

Somatic Expression® with Jamie McHugh
Body Wisdom for Modern Times



Photo: Gregory Bartning from [Stance on Dance](#)

"War is just a spectacular expression of our everyday behavior." - Krishnamurti

Dear Friends,
Happy New Year and welcome to a new decade. 2020 has started off with a bang with 2 catastrophes - one ecological (Australian fires) and one political (Iran). I am aware of my anxiety and sadness, my outrage and despair, with the daily onslaught of distressing news. We all carry on nevertheless in our daily lives, even though an unsettled undertone permeates the planet and seeps into our cells like ambient background music stuck on autoplay. Yet a cellular integrity exists within our bodies that can serve as a map and a metaphor to buffer us from endless heartbreak.

The healthy cell wall is defined by its separateness and permeability, its ability to both individuate and join, reminding me of the necessary rhythm of disconnecting and stabilizing the inner realm as well as re-connecting to and engaging with the world. The practice of Embodied Mindfulness is a firm commitment to trusting this cellular integrity by creating time for a daily

discovery of, and reckoning with, what is alive within me. Settling into my breathing with supported uprightness and allowing the stream of thoughts, sensations, and feelings unimpeded access, I can then collaborate with all that is percolating. Simple modulations of breath, movement, contact, sound and stillness open and close the floodgates of information as I orchestrate my own rhythm of reflection and presence. *This is but one of many ways to stop the war at home.*

Calming the nervous system and the overactive mind increases receptivity to not only the inner landscape, but the outer one as well. Extending attention outwards beyond personal concerns and the boundary of our own skin sets the stage for more empathy and identification with others, infusing us with a larger perspective. This balance of self-awareness with other-awareness is necessary for the health of both ecosystems as our movement behavior and its affect in the world contributes to more joy or to more agitation. Each moment we are asked by life: Open or close? Speed up or slow down? Push or yield? *This is but one of many ways to stop the war at home.*

Tending the land where I live, making habitat for birds and bees, and enjoying the fruits of my labor brings me back to the basics of “reality”. Making contact and connecting with the elements of the natural world, as well as animals and young children, reminds me of life in its wild exuberance and tender mercy, what we are graced with in this lifetime for such a fleeting moment.

I leave you with a new year’s poem/intention I wrote to myself, and further down, some opportunities for exploring ways to fortify and inspire your liveliness. May we all find our own unique ways to embody peaceful warriorship in this new decade.

Warmly,
Jamie

*Cultivate your garden
Tend to your compost
Build your soil
Deepen your roots
Prune your dead wood
Have faith in a larger intelligence
Persevere with grace*

Upcoming Selected Offerings

February 2-March 8: Embodied Mindfulness Online Immersion

This immersion in the practice and theory of Embodied Mindfulness is designed to generate an easily repeatable individual daily somatic sitting practice to cultivate and nurture greater degrees of ease, patience and focus. Consists of six 3-hour live online classes, audio/video recordings of all class sessions, peer group support, assorted readings and 1 individual session. **3 places left Tuition:** \$375 registered by January 15; \$425 after Complete information [HERE](#)

February 3-March 11: Thinking Body, Sensing Mind Online class series for exploring the universal basics of breath, alignment, self-contact, and subtle movement; a good way to maintain a steady diet of somatic input. All class sessions recorded for playback. Mondays & Wednesdays 8-8:45am Pacific Time Complete information [HERE](#)

May 19-27: Embodying Nature, Becoming Ourselves Retreat

An immersion experience in body, nature, community and creativity near Grenoble, France (Early registration discount deadline: March 1) Complete information [HERE](#)

May 29-31: Bringing Spirit into Form

Explorations in breath and vocalization near Toulouse, France Complete information [HERE](#)

September 10-17: Creative Incubation Retreat

An immersion experience for renewing vitality and curiosity at Sea Ranch, CA (Early registration discount deadline: July 1) Complete information [HERE](#)

Jamie McHugh, RSMT is an interdisciplinary artist and somatic movement specialist living on the Mendocino coast. He has been teaching movement-based work internationally for 40 years, and is committed to creating accessible, inclusive, and nourishing somatic-expressive practices for re-wilding the body, decolonizing the mind and restoring the spirit. Jamie continues to study and research the mystery of the body as an element of nature and as an expression of our humanity with the power to transform society – one being at a time.

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