slowly to become aware of the intricacies of this part of your body.*
- *You may wish to simply raise your arm in the air to notice any muscular tension or sensations as you engage with this movement.*
- *As you continue to move gently and minimally, notice whether other parts of your body wish to move.*
- *You may notice that if moving one arm, the other arm may wish to move perhaps.*
- *Continue to play with minimal, simplistic movement to notice any body sensations that may arise in the moment.*
- *Staying in contact with breath and your breathing pattern, notice how your body is moving and how this affects your movement experience.*
- *You may wish to transition between moving and stillness to notice sensation.*
- *As you continue to move, how does your body react?*
- *You may notice that your movement takes you on a journey.*
- *Expansive movement may emerge from an intricate exploration, or you may simply rest into the ground engaging with minimal, simplistic movement.*
- *Allow your body to follow any impulses to move, whether this is minimal or expansive.*
- *Notice whether your attention shifts to different parts of your body to explore different movement qualities.*

- *How does this shift in attention affect your body?*
- *Staying in contact with breath as an anchor to your movement exploration, allow your breath to carry your experience, allowing time and space to engage with this practice.*
- *You may wish to engage with reflective practice after movement.*
- *Simply mark-make, draw or write down some descriptive words that relate to your own, individual process.*

## **The Skeleton**

- *You may wish to have a pillow and blanket nearby for this process.*
- *Find a comfortable position in the space lying down and notice your breathing pattern.*
- *If lying is uncomfortable, please sit on a chair.*
- *Allow your focus and gaze to soften.*
- *Notice how you are feeling in this moment.*
- *If it feels comfortable to do so, allow your eyes to close.*
- *With each inhale, notice how your chest and rib cage expands and your shoulders raise.*
- *As you exhale, notice the movement from your diaphragm as it releases, and your breath exits your mouth.*
- *Allow your jaw to drop and the muscles in your face to relax.*
- *Notice the weight of your head on top of your spine as you bring your awareness to your skull.*
- *You may wish to place a pillow underneath your head if you are lying down and make sure that the pillow is resting in a comfortable place, not straining your neck.*
- *Notice the weight of your skull as it drops into the ground.*
- *Notice the suppleness of your neck as the back of your head simply rests.*
- *Notice if there is a sense of openness or space in your head and neck. How does this feel?*
- *You may wish to gently move your head from side to side to become aware of the movement within your neck and how your skull is in relationship with your spine.*
- *Notice if you wish to rest here into the support of the pillow and ground, or whether you wish to explore the relationship between your head and ground through minimal movement.*
- *What can you notice? How does this small, gentle movement feel? Is there a jerkiness, or is the movement flowing and fluid?*
- *As you continue to breathe and move minimally, engaging with the movement of breath, you may notice the rise and fall in your shoulders and the movement of your collar bones in relationship with your chest and neck.*

- *Notice how breath moves your skeleton and how your skeleton responds to the movement of breath as you trace your upper body.*
- *Staying in contact with breath, continue to move your upper body gently and in response to breath.*
- *How does your breath, movement and your skeleton relate to one another?*
- *As you trace your shoulders, your arms, your chest, your neck and your skull, notice if your lower body wants to move.*
- *You may wish to send your awareness to another part of your body in response to sensations that may arise elsewhere.*
- *Perhaps you may bring your attention to your hips or pelvis to become aware of the connection between your lower body and the ground.*
- *How does the ground support your lower body, and how does your lower body respond to a sense of release?*
- *Following any impulses to move, allow yourself the time and space to explore your body in relationship, noticing the intricate movement of your skeleton in response to release.*
- *You may wish to continue exploring minimal movement, or you may wish to be expansive, exploring the edges of your skeleton in relation to the space around you.*
- *If lying down, notice what parts of your skeleton are staying in contact with the ground as you continue to move and breathe.*
- *This may be your spine, the back of your head, the backs of your legs, or the soles of your feet if in constructive rest.*
- *Notice what is present in your body as your movement explores your skeleton.*
- *You may wish to use self-touch to explore the bones in greater detail.*
- *Allow the time and space to play with this process in your own time, opening possibilities for movement awareness through your body.*
- *Stay in contact with how you are feeling, and if any pain or discomfort arises, try and send your awareness to a place of clarity or a place where there is no pain.*
- *You may wish to reflect on this process in your own time after moving.*
- *Simply make a few notes, draw, or mark-make to recount your experiences and explore what you have noticed throughout the process.*

### **Rotation and Flow**

- *Like skeletal release, this process explores the rotation and flow of the body in relation to space, sensation, and your body.*

- *Find a comfortable position standing or sitting and allow the eyes to remain open as you adjust to your surroundings.*
- *Acknowledge how you are feeling in the moment.*
- *Notice what bodily sensations are present and how this makes you feel.*
- *You may wish to alter your position to support your body.*
- *As the eyes become aware of your surroundings, allow them to close gently if this feels OK.*
- *Release any tension from your eyes and allow your jaw to drop.*
- *Notice your breathing pattern. Is your breath shallow?*
- *Allow your inhale to become deeper and extended.*
- *Allow your weight to release into the ground as you exhale through your mouth.*
- *Notice the movement of your chest, rib cage and diaphragm.*
- *Notice if any tension or discomfort is present within your body.*
- *Allow your awareness to focus on this place as you continue to breathe and release into the ground.*
- *If standing, you may wish to sit or lay down here to become aware of the ground as support.*
- *Notice if this area of the body wants to move, or whether it wants to rest in stillness.*
- *If you have the impulse to move, you may wish to gently rock or rotate this part of your body to become aware of the sensations present.*
- *If rotating the wrist for example, tune into the quality of rotation, and whether your movement is jerky or uncomfortable.*
- *How does it feel to rotate this part of your body slowly?*
- *How does this shift your awareness of this body part?*
- *You may wish to send your awareness to a different area of your body to explore rotation, or you may wish to simply stay with this area to explore the intricacies of movement and sensation.*
- *You may wish to explore multiple part of your body, rotating the hands, arms, ankles or head.*
- *Notice what is present through rotation and engage with free-flowing movement.*
- *Where does this take you? How does rotation and flow open possibilities in your body?*
- *If you are moving gently and minimally, how does it feel to rotate your body expansively, engaging with the space around you.*
- *Stay in contact with your breath, noticing your breathing pattern and where this may take you.*

- *You may follow different impulses in your body in a circular pathway, allowing your body to spiral, rotate, and curve.*
- *Notice what movement qualities feel supportive for you in the moment and how spiralling and rotating your body may invite a sense of flow perhaps.*
- *Allow the time and space to play with this process, exploring rotation and flow minimally and expansively.*
- *Engage with gentle, subtleties of your body to open space.*
- *You may wish to reflect after the process by drawing, writing, or mark-making.*
- *Please do this in your own time, noticing anything that has emerged.*

### **Embodied Rhythm**

- *For this process, you may wish to clear a space if you decide to move and ensure that there are no obstructions in the space.*
- *Finding a comfortable position lying down, standing, or sitting, begin to tune into your breathing, noticing your breath pattern. How are you feeling in the moment?*
- *Notice if there is any pain or discomfort that you want to become aware of.*
- *Begin closing your eyes very slowly if this is comfortable, but if not, rest the gaze as you begin to tune in with your wellbeing.*
- *As you breathe, notice the rhythm of breath and how breath carries through your body, filling the lungs and the diaphragm, providing space in your chest and tummy.*
- *Without consciously altering your breathing pattern, notice if the rhythm of your breathing changes as you inhale and exhale.*
- *The continuous rhythm of your breathing allows the body to rest and release in the moment.*
- *Are you breathing deeply, or is your breath shallow? How does the rhythm of your breath change in the moment?*
- *Notice how your breath moves your body, and whether you feel any impulses to move.*
- *You may wish to change your current position if you feel uncomfortable, or you may notice a desire to engage with movement.*
- *Where is your attention drawn to?*
- *You may bring your attention to your chest, or shoulders to explore the rhythm of your breath in your upper body, or you may simply rest into the sensations of your rhythmic breathing.*
- *How does your breath move you in the moment?*

- *Staying in contact with your breath, you may explore different rhythms and qualities of movement to explore your body.*
- *By moving your leg in a slow, gentle way for example, you may become aware of small pulses or tension present.*
- *Notice how different rhythms within your body play a part in becoming aware of your whole body.*
- *Play with different speeds and rhythms of movement, exploring any intricate details that arise in your body.*
- *You may find that a fast rhythm feels supportive perhaps?*
- *Or you may sense how slower movement supports a sense of flow and fluidity for you.*
- *As you explore rhythm of movement and breath in your body, notice how you respond to sensation.*
- *Does rhythm provide a sense of ease, dissolving tension, or does rhythm offer the impulse to move more expansively?*
- *Notice if you wish to simply rest or move with slower rhythms of movement that feels more comfortable.*
- *Allow this sense of rhythm to open possibilities of movement and explore fast, slow, dynamic, and easeful movement whilst engaging with your breathing pattern.*
- *How do the different rhythms feel in your body? What arises in the moment?*
- *Explore this process in your own time, resting, releasing, and moving according to your own body and what your body needs in the moment.*
- *If you wish to explore reflection after the moving process, engage with mark-making, writing, or drawing to recount your experience.*
- *What have you noticed throughout the process?*

### **Stretch, Extension and Elongation**

- *Finding a comfortable position to rest, allow yourself the time to acknowledge how you are feeling in the moment. Begin to sense your breath and how you are breathing.*
- *Notice if your breath is shallow, or if you are breathing deeply.*
- *If you feel more comfortable on a chair, please use a chair for this process.*
- *As you continue to breathe, allow the eyes to close if this feels available to you, but if not, simply rest your focus and gaze.*
- *Allow your weight to drop into the floor, whether that is through your feet if standing, the back of your head is lying down, or the backs of the legs if sitting.*



- *You can place a pillow under your head or lie on a blanket if you wish.*
- *Noticing your breathing, bring your attention to any areas of your body where tension or discomfort is present. This may be your back, your shoulders, your neck.*
- *Bring your awareness to this part of your body and notice if you can open space within the muscles and tissue through your deep breathing.*
- *If any impulses to move arise, follow your body, and become aware of the different sensations that may be present. How does it feel to move your body?*
- *Does your tension feel stuck perhaps?*
- *You may wish to use self-touch on a specific part of your body to sense the warmth from your hands.*
- *Staying aware of your breath, gently allow the body to stretch and extend slowly from an area of your body where there is an impulse to move.*
- *You may wish to simply raise your hand and push upwards to sense a stretch, or you may wish to curl your torso to tend to your spine.*
- *Take a moment to play with stretching, elongating, and extending your body, noticing where your body needs a stretch, or noticing where extension feels comfortable.*
- *You may notice a sense of release perhaps.*
- *Notice if you begin to yawn naturally as you stretch, or if any sounds emerge from extending your body.*
- *How does this affect your breathing?*
- *Continue to play with extension, elongation and stretching, following your body as you respond to your movement.*
- *Notice how the rest of your body responds and if movement begins to shift any tension or discomfort.*
- *Notice any shift in weight as the ground supports your movement and your body. How does your body feel in relation to the space around you?*
- *As you stretch your legs or your arms, how does the space that surrounds your body change? Does your body expand and fill the space around you?*
- *Allow moments of rest and stillness to become aware of your sensations present.*
- *Take your time, be sure not to rush and allow movement to emerge organically, whether it is minimal or expansive.*
- *You may wish to reflect after the process.*
- *Simply draw, write or mark-make to reflect on the individual experience of the process.*
- *How have you engaged in this process?*

## Dynamic and Light Self-touch

- *For this process, you may wish to have a blanket or pillow nearby so you can use them throughout.*
- *Find a comfortable position lying down or sitting and close your eyes if it feels comfortable to do so.*
- *If eyes closed it uncomfortable, please soften the gaze.*
- *Tune into your breathing pattern, noticing and listening if your breath is shallow or deep.*
- *Allow the time to feel, sense and become aware of your breathing in this moment as it travels through your body.*
- *As you inhale, sense how your rib cage expands, filling with air, moving and releasing your torso.*
- *Place a hand on each side of your rib cage and notice how your rib cage expands sideways, upwards, and into the ground in lying.*
- *Notice your rib cage as it opens space for your lungs to expand.*
- *You may wish to rest here for a while, becoming aware of the quality of your touch.*
- *You may wish to self-touch in a different area of your body, or you may wish to stay in contact with your rib cage and upper body.*
- *Notice if your body and skin respond to your light touch, as if a dragonfly was landing on a flower by the pond, or whether a firmer, stronger presence of touch brings about an awareness of your body.*
- *How does the warmth of your touch resonate with this part of your body? Can you sense an openness perhaps?*
- *Bring your awareness to your heart and place a hand on this part of your torso.*
- *Notice if you witness the presence of the heart through your hand.*
- *You may notice your heart beating continuously through your hand.*
- *Again, play with different qualities of touch to become aware of your body in a different sense.*
- *Staying in contact with your breathing pattern, explore your body through your fingertips and palms of your hands.*
- *You may wish to send the palms of your hands to an area of tension or an area of ease.*
- *This may be a shoulder, or your hip, perhaps your forehead. Notice if you can sense the warmth presence of your touch and notice if this feels comforting.*
- *If lying down, you may wish to explore the front surface of your body, tracing its relationship with the space around you.*

- *If sitting, you may wish to focus on the head and upper body. How does it feel to use dynamic self-touch in different areas?*
- *As you give yourself the time to explore different parts of your body and different qualities of touch, notice if your resting touch differs from your dynamic touch.*
- *Does resting, light touch feel relaxing perhaps? Does dynamic touch shift your sense perception from stillness to movement?*
- *You may wish to follow any impulses to move through your self-touch, noticing if movement comes from touching a certain area of your body.*
- *How does the quality of touch affect your movement? Your movement may be very minimal, or maybe expansive.*
- *As your body continues to respond to touch and breath, allow this exploration to support your body and your experience.*
- *Explore this process in your own time, opening your body to receiving self-touch and playing with dynamic self-touch.*
- *If you wish to reflect on your experience, you can mark-make, draw or write some notes.*

### **Noticing and Addressing Habit**

- *Find a comfortable position in the space and rest into ground. Take a moment in stillness to notice how you are feeling and allow your body to arrive in the space.*
- *If you feel comfortable to do so, close your eyes.*
- *If this isn't available to you, soften the gaze and allow the light to become soft.*
- *Become aware of your breathing.*
- *Notice if you are breathing deeply, inhaling through your nose, and exhaling through your mouth.*
- *Allow your jaw to drop and soften your face, resting your head into the ground if you are lying.*
- *Notice what parts of your body are in contact with the ground. This may be your spine if lying, your feet if standing, or your legs if sitting.*
- *Allow the weight of your body to melt into the ground on each exhale as your breathing and the ground supports you, resting and releasing.*

- *Simply rest here for a moment, tuning into your breath and your body in relation to the ground. Notice any shifts in weight, or if you need to alter your resting position.*
- *Are there any impulses to move your body? As you follow your body's responses and sensations, notice the way you are moving. Are you engaging with minimal movement? Are you moving different parts of your body?*
- *As you continue to move minimally or expansively, notice any shifts in bodily sensations, and if you notice any tension or discomfort.*
- *Move in different ways to become more aware of sensation.*
- *Staying in contact with your breath, allow breath to move your body in a way that differs from your usual movement response.*
- *If you are used to moving slowly and gently, try moving in a more dynamic, faster way.*
- *Notice how this may feel.*
- *Notice if you begin to engage with an internal witness, becoming aware of how movement is making you feel.*
- *Does different movement feel odd perhaps, or does different movement provide the opportunity to engage with your body differently?*
- *How do you respond to altering your habitual ways of moving?*
- *You may wish to focus on one specific part of your body, or you may wish to explore your whole body from this different perspective.*
- *Allow time for exploration and rest.*
- *Notice if your movement intentions shift your awareness of your body. Are you consciously becoming aware of your moving body?*
- *Notice what sensations and awareness's are arising from your movement.*
- *You may wish to reflect on your process to recount your experience.*
- *Notice if there has been a shift in your discomfort or tension.*
- *Simply reflect by drawing, mark-making or descriptive writing.*
- *Allow the time to engage with embodied reflection.*

### **Rest and Active Stillness**

- *Allow yourself the time to rest and release into stillness, becoming aware of your body and how you are feeling in the moment.*
- *You may wish to have a blanket, mat, or a pillow for this process as this process starts lying down on the ground. Make yourself as comfortable as possible.*

- *Finding a comfortable position lying down on your back, extend both arms beside you towards your legs, and allow your legs to straighten and rest into the ground.*
- *Allow your shoulders to drop and release into the blanket and allow your head to rest into the pillow.*
- *Make sure that the pillow is comfortable and supporting your neck. Ensure the pillow is not raising your head too much off the ground.*
- *Begin with your eyes closed if this feels available to you and soften the gaze.*
- *Allow your jaw to drop and your breathing pattern to remain natural without effort.*
- *Notice your breath and the way you are breathing.*
- *Allow your breath to continuously move your upper body, noticing your chest as it expands and contracts with every in-breath and out-breath.*
- *How do your shoulders move with your breath? Sense how your diaphragm moves, inflating and contracting.*
- *Become aware of any tensions you may be holding in your body and allow the tension to release into the ground or pillow as you release your weight.*
- *Notice any areas of your body in contact with the ground.*
- *This may be your back, your head, the heels of your feet. How can these areas release even further into the ground?*
- *Notice how it feels to lie in stillness.*
- *If you sense any discomfort when lying, please alter your position to feel as comfortable as possible.*
- *You may wish to lay in constructive rest with your knees pointing towards the ceiling and the soles of your feet on the floor.*
- *Staying in contact with breath, allow your breath to open space within your body. Notice if there are and impulses to move gently.*
- *Notice if any minimal movement feels available.*
- *As you rest into the ground and your body as support, how is your perception of your body shifting?*
- *Is there a sense of ease as you breath and rest into your body perhaps?*
- *You may wish to simply lay still and focus your attention on breathing, or you may wish to rest in different positions.*
- *Notice what your body needs in the moment and what sensations are present in your body.*
- *If moving gently or minimally, slowly bring your movement to a close in your own time and simply rest into the ground. Notice how your body feels after moving and resting in stillness.*

- *You may wish to self-reflect on the process by mark-making, writing, or drawing. You can do this in your own time in any way that seems natural to your process.*