# Presencing

JACK BLACKBURN'S NEWSLETTER

**Presencing Issue 107 - Writing & Webinar Months**
**Working on Editing and Completing Four Books:**
**100 Days in NOW. Trager Source Book.**
**Presencing Case Reports 20 Years Japan Impressions**
**Upcoming Webinars:**
**Side Lying Somatics, Presencing Pain,**
**Original Face, Decompression Somatics Intro**

**Dear Ones:** Please view our demonstration video on our YouTube ***Presencing Source*** Channel

Link: **Shoulder work in Side Lying Somatics**

Link: **Here is a short video of Original Face**

**Touching Pain Applications:**
During these interactive meetings both persons can feel the tissue response; hence a shared experience. Tissue responses include melting of muscle, ligament, and fascial tonicity; warming, softening, pain reduction, client shifts from sympathetic to parasympathetic responses, and mentally shifting awareness from past story into presence.The main benefits of these applications is that they change our relationships with pain and break our Faustian relationship with fear!

**Touch Pain Exercise 1:** Interacting with breath expansion and contraction: starting by having the client taking deep in breath into different body parts; followed by deep emptying out breath. Client feels expansion with in-breath and contraction with out-breath. What matters is that client becomes capable of directly interacting with body parts by using the feeling of expansion and contraction into and out of any part of her body. In that way we are able to create a somatic interaction with the touch of the practitioner's hands.

**Touch Pain Exercise 2:** Proprioception, interaction, both giver and receiver entraining into presence… What is occurring is that the filling and emptying feeling on the client's part is creating a presencing and palpable interaction with the practitioner's hands. The client is actively propriocepting while the practitioner is palpating. As this is occurring the practitioner can apply various types of tactile interaction; e.g. tapping, compression, rotation, and positional releases, while asking the client to engage with practitioner's tactile signals by touching from inside her body or expanding and contracting towards a particular joint, muscle, attachment or other connective tissue including fascia.

**Touch Pain Exercise 3:** Practitioner/client creating interactive stimulus and palpating tissue response and at the same time interacting verbally. Practitioner narrates what she is doing so that the client has a presence-centered story line to accompany her sensory experience. This narrative creates another type of joining between both persons. Other benefits of narration are that it allows the client to engage with the tactile stimulation and monitor her tissue responses. As this continues the client becomes more adept at interacting with her own tissue. This is a skill she can practice on her own so that she becomes more and more somatically aware and present to her body and her life.

**Touch Pain Exercise 4:** Client reporting, practitioner mirrors words. Both monitor sensory responses. Here we are combining inner touch on the part of the client with outer touch on the part of the practitioner along with presencing verbal interaction derived from Focusing. Here the practitioner is using touch to enhance the client's process in exploring her connection between her feeling awareness called felt-sense and issues that may be arising in her life. We will notice that as the client reports what she is feeling in a particular body part, and we reflect back what we are hearing, she will enter a process in which she is able to uncover insights that pertain to those life issues. Two unique body phenomena are produced in this combination of using and sensory accompaniment. As with the above applications there is a shift in both pain and fear due to the mutual sharing of presence verbally and tactilely. First the closer the client comes to verbally describing her felt sense the more tissue response is produced, Secondly, the combination of touch and Focusing is more likely to produce what is called a felt-shift in which the body and mind of the client coalesce in a flow of insight and elation.

***Our Presencing Motto:*** ***As we attend more to the sensations arising from within our own bodies, a new essence starts to companion us from within. We start to experience presence as the arising of each moment, as a taste of eternal awareness. All living systems are attuned to NOW. Every event; past, present, and future is a part of this eternal moment. This growing awareness of NOW seems to put many things, especially fearful ones, into different perspectives. The body is temporal. If we pay close attention, we realize that the body only exists now. So that which is implicitly temporal may lead us to experience that which is explicitly eternal!***

*****Reminder from Jack: All webinar attendees receive a class manual, NCBTMB certified CEs, and video copies of each class session. I offer a range of classes which I hope will enhance your practice and help with your CEs. My Blessings to all touch practitioners everywhere in these difficult times!*****

Switzerland 2021 Japan 2019 Orcas Island 2011

**SIDE LYING SOMATICS;**
**Custom Class On Demand 8CEs $160**
**NCBTMB Approved 4pm-6pm PDT**
**Sampler Class: August 2, 10am PDT** **From Jack:** "I started developing my own approach for working clients in a sidelying position shortly after starting to work clients with serious back problems I was approved to teach my SLS method as a Trager elective class in 1993. I know you and your clients will enjoy the rewards of SideLying." **Advantages of Side Lying:**
Over 40 years, having given thousands of sessions, I realize that side-lying offers so many advantages that it could arguably be used in every session, not only in Trager but also in every bodywork modality. Here are some of the advantages that I found:
*Most clients, when properly bolstered, are more comfortable and less resistant when lying on their sides.
*Clients who have been abused usually feel much safer, less vulnerable in the semi-fetal position that side-lying offers.
*Gravity can be used to great advantage because of the way it loads the joints and muscle tissue, hips, shoulders, abdomen.
*The therapist benefits from all the positioning advantages and thus doesn't have to work so hard.
*There is comparatively little body surface in contact with the table so one can introduce movement with very little effort. Like a pendulum, the further away a body part is from the table the easier it is to keep in motion.
*The shoulder girdle and hip that is not on the table can be decompressed and tension in the joint released non-reflexively with the help of gravity.
*Small amounts of motion can be transmitted through the joints with very little effort and very pleasurable effect to the client.
*The body in a side-lying position is similar to a piano keyboard with various body parts readily accessible at the same time.
*The body in the sagittal plane is asymmetrical from back to front so you can take advantage of the different way the body moves. For instance, the pelvis and shoulder uppermost move independently of the torso. When any one is put into motion a gentle and freeing torque is created along the spine.

**Why Somatics?** When the conscious mind starts to pay attention to the full language of the body, things change. This is the basis of all somatic approaches. Until then the mind only pays attention to what it likes and tries to eliminate what it doesn't. Ordinarily we pay attention to the autonomic; sympathetic and parasympathetic impulses when they engage or soften. Part of the role of the somatics practitioner is to help the client pay a different kind of attention to the body than preferences, demands, and avoidances. As we attend to our clients in these ways, we also start to change. Our senses are heightened. We become aware of different kinds of information that guide us in our work and our lives. As we help our clients discover the connections between their conscious and unconscious minds through the simple tool of presence, we too become aware of those connections. By so doing, we and our clients, get to partake of the Mind of the Designer.

Register

**PRESENCING PAIN; Custom Class on Demand**
**Three 2 hour Classes 6 CEs $100**
**NCBTMB Approved 4CEs 4pm-6pm PDT**
**August 19, 21, 23rd, 2024 4pm PDT**

**The Gateless Gate:** In touching pain we are turning our direction towards rather than away from pain. As practitioners we are approaching pain with respect and deference. I started this writing by saying that caregiving professionals are expected to remove or reduce our clients' pain. Most of our methods do not directly address the unconscious associations that clients often make with pain. Relieving our clients' pains does not resolve hidden issues like fear, guilt, and punishment. Also, suppressing or removing the client's pain does not necessarily alert the client to activities that created the pain. Those are physical or mental activities that happen away from the sessions. It is frustrating for all care givers to realize that our clients have various situations in their lives that perpetuate much of their suffering. While it is tempting, within our scope of practice, to help our clients address those situations, we are limited ethically from doing so… And yet watch how quickly the practitioner is blamed and rejected if she cannot be successfully end her client's suffering.

Here is a different scenario. The client and practitioner form a team to mutually explore sources of pain. The client is using proprioceptive and somatic awareness to interact directly with painful parts of her body from inside. At same time the practitioner is using her palpation skills to interact with and monitor the client's painful body parts from outside. They are engaged tactilely through mutual touch. They are engaged verbally and consciously through their willingness to be interactive with one another in the area of pain. As such they are conjoined in the present moment. I cannot prove it just by my words, but I believe this mutual engagement is releasing both persons from their fear laden associations with pain. In that sense much of our accumulated mental conditioning is nullified when we share in presence. So the place we were least likely to go becomes a gateway into new territory. Together we are discarding the baggage of our past conditioning towards pain and starting to explore with newfound freedom; freedom to enter new levels of conscious awareness. Later in this series we will consider some case studies which point towards this direction.

Register

**Adding ORIGINAL FACE to Your Practice**
**Four Two Hour Classes - 8CEs**
**September Class on Demand, 4pm-6pm PDT**
**8CEs NCBTMB Approved Cost $160**
*Show me your face before you were born.*
*A Zen Buddhist unanswerable Request!*

**Human Faces are Mirrors:** We cannot see our own faces. So one of the primary functions of our faces is to mirror the faces of others – even as they are mirroring us… What we feel inside governs how we mirror others. Loving-open faces create the effect of being truly met. "Truly met" means that someone is greeting us as a fellow soul-being… When we wear a "mask," what the Greeks called persona, it means that we are

playing a part or role in relation to others. Handsomeness and beauty are personas or roles, not mirrors of empathy.

**Original Face Work:** In Original Face Work, we are learning the feeling the feeling of relaxed, refreshed, and fearless facial musculature. We are clearing our musculature from past memories and projections. True beauty and ugliness have nothing to do with age… they reflect our ability to mirror others and our willingness to be mirrored back.

**Gateways to Personal and Interpersonal Expression:** Our eyes are called mirrors of the soul and can look deeply from our soul to another soul. The expression “Look into the eyes that really see you,” is a deeper form of mirroring we support with Original Face Work. We are relaxing eye muscles and inner tension inside and behind the eyes. Many persons are afraid to make eye contact… Why? Also many persons are afraid to keep their eyes closed when entering their inner being… Why? What are the stages of letting go of eye-centered fear?

Register

**DECOMPRESSION SOMATICS INTRO;**
**Custom Class on Demand 4 CEs $100**
**NCBTMB Approved 4pm-6pm PDT**
**September Class - On Demand**

**Activating proprioceptive rather than neuromuscular responses:** As with yoga we are teaching the client to interact with different body parts through proprioceptive and felt sense communication. Rather than asking clients to engage muscles we are encouraging them to join in with their proprioceptive awareness. 'So doing, we can mostly avoid triggering the neuromuscular system with its preset gamma sensory motor limits. This could be extremely beneficial for those persons whose neuromuscular systems have been partially compromised. It also sets up a parallel system for growth in somatic awareness. Perhaps the most surprising result of this kind of interaction is that clients can become involved is producing their own tissue responses. Clients can also feel their own reflexive releases and feeling linked-relationships (Anatomy Trains) to other parts of the body. This is effective and reinforcing because clients are learning to be their own healers.

**Decompression Somatics as a shared meeting place:** Probably the most difficult concept in DS is the concept of somatics... A state of conscious awareness, or shared presence, we are trying to produce for the client and achieve for ourselves. While DS relies upon presencing at the core, it also relies upon the willing participation of both parties. DS is called DS because somatics is the heart of our work. We are using a slightly different approach to somatics than other forms of bodywork. We are reversing the emphasis from teaching the client somatic awareness to directly recruiting the client into the teamwork of releasing (ego based) holding patterns. Thus we become equal participants with the client and visa versa. It works both ways because we have created a shared meeting place. The first step starts with bringing the client into that part of the body. The second step involves using interactive feeling tools like client breath and touch. The third step, and perhaps the most powerful, is to support the client’s words to come forth or emerge directly from his/her felt experience. This search for words that

convey the felt-sense (process borrowed from Focusing) induces a state of exploration and curiosity in the client. This state becomes an open doorway to the direct inner perception of the body. The client searches for words. Correspondingly, as the search proceeds, the client's tissue changes. The search for an exact verbal description spurs curiosity, the opposite of control and faking it (ego devices). The words have to fit or the tissue will not respond... Process; find the fit in an ever-changing domain of somatesthesia (somatic awareness).

Register

**Jack Blackburn, LMP, Master's in Theological Studies, Certified Spiritual Director**, specializes in body centered spiritual growth and healing. He has been a Trager® practitioner since 1986. He has been a Trager tutor since 1993, has taught Trager electives classes since 1996, and teaches a variety of classes to care giving professionals. He is a NCBTMB Approved Continuing Education Provider and AMTA National Presenter. He is a Focusing Trainer and teaches Bodywork Focusing classes for professionals. Jack is also a Reiki Master and teaches levels I, II, III and Advanced Reiki for Bodyworkers.

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