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Intuitive Life Movement®

As we negotiate life's experiences, the body plays a crucial role in how we learn to cope and respond to negative life events. In a highly structured and hierarchical culture, our choices are often limited by the dictates of that culture. We all face circumstances where fear, grief, shame or even rage are generated but can't be expressed because of societal norms or our status in the cultural pecking order. In that state of relative powerlessness, emotions that are generated by conflicts are often stored in our bank of memories that serve to protect us from future threats. This process is especially powerful when it occurs as children as part of a dysfunctional family.

Every emotion has its own sensory experience and its own representation in a set of muscles and organs of the body. Antonio Damasio calls these sensations and movement patterns *somatic markers*. The tightness and queasiness in the solar plexus and the raising of the shoulders and forward flexion of the spine reflect fear, flushing and burning of the face and shrinking of the torso reflect shame, clenching the fists and gritting the teeth reflect anger, and so on. So when the expression of an emotion is suppressed because it is unacceptable, not only is the perception of the emotion stored in unconscious memory, but so is the pattern of defensive muscle contraction. Most of the muscles linked to emotion include the spinal axis – the muscles of the hips and pelvis, the entire spine, the shoulder girdle and the jaw. Is it any wonder that low back, neck, shoulder and head pain are the most common human symptoms?

We also all experience physical injuries to a greater or lesser degree. One of the most common injuries in our society is that associated with motor vehicle accidents (MVAs). Most of us, through our own, friend's or member of our family's experience, are familiar with the aches and pains of a "whiplash". A large part of this persistent – even sometimes permanent – muscular pain is based on the same process as the pain that accompanies stored emotions. It's stored in procedural – or movement-based – memory.

Fortunately the human brain and body are primed to heal and resolve symptoms, and to return the body to homeostasis, the rhythmic cycling of our autonomic nervous system and all systems of the body. There is a constant unconscious drive to resolve systems that are out of synchrony. If we can tap into this wonderful source of energy, we can reverse the intrinsic process causing our symptoms. In a nutshell, we need to access the emotional memories and their associated movement patterns, and allow them to flow to their completion.

There are a number of ways to achieve this goal. In Dr. Shelley Tanenbaum's *Intuitive Life Movement*, these dysfunctional movement and muscle holding patterns are accessed through a guided trip into the core consciousness that we all possess, but seldom find. This state is one of complete harmony with our intrinsic homeostatic state, with the arousal systems of the brain that generate emotions basically shut down. In that sacred space, emotions and the dysfunctional movement and muscular holding patterns are allowed to emerge spontaneously, replicating and completing the unfinished process of self-preservation.

The implications of this process go far beyond simply removing brain-generated sources of muscle pain. Removal of residual unresolved emotional tension through extinction of its unconscious memories clears the memory centers of unnecessary clutter, leading to clarity of thought and consciousness. Stabilizing the poorly regulated autonomic nervous system allows the vital organs of the body – the heart, lungs and digestive tract – to return to a state of calm and balance, clearing symptoms such as palpitations, irritable bowel and stomach acid reflux.

***Intuitive Life Movement* represents another innovation building on the field of somatic psychology that includes such techniques as EMDR, Brainspotting, the tapping techniques such as EFT, and a number of other evolving therapies. These techniques have all evolved for the purpose of healing trauma, but those life events with irresolvable societal conflicts have the same brain physiology as trauma, and affect us all. *Intuitive Life Movement* has the capacity to resolve the physical, emotional and cognitive burden of these life experiences.**