



SEZIONE III: ECOLOGIE DEI PROCESSI, ETNOGRAFIE DELLE PASSIONI

Journeying as Amateur and Professional – A Somatic Movement Approach

Martha Eddy – Dana Davison

Introduction

The following co-authored essay is an interactive case study narrative account written by myself, Martha Eddy – founder, director, and teacher of Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy (DE-SMT) – and my student – Dana Davison, now a Dynamic Embodiment Practitioner (DEP), faculty member, and dance and yoga teacher. Dana is also a writer, editor and translator. Together we address views on moving from amateur to professional in the fields of dance education and somatic education over the course of six years working together. We aim to highlight the role of somatic education, and specifically neuro-developmental movement patterns, in equalizing the experience of amateurs and professionals. Furthermore, this report includes examples of how DE-SMT has generated other educational experiences available to the public in class and workshop format (e.g. *BodyMind Dancing* and *Moving For Life*) and through involvement with creating public performances (e.g. *New York City Dance Parade* and *Global Water Dances*). These are for diversely skilled performers and audiences. Thus the Dynamic Embodiment (DE) approach (known as SMTT prior to 2005) invites both amateurs and professionals as equals to partake in a variety of creative opportunities and participatory events as well as volunteer efforts and social activism.

This essay is written in the first person in order to disclose the nature of the inquiry process central to its primary methodology – somatic education. Somatic Education was coined as a term in the late 1960s and published in the 1970s to give a name to a basic human right – the ability to listen to one's own body signals and to learn from them. It has been further described as a process of self-discovery that results from paying attention to bodily sensations (proprioception) and movement awareness (kinesthesia) (Eddy 2016). Thus engaging in life with a consciousness "from within" heightens bodily knowing and movement awareness. The result is that this somatic awareness supports self-healing, creativity and empathetic behavior, and has been seen to improve overall well-being (Hanna 1979; Allison 1999; Johnson 1994, 1995, 1997).

Somatic education is a form of first-person experience that can be discovered on one's own if one is



conscious of his or her kinesthetic sense, or it can be guided by skillful practitioners – somatic educators and somatic movement therapists using movement demonstration or guidance, skillful touch, or psychophysically astute verbal exchange (Eddy 2009, 2016). In this way, somatic education also speaks to the interaction of the professional and the amateur. Every amateur has access to somatic awareness, but it often takes a professional trained in “somatics” to help awaken this awareness in others, especially those who are more visual or auditory in their learning process and less kinesthetic.

The professional role implies that a person has a higher skill level with more theoretical knowledge and as an educator also maintains a substantial degree of pedagogical competence. The common indicators of the professional status in somatic education are: number of years of experience in embodying somatic principles, gaining certification in a somatic movement system, and beginning to present/teach/publish somatic work. The format for presenting/teaching can be diverse – private lessons, conferences, workshops, publications, performances and teacher trainings. What is unusual is that in taking on this professional persona, the somatic model causes us to recognize that we’re constantly learning, even once we are teachers – and if we love the learning then we truly remain amateurs as well.

The Education of Dynamic Embodiment Practitioners – the bi-directional amateur-professional continuum

Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy Training (DE-SMTT), begun in 1991, is the particular form of somatic education that will be described in this article. DE-SMTT brings an explicit emphasis to this constancy of amateurism. It is one of approximately 40 methods for teaching somatic movement education or somatic movement therapy to be found around the globe. Other examples include Alexander Technique, Bartenieff Fundamentals, Body-Mind Centering®, Continuum, EastWest Shin Somatics, Feldenkrais, Gerda Alexander’s Eutonie, Ideokinesis, Rolf Movement, Sensory Awareness, Somatic Movement Practitioner, Trager, Voice Movement Integration (Eddy 2009, 2016¹).

The heart of Dynamic Embodiment is a sophisticated interweaving of two long-time somatic

¹ On the subject, see also the Ismeta website: <http://www.ISMETA.org>. Access: 5th July 2016.



movement systems – Laban/Bartenieff Studies and Body-Mind Centering® (the work of Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen) together with my own interest, studies and professional work in dance science and medicine, conflict resolution and community building, social justice and curriculum development. Hence Dynamic Embodiment distinguishes itself from many of the other somatic movement trainings for the following reasons:

- DE uses not only movement but dance to teach somatic concepts.
- DE is not formulaic or protocol based – one begins with the skills, talents and values brought from the rest of life and integrates them with one's own DE approach.
- DE includes a strong focus on social somatics (Eddy 2016; Leguizaman et al 2014).
- DE includes a unique content blend of two other somatic systems – Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) (Bradley 2009) with Bartenieff Fundamentals (BF) (Bartenieff 1980; Hackney 1998) and Body-Mind Centering® (BMC®) (Bainbridge Cohen, Hartley).
- DE aims to get graduates swiftly involved with paid work in multiple arenas and includes an internship period.
- DE is affiliated with undergraduate, masters degree and doctoral level credit-bearing institutions.
- DE training is only 500-550 hours and has been the launching for continuing life-long education in somatic movement. More than fifty percent of the graduates, if not already complete with their higher education or Certified Movement Analysts or Body-Mind Centering practitioners, go on to higher degrees or to certify in these or other somatic systems in addition to DE.

Each of the above facts is part of the interplay between becoming a professional, already being a professional, and staying active as a learner. The underlying philosophy and methods of DE emphasize the constancy of being an amateur. In particular the following two pedagogical perspectives are important.

Firstly, DE-SMTT includes regular class periods that focus on learning somatic principles using the art



of dance, whether or not the students have prior experience with dance. In other words, the students within DE-SMTT are asked to experience newly, as amateur dancers if they are not already professionals of somatic dance. Furthermore, all students are asked to open to the “beginners mind” – learning newly as if a baby learning for the first time. This “mind-state” is fostered in BMC® studies and is at the heart of opening to a somatic experience whereby each encounter is perceived freshly through the immediate sensations of the moment. It is a state of mind to be cultivated as a student and kept going as a professional.

Furthermore we all share a history of being taught about movement by our mothers while in the uterus and this shared experience, followed by learning to roll, crawl, stand and walk are common experiences. Numerous somatic movement educators and therapists share skills in how to nurture these patterns of movement even in adulthood or with older children. In Dynamic Embodiment studies, the practice of infant movement patterns (from in utero to toddlerhood) is derived from both neuro-maturational and dynamical systems theories of motor development and constantly re-engages both the students and the faculty in renewing their ever-developing and changing perceptual-motor awareness.

Secondly, DE-SMTT values participatory arts as a learning vehicle in the classroom or studio and as a form of communication with the public. It espouses the value of sustainability and social change (social somatics). One evaluative measure (among others) is that it aims to provide avenues of employment during training and upon graduation. Indeed with the 2008 fiscal crisis in the United States, DE suspended trainings for a while. The decision was to provide shorter less expensive certifications in sub-disciplines that provide quick opportunities for teaching – Moving For Life DanceExercise for Health® and BodyMind Dancing™.

All DE students are required to engage in internships and many are invited to engage in volunteer or even paid work using somatic skills in clinical and arts settings while being students. This requirement emerged when DE-SMTT became aligned with Moving On Center – the School for Participatory Arts and Somatic Research, and continues in its allegiances with numerous schools of higher education such as the State University of New York – Empire State College (MALS and BA), University of North Carolina, Greensboro (MADE), Montclair State University in New Jersey (MFA) and the International University of Professional Studies (PhD). Wherever possible DE-SMTT



internships included providing free services to underserved people, from people living in temporary housing in Oakland, California to those waiting at a Food Pantry near Harlem, NYC or others dealing with cancer throughout different locations.

Thus, Dynamic Embodiment SMTT stands out in its pedagogical approach because of its focus on being open to learning newly (as if a baby) at all stages of life (even as a senior), its value of ongoing learning toward and beyond higher education, the idea of equity and social justice – making somatic education available to people who normally don't have economic or cultural access to it and finally providing work opportunities for graduates. As part of meeting these goals somatically, DE-SMTT strives to provide experiences whereby students can practice somatic movement skills and seeks to do so in meaningful settings that can lead to gainful employment upon graduation. Ideally the internships and post-graduation work is of the type that helps to offset health disparities – providing access to somatic movement to people of all income levels.

In summary, during the DE training, somatic awareness is applied to the process of “taking dance class” – learning somatic principles through a creative, expressive process, and to being of service to others. Options are given to experience work with children or adults, with individuals or in groups² with supervision from faculty. Through these learning experiences students begin as amateurs but move toward professionalism within the course of the 500 hour training. It is interesting to note that students in the early years at Moving On Center balked at the requirement to apply somatics so quickly – to engage in “somaction” within their first semester of study as part of the group project. However by the end of their training they showed appreciation for this push “to move out from within.” Despite fears they managed to learn, deeply integrate and give back.

What Dynamic Embodiment Practitioners share with many other somatic experts and trainees is the engagement with his or her bodily self for physical, psychological and cognitive development. Also pervasive across the field is that everyone can always learn more. DE focuses on this openness to ongoing learning from the first weeks of class into graduation, and encourages staying open-minded to new approaches when employed as well.

² Martha Eddy is a vendor with the NYC Department of Education and maintains a practice as a Registered Somatic Movement Therapist with a specialty in Developmental Movement Therapy focusing on neurological problems from birth trauma, to head injuries to physical and sexual abuse to stroke. She engages DE graduates in this work that she offers through the Center for Kinesthetic Education as appropriate.

Specific Somatic Movement Career Directions

Over the course of 26 years, the DE certification process has evolved to include both preparation for private practice and entry into a variety of careers. The following are some specific examples:

1. Most typical to the field of somatic movement: practitioners often work providing one-to-one coaching, and educational and/or therapeutic sessions for people with a wide range of psychophysical goals including, but not limited to, chronic disease and pain to virtuosic performance goals in sports, theatre and dance. Many Dynamic Embodiment Practitioners (DEPs) register with the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association to become Registered Somatic Movement Educators (RSMEs) or Registered Somatic Movement Therapists (RSMTs), or both.

2. Teaching of dance – DE-SMT trainees are sometimes professors within dance departments in higher education already; many are not. Any trainee with a love of dance may choose to become a BodyMind Dancing© (BMD) teacher. BMD began in the 1980s with Martha Eddy developing sequences and improvisations that used a combination of ideas and movements from Bartenieff Fundamentals of Body Movement (BF), Body-Mind Centering® (BMC) and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA). Since 1986 class members of BodyMind Dancing have been both professionals and amateurs – acclaimed teachers and choreographers together with people who have never studied dance before. Each person shares the experience of living in and dancing with a body – no matter what their physical abilities and disabilities may be. The neuro-developmental framework emphasizes the common experience of infancy – exploring movement such as lifting one’s head, the head-tail connection, rolling, coming to sitting and crawling and then applies these basic coordinations to more typical dance movements as well. As toddlers and then even as adults there is merit to repeating these “patterns” again once upright and standing on the feet. BMD includes carefully developed dance phrases that relate these early neuro-motor skills to the more complex skills in dance such as *pliés* and *relevés*.

2.A. Many DEPs become Certified Teachers of BodyMind Dancing (CTBMD) and some individuals



begin with the CTBMD training and then move on to enroll in DE-SMTT in order to certify as somatic movement educators and therapists.

2.B. Many of them attend or learn to teach Moving For Life DanceExercise for Health® or MFL DanceExercise for Cancer Recovery™ classes – classes designed to engage patients, family members and caregivers in somatic awareness while dancing. The Moving For Life (MFL) classes themselves use somatic movement strategies that demonstrate positive and significant effects in weight loss and body mass index (BMI), as well as adherence to exercise standards (Kern et al., 2012). They are based in research on the role of conscious movement in reducing hypertension (Eddy 1985) and aim help in the management of lymphedema, neuropathy, vertigo, fatigue and diabetes (Moving For Life 2016).

3. Some DEPs create their own approach or bring the DE-SMT approach to Pilates, yoga, dance classes, massage therapy, dance therapy, theater, drama pedagogy, and Laban Movement Analysis, among other fitness and therapeutic movement careers.

Interactions with the Public: Performance and Health

Dynamic Embodiment Practitioners (DEPs) with an enthusiasm for dance or any of the performing arts are encouraged to engage with the public in performance opportunities as well as classes. They have traditionally been active volunteers with events such as the *New York City Dance Parade* – an annual public performance dancing down Broadway. Other examples include projects generated in partnership with Moving On Center from 1994 to present – free outdoor performances at Jack London Square in Oakland, California, and Global Water Dances throughout the Americas and in parts of Europe and Asia beginning in 2011 and on-going into the future.

Through these free public performances and “somatic bodywork clinics” Dynamic Embodiment as part of Moving On Center (MOC) provides a model of education that supports community engagement, citizenship and/or human, social service, and it continues to remain open to networks that invite performance and volunteerism. According to Dan Roth, Dynamic Embodiment Practitioner,



“MOC seeks to engage communities of learners in an overarching integrative process of self-healing, healing of our spirits, healing of our minds, healing of our bodies, and healing of our communities and planet. Health in this sense is a dynamic balance that enables all of our diverse parts to relate and participate ‘in a deeper democracy that goes right back to the body.’ MOC is an organization that brings the catchy 1960s slogans into contemporary life: ‘The personal is the political.’ ‘The earth is my body.’ ‘We are the ones we have been waiting for’” (Roth 2005: 5).

Developing Agency through the Art of Dance Pedagogy

One of the goals of moving from student (amateur) to teacher (professional) is the accumulation of knowledge and experience to feel a sense of agency. We believe that Dana Davison’s story of being reinvigorated by somatic movement and the pedagogical process of Dynamic Embodiment is a case of re-establishing a sense of agency. It also speaks to the importance of keeping her love of dance alive.

Dana Davison shares: Dance was part of my life since I was about five years old, taking my first ballet and tap classes at Miss Salter’s School of Dance in a shopping mall in Tallahassee, Florida. I remember being very shy and having one friend I sort of clung to, and I remember crying when the teacher corrected my arm position. Even though being labeled a “difficult” student would continue to haunt me, when we moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan, I kept dancing and performed with a junior company in jazz dance. Over the years I focused more and more on classical ballet. When my mom and sister moved to Texas, I stayed behind and worked and lived at the dance studio, studying with Shér Marie Farrell (and taking workshops with Jurgen Schneider, Sulamith Messerer, and Janina Cunovas). By the time I rejoined my family, I’d focused in on classical ballet as my dance form of choice. In Fort Worth, I studied under Sir William Martin Viscount at Fort Worth City Ballet, an intensive training, which instilled a certain discipline that remains a valued attribute. There I taught children in preparation for *The Nutcracker* and performed in “Waltz of the Flowers” and as a Snowflake. I went on to become a soloist there in *Swan Lake*, *Napoli* and *Pas de Quatre* (coached by John Wey Ling and Susan Clark) and briefly danced in the corps of the Dallas Ballet, before a horrible car accident changed my course.

I’d been given the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy with a small company, and here came my first



serious teaching experience. A friend had put me up for the leading role under dubious pretenses, and I was flown down to film a commercial, teach a master class, get fitted for costume, and start rehearsals. I was 19, I was in over my head, and I broke under the pressure in the middle of teaching the master class. The director assured me I'd be a really great teacher some day because of this experience, but I didn't think I'd ever be a teacher again. Soon after, I decided to go back to school, sensing the smallness of the ballet world and longing for something more. I began studies in journalism and Russian. Joining the modern dance company at my University, I tried a hand at choreography and kept performing. I also started dancing at night clubs every weekend to express myself, and practicing yoga with a Hare Krishna friend. Then I spent four years abroad in Kiev, Ukraine. Living with a ballet and folkloric dancer there, in a room fitted with ballet barre and mirrors, dance continued to be a major part of my life. I also began to get "into my head," working intellectually with a job as publisher of a weekly magazine. I continued dancing at the nightclubs, which were new to this freshly independent country. They were vibrant scenes full of costume and free movement and expression. I was in the thick of it.

Returning to New York City in 1996, after trying my lot with drag and cabaret performances, I went again more into intellectual pursuits, publishing the lofty little literary magazine called "Goodie" and an accompanying imprint called "Panther Books". This time practically forgetting entirely about my body and not moving much at all, for about 10 years! A broken relationship brought me back to ballet, then yoga, with new discoveries, things I couldn't do any more, things I could do better, and my muscle memory was ignited. A new energy came in.

I had started at New York University graduate school for a Masters degree in journalism and Russian Studies, but while studying there, a new path unfolded. On a train from Montreal with my mom, we sat beside a woman surrounding herself with a pile of books. I saw the titles, *Wisdom of the Body Moving* (Hartley 1989: 1995) and *Body Stories* (Olsen 1998: 2004) and asked to hear more. This stranger introduced me to Somatics and to Dr. Martha Eddy, which opened a new chapter. After meeting with Martha and sensing a familiar enthusiasm, I dove right into her Dynamic Embodiment training, hoping to transfer credits from New York University to the University where she is on faculty, State University of New York-Empire State College (SUNY-ESC), in order to finish my Masters degree. What became more important was the realization that these studies in Dynamic



Embodiment were crucial to my own well being, to establish a new, solid foundation and platform for doing good work. For the first time, I felt an inkling of a “calling”. As I was studying DE, I found I was being mentored into becoming a teacher of somatic education, anatomy and dance using Dynamic Embodiment. To initiate this teaching I studied to become a Certified Instructor of Moving For Life (MFLCI) and BodyMind Dancing (CTBMD), eventually entering into the faculty of DE and also the faculty to train other teachers of MFL and BMD.

Martha Eddy explains: BodyMind Dancing emerged out of my own need to dance and soon became a fun and engaging way to convey somatic theory. As a somatic approach to performance training, BMD teaches the underlying principles of Dynamic Embodiment. For instance – through dance we can experience the role of the body in space using dynamics and shaping as learned in Laban Movement Analysis. Dance phrases performed at increasing complexity at the low, middle and high level using Bartenieff Fundamentals of Body Movement reinforce early developmental patterns as important support for more complex weight shifts, turns, and aerial movement in adult upright dancing. The Body-Mind Centering® concepts of moving the contents (initiating from the organs, fluids or glands) or the container (initiating from the neuro-skeletal-muscular system) can be taught through either improvisations or set dance phrases and further supported by using a wide assortment of music carefully selected to match the vibration of the body area of focus.

Professionalism that Maintains The Essence of the Amateur

Dana Davison continues: One of the most meaningful things to come out of my studies with Martha was: “You are prepared! What you’ve been doing these past few years in the training has prepared you.” It came with an underlying message that what you’ve been doing your whole life has fully prepared you for where you are now.

Another important factor for me in the training was the seemingly unconscious way Martha knew just what I needed to come into my own being and apply this work. With somewhat loose but steady reigns, coupled with my own self-discipline, I was able to find my feet firmly on the ground, to step in and take the vow (become a professional) to do what I love (remain an amateur). That Martha provides paid opportunities to teach and lecture, as well as chances to perform, is a huge



blessing, and it allows DE practitioners to be both amateur (keeping the love) and professional (increasing the skill level).

This question of “professional versus amateur?” is an interesting one. Each new profession will have a period of being the amateur. If we relate it to the world of sports, we think of a professional as being paid and an amateur as unpaid. In some creative circles, “professional” may have a negative connotation, and for others, “amateur” may somehow be of lesser value. But if we look at the etymology of the words, we find that amateur relates to love and professional relates to taking a vow. In an informal discussion on this topic with a friend and colleague, American painter Tasha Robbins brings the two together. “It’s less of a dichotomy than a coalition”. Follow what you love and take a vow to do it! Somatics not only allows but calls for both the amateur and the professional to coexist. We all have “the inner amateur” when we invest in somatic education – this is because we are in a constantly curious state of learning about self and our relationship to others. Somatics also beckons that we perceive ourselves as professionals – a person with authority, in this case the authority to make decisions for her or himself at all times. Somatic education adds to this supporting and nurturing creativity and growth without labeling as good or bad, right or wrong.

Challenges arise from some of the current perceptions of meaning. “It’s not professional”. “That was so unprofessional”. “How amateurish!”. Do we want to be professionals? In the Dynamic Embodiment model, we always want to be professional, in that we profess a commitment to observing, supporting and providing options (Eddy’s OSO model) – we move from caring to action and do so with agency. However, we are also interested in re-invoking the love and delight of the amateur. Finally we find that entering a somatic arena through multiple gateways can actually strengthen a professional aesthetic and social value. Professionalism must rest on communication style, reliability/ethics and presentation rather than only on content knowledge. The somatic work teaches rich content but also models the embodied practice of a professional working style and relationships.

Practical Professionalism – Finding Work on Graduation

Martha Eddy continues: A major motivator for starting the DE-SMTT was that my students and graduates of both the Laban/Bartenieff Institute and the School for Body-Mind Centering® would



come for private sessions with me to make sense of these new systems they had just embodied. They wanted to better know how to apply the work. This was before Somatic Movement Therapy had been named. I dealt with the challenge by participating on the board of ISMETA for 15 years, helping to shape the field with definitions, scope of practice, ethical guidelines and work standards. When I started the DE program I was aware that students wanted insights into how to be capable in the work force as practitioners. One solution was what we taught at Moving On Center – a multi-modal model of work as teacher, performer and private practitioner. The faculty has found that using these three sets of skills interacts well to support a full and balanced professional life.

Another view of this continuum of amateur to professional shows up in the transition from student to teacher. I have witnessed my graduates experience on the continuum of moving from learning content as amateur to being a professional looking for work. The gift and the challenge of somatic movement is that there are potential applications of this relatively new-to-the public perspective in hundreds of domains.

Some examples are the education of infants through senior citizens, health, wellness, fitness sports, philosophy, anthropology, psychology and various types of therapy as well as in all of the art disciplines. While somatic movement tries to find its identity in the global economy RSMTs and DEPs are kept “on our toes”, always improvising, learning to adapt the work to fit the need. Through the ‘80s we applied the work to the AIDS crises and the focus on aging, in the 1990s on violence prevention, along with fitness, wellness and health, and in the new millennium we are back to having a multi-cultural sensitivity in light of immigration as well as holding more awareness of abuse and trauma. The DE-SMT system values social awareness and cares about equity of health and opportunities for earning a living. BodyMind Dancing emerged out of my own need to dance – to keep my artistry alive even though my major identity was as a teacher, professor and private practitioner. Happenstance led me to also creating Moving For Life DanceExercise for Cancer Recovery. In order for this program to work, we needed more teachers. The early teachers were DE graduates who I personally mentored. Later I developed a curriculum for training small groups of dance educators, yoga and Pilates teachers, massage therapists and nurses as well as cancer survivors to become certified.



Dana Davison writes: Toward the end of my DE training, I had the good fortune to study to become an MFCLC with Martha in Denmark. On returning to New York, I began assisting Moving for Life DanceExercise for Health® group dance classes for cancer patients in treatment and recovery, as part of a research study at NYU Langone Medical Center (Kern et al). I taught BodyMind Dancing™, Breathing Anatomy Labs, and The Body in Translation at Dance New Amsterdam, Moving for Life at Gilda's Club and the Jewish Community Center, and yoga and meditation at New Visions Charter High School. It all happened very quickly, and I hadn't necessarily planned to become a teacher. But as I started teaching, I felt it was in my blood, and then realized it is. My mother is a professor of Sociology and my father is a retired elementary school physical education teacher. Somatics is this perfect combination of exactly where I come from. There is a difference between teaching MFL – with a focus on joy, working with community members and guiding psychophysical therapeutic outcomes with students who are mostly not trained dancers, and teaching pre-requisite and pedagogy classes for the teacher training. The range of work in the teacher certification/training includes theory, modeling, discussing and analyzing practice in order to facilitate others becoming teachers/professionals. The opportunity to work in these different ways, teaching classes, training new teachers, and creating my own workshops based in DE is significant to keeping the love for the work.

Martha Eddy continues: As somatic movement practitioner who felt I almost lost my professional inroad to dance I was acutely aware that is important to also value artistry. I chose to find ways to add cultural promotion to the roster of DE's learning and work goals. I believe that every human is an artist or at least has a need for artistic expression. Furthermore the skills of making art – going through both messy and productive phases (Eddy 2015) is in-line with the interaction of being a professional-amateur while also an amateur-professional. In the following paragraphs I outline the kinds of contributions that have arisen from collaborations between artists and professionals from different fields.

1. Making performances together around social issues demands new language and forms of communication across disciplines. Dynamic Embodiment practitioners and Moving On Center have



been active with *Global Water Dances (GWD)* – a form of Movement Choir focused on appreciation and preservation of clean water for all. The movement choir performed on one day every two years (next is June 24, 2017) with amateurs and professionals moving together in approximately 200 countries around the world is modeled after Laban’s choreography with thousands of workers in the early twentieth century and in sync with Flash Mobs of today (Eddy 2011). As we dance together and create meaningful tributes to the environment together, we discuss embodiment, nature, politics, sustainability and art. We also express emotion. The key aesthetics that emerge in the somatic educational approach or from any creative project are a valuing of in-the-moment choreography, adaptability, and caring for one another and oneself. This can be seen in the humanistic qualities – even when showing stress, anger and frustration as in the second section of *Global Water Dances*.

2. Dancing and performing with the lay community is not a new concept. Community Dance is a term being used more and more to describe the process of getting everyone dancing. It is particularly rich to see people with disabilities taking leadership in this domain. Simi Linton’s film *Invitation to Dance* is a case in point. The reality of funding to work in dance or theatre in the USA is that money comes less from governmental support and more from individual donors and family or corporate foundations. Another aspect of community-based dance events is the intermedia involvement whereby performers are vocalizing, providing visuals, live music, multi-lingual translation, computational interfaces (Toronto MECI symposium 2016) and projections on city walls or public screens. This melding can build bridges for better social and cultural understanding by raising issues that are meaningful to people who bring the language of their skills to this interdisciplinary dialogue.

3. Moving For Life class members (mostly cancer survivors), MFL Certified Instructors, and current trainees all participate together in the *New York City’s Dance Parade* – a group of 10,000 people dancing down Broadway in every genre of dance. Each year our participants glow from the public acknowledgement, the growth in confidence, and the sheer physical stamina they have demonstrated in participating in this highly public parade. The time in the parade is a type of



somatic and physical practice that has diverse psychophysical benefits. Indeed participants report feelings of elation and instructor trainees are excited to gain course credit for engaging in these two hours of non-stop interaction with the public through the art of dancing (and leafleting).

4. Other supports are the actual structural and procedural definers of the somatic movement teaching process – moving/doing, discussing and sharing information, returning to self-reflection and then exploring creativity. This is encapsulated in Eddy's Waking Up to Self model (Eddy et al. 2015), whereby a student/client/amateur or professional is asked to express herself (often with emotion and sometimes about physical status such as pain, joy, virtuosity), then ground the expression with contact and weightiness, and then discuss/discover wants and desires that are part of the original expression, and finally *communicating* the integrity of one's expression, grounding and desires with others. This interplay shows up as part of the "hidden curriculum" within DE/BMD/MFL and is taught to new faculty.

5. Another valued model from DE-SMT is that the professional-amateur will often be most successful in having a sustainable career by carrying on the model of living with the multiple identities of being teacher, somatic movement therapist and artist. This triadic relationship can be perceived as a survival strategy in the economy of capitalism and this is perhaps because in some ways somatic education is perceived as an amateur itself. This is thought because the bulk of its work occurs outside of mainstream professionals and is often undervalued and underpaid. On the other hand, movement therapists sometimes are perceived as more skilled, more professional and more likely to help in health, self-care, recovery than anyone who is "just a dancer". This again is circular. Rudolf Laban went through six careers in his lifetime – artist, architect, dancer, actor, director, teacher, writer, creator of dance notation, industrial analyst, and healer. Bartenieff did the same... from dancer, to physical therapist, to leading the emergence of the field of Dance Therapy, onward to anthropology (Choreometrics with Alan Lomax) and the founding of an educational institution – Laban Institute of Movement Studies (LIMS). Most likely, as each new profession began, there was an amateur stage. Knowledge spirals in these cases. And one's aesthetic is informed by this great life work. In part the scholarship moves from topic to topic as the field seeks



to find a home, but along the way it grows and deepens and brings people back to the body, providing a highly sophisticated inroad that few other people on the planet besides somatic movement educators and therapists can espouse or match. The sophistication is made evident through the integration of cognitive and kinesthetic intelligence at the professional level and a low degree of ethical breaches reported to the professional association. This ethical safety helps to form community amongst practitioners and to build trust with the greater public. The experience of dancing together intensifies these bonds of caring and respect. Skillful therapeutic touch with an awareness of the high degree of trauma history living in the cells of our global community also deepens the bonds of interconnectedness. This combination of scholarship and embodiment may be unprecedented in any other field. Somatic education scholarship occurs in large part through higher education and related publications in dance, psychology and some branches of holistic medicine. The need for a greater body of research is the next frontier. A text on research methodologies in somatic dance is forthcoming based on the work of Dyer (2009 a-b)

Martha Eddy: Practice takes place over time, as does creating an aesthetic. Practice shifts from newfound leadership to the time of teaching that makes the dance class come alive. MFCLIs are asked to bring their prior expertise to the table along with their enthusiasm as leaders. Throughout the span from trainee/amateur to professional/employee-consultant there is a shared principle of Self-Reflection-Portfolio Performance that is completed. The self-reflection on one's teaching using beginners mind helps each educator to connect with compassion with the students. Each class is a fresh experience so no two classes will be alike. The group that coalesces asks the instructor to meet them in a present manner that is not PRE-scribed. This model of "meeting the students where they are" is derived from Body-Mind Centering® and profound in Dynamic Embodiment work. It also echoes the principle of finding the balance of inner and outer focus from Body-Mind Centering® that is present in LMA as well – that internal and external experiences are two sides of the same coin. This approach is important for Certified Teachers of BodyMind Dancing. This philosophy and the ensuing activity can be captured with words through the language of Laban Movement Analysis. The "doing and saying process" is what enables cortical learning and assures the on-going verbal transmission of most somatic practices.



Community further arises from workshops, retreats (like those held at EarthDance in Western Massachusetts), conferences (the Body-Mind Centering Association conference as a case in point) and special events (Dance Parade, Hike-a-thon). Here again these events are most often inclusive of amateurs and professionals learning from one another. Another way to say this is that as this new somatic movement field grows (Eddy 2016), it becomes visible by entering a wide assortment of fields and providing what can be perceived as a great adjunctive (can we say amateur) input. Whether in regular dance class settings (MFL/BMD), *Global Water Dance* rehearsals or performances, or in teacher trainings, DE-SMT allows for this spiraling effect of gaining new information, checking in with the body to confirm its intelligence and worthiness, and then addressing how it can be used in practical ways. Each of these moves through stages of professionalism and hopes for the best of an amateur – love, openness and appreciation!

MFL and BMD are model methodologies that I established to point toward the merging of amateur and professional, in practice and “performance”. This is evident as we invite participants (the public) of our Moving For Life classes as well as friends, family members and our instructors – Moving For Life Certified Instructors (MFLCIs) and trainees in the process of becoming MFLCI’s to join us publicly in performing. As theatre professionals we know the power of performance to cultivate learning, bring out confidence and communicate our beliefs, values and work to others. Again, the *New York City Dance Parade* emphasizes this – it is an event during which dancers from diverse cultures and genres dance down in the streets of New York City and are watched by even more of the public. It is a time when dance moves from a self-healing and health focus to a time to be proud, stimulated by community engagement, and transformative. Similarly some of our class participants – in this case, eight breast cancer patients – chose to be participants in the Dance to Recovery DVD – a choreography project that is a kind of permanent performance as it is now available for the entire world to see and engage with. This makes the students not only performers but teachers in a sense, as they demonstrate what “worked” for them in their healing process. Each amateur has become a professional inspiring others to engage in the benefits of dancing together with others to music.



Concluding Thoughts

“If you have a choice between two things, and you cannot decide... take both”

(Gregory Corso, *Getting to the Poem*)

From Dana Davison: The ability to remain an amateur for the love of movement/dance, and move into being able to make a living sharing that love through a professional identity and its evolving field has been and is extremely satisfying.

In writing this I realize that at first I was reluctant to take on being a professional, and now I've accepted that I am one. Fortunately, Somatics allows me to remain an amateur too, to take both! While I've remained out of the performance arena, perhaps a return will come in that realm too.

From Martha Eddy: This reflective inquiry process has been of great satisfaction – highlighting our values as educators, performers and people. I can now say with gratefulness: it is such a blessing, to be both a professional and one who loves continuing explorations and creations – in the true sense of an amateur. Choosing somatic inquiry keeps one's novice status constantly alive. There is always more to learn.

Both authors agree that the practice of the art of dance whether for class, the stage, in theatre or on the streets, takes place over time, informing aesthetics, and making creative work come alive. With attention to both inner experience and the outer contingencies of any specific situation, all people can become more sensitive and compassionate as performers and as human beings. If they are professionals, this somatic approach reminds them to stay ready to also remain amateurs – open to passion, curiosity, questioning and love.



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Abstract – IT

Questo resoconto rappresenta uno studio interattivo e co-autoriale condotto da un'insegnante e dalla sua allieva sul tema del movimento dall'amatore al professionista. Esso evidenzia il ruolo dell'educazione somatica nell'equiparare l'esperienza di amatori e professionisti così come nell'indicare specifici percorsi, performance pubbliche, eventi partecipativi e attività di volontariato che vengono offerti, in maniera esclusiva, a studenti di programmi di formazione legati al Dynamic Embodiment™ Somatic Movement Therapy (conosciuta come Somatic Movement Therapy Training – SMTT tra il 1991 e il 2005). Scritta in stile narrativo, in prima persona (Powdermaker 1966), quest'indagine supporta la metodologia primaria dell'educazione somatica – il processo di scoperta di sé "dal didentro" (Hanna 1976) che pone l'accento sul corpo fisico concentrandosi sulla propriocezione corporea e sulla consapevolezza cinestetica – così come la natura umanistica della relazione allievo-insegnante e il valore di ciascuno nella performance e nell'educazione.

Abstract – ENG

This account is an interactive case study co-authored by a teacher and her student on the topic of moving from amateur to professional. It highlights the role of somatic education in equalizing the experience of amateurs and professionals as well as pointing to specific curricula, public performances, participatory events and volunteer work that are made uniquely available to students of programs related to Dynamic Embodiment™ Somatic Movement Therapy (known as the Somatic Movement Therapy Training – SMTT from 1991-2005). Written in first-person narrative style (Powdermaker 1966), this inquiry supports the primary methodology of somatic education – the process of self-discovery "from within" (Hanna 1976) emphasizing the physical body with a focus on bodily proprioception and kinesthetic awareness – as well as the humanistic nature of the student-teacher relationship and the value of each in performance and education.



MARTHA EDDY

RSMT, Ed.D, relatrice e autrice del volume *Mindful Movement – The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action*, educatrice in danza, fisiologa di esercizio e Operatrice Certificata in Somatic Movement Therapy. È inoltre esperta a livello internazionale di Body-Mind Centering® e di Analisi del Movimento Laban/Bartenieff, che per prima ha integrato nel programma di formazione in Somatic Movement Therapy Dynamic Embodiment™ nel 1991. Ha sviluppato inoltre Moving For Life, un programma di esercizio danzato originariamente pensato per persone affette da cancro. È membro di numerose facoltà universitarie che offrono diplomi avanzati e che collaborano con lei nella formazione di insegnanti certificati nei suoi metodi – BodyMind Dancing, Moving For Life e Dynamic Embodiment™.

MARTHA EDDY

Martha Eddy, Ed.D. is public speaker and author of the book *Mindful Movement – The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action*, dance educator, exercise physiologist and Registered Somatic Movement Therapist. She is an international expert in Body-Mind Centering® and Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis that she uniquely blended into the Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy Training in 1991. She has also developed Moving For Life, a holistic dance-exercise program originally for people with cancer. She's on the faculty of numerous universities that offer advanced degrees and they partner with her to train Certified Teachers of her systems – BodyMind Dancing, Moving For Life, and Dynamic Embodiment.

DANA DAVISON

RSMT/E, Operatrice in Dynamic Embodiment specializzata nel lavoro sul respiro. Danzatrice classica poi diventata editrice e traduttrice, è tornata a praticare il movimento grazie a uno studio intensivo con la Dott.ssa Martha Eddy. Tra il 2015 e il 2016, ha partecipato alle conferenze della Body-Mind Centering Association a Ghent, in Belgio, a Portland, Oregon, e a Montreal (Quebec – Canada), e ha collaborato con la rivista della BMCA, «Currents». Insegna in programmi di Dynamic Embodiment, Moving For Life, BodyMind Dancing e Somatic Anatomy. Insegna inoltre *Yoga through the Glands (Yoga attraverso le ghiandole)*, così come in corsi d'Introduzione al movimento in età evolutiva, e lavora privatamente a Brooklin, New York.

DANA DAVISON

RSMT/E, is a Dynamic Embodiment practitioner specializing in breath work. A classical ballet dancer turned publisher and translator, she returned to movement through an intensive study with Dr. Martha Eddy. In 2015-16, she presented at the Body-Mind Centering Association conferences in Ghent, Belgium, Portland, OR and Montreal, QB, Canada, and contributed to the BMCA journal, «Currents». She teaches on faculty for Dynamic Embodiment, Moving for Life, BodyMind Dancing and Somatic Anatomy. She also teaches Yoga through the Glands and Introductory Developmental Movement classes and offers private sessions in Brooklyn, New York.