

## THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PAUSE

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When we are engaged in “exploring flow” . . . the great mediator between the In and the Out . . . the expanse and the contract is the PAUSE. It is the non-action from which all action is born, the mother of the flow, the subtle pulsing potentiality that precedes manifestation. To dive into the depths of the Explore Flow path, it is vital that we become intimate friends with the pause . . . as it is here where communion and healing begins.

### THE SOURCE and THE FLOW

Like any river or stream of water, the flow is born of a source. Often we do not know the origin of the source. Sometimes in our curiosity, we go seeking the “source”. Metaphorically, it may be “underground”. It may be frozen in the form of “ice” or high above our heads in a “lofty thunderhead”. In searching for the source, sometimes we track “up river”. Seeking the source may send it further into refuge. The search for the source can begin and end here and now when we recognize that the source is inherent in the flow. From a systemic point of view, one single drop equals the entire ocean. When we drop into the pause and listen lightly with all of our heart, we can sense the essence, the origin, the latent potentiality from which the flow is born. No amount of seeking will bring us any closer to the source of the flow than we already are right now.

In Watsu and Tantsu this pause (known as “stillness”) floats on ‘the emptiness that resides at the bottom of the breath.’ Following our in-breath and our out-breath is one of the most natural ways to know the flow and the pockets of pause inside of the flow. There is no need to change or manipulate your breath to be anything different than it already is. The simple act of noticing your breath helps to create balance and over time any necessary changes in your breathing will happen naturally. Our bodies are a miraculous mélange of intelligent body-mind-emotional intricacy, that when given then right environment, flow naturally towards a state of receptivity and balance. Simple noticing of the breath, simple noticing of ourselves, just as we are, here, right now. . . is the first step in creating that healthy environment. When we slow down into ourselves, we become more sensitive containers for our partner’s experience.

### FLOW IS IN YOUR NATURE

Nature flows and fluxes and pauses. Fruits return to the ground after the long summer season to pause (decompose) in the cool moist earth. Seeds rest, pregnant with latent potentiality ready to return to life’s growth cycle upon the perfect conditions in the Spring. We too, are magnificent manifestations of the natural world. We too, live in inherent cycles of birth, growth, death, transformation, pause and rebirth. Watsu Tantsu Explore Flow serves as a safe and supported “living laboratory” in which we can accept, live and experiment with life’s cyclical nature. A Watsu or Tantsu sharing has cycles of Follow Movement, Explore Movement, Stillness (Pause), just like nature. What we learn inside of a Watsu or Tantsu sharing can then be brought out into how we live our day-to-day lives in resonance with nature’s cycles.

## THE FEAR OF THE PAUSE

Our modern society has conditioned us for input and action. We have been trained that if we are not “doing something” that we are lazy or will fall behind or “lose ground.” From a neurological perspective, being in constant action is counter-productive.

As the practice of Explore Flow is endless, goal-less or, as Harold says “with no last line”, there is no need to try to accomplish or arrive at the end. What’s the hurry? No “award” awaits the end of a sequence well executed in the “right” amount of time. In Watsu and Tantsu Explore Flow, the exchange is an experience that validates itself. Enjoy each moment of its luxurious flow. Don’t be concerned to “finish”. The cycle tends to find its own “finish” that may or may not look like what you expected. Like this, you will have all the time in the world to “drop into the pause”. ENJOY!

The pause is an inherent part of the deep listening process in the practice. It is the rest, the fallow, the re-absorption, the honoring of the latent potentiality, trust in the rhythms of the universe. It takes courage to PAUSE, because our society generally doesn’t support this patient inner listening. The pause gives opportunity to listen deeply within oneself. It gives an opportunity to hear the voice of our own Truth. It gives opportunity for vital life force to grow. It gives possibility to expand our perception of the world around us. It allows us to recognize that we can be simultaneously autonomous AND in collaborative sharing with each other. It gives us the incentive to know our own individual organic rhythms FREE from culturally imposed beliefs and mechanized cadences.

How can we really be ourselves if we have not stopped to listen to who we really are? Listen deeply to your hearts desires and your natural rhythms, the callings of your cells, the movement of your fluid. A Watsu or Tantsu sharing gives space and containment for your inner inquiry.

Don’t be afraid of silence. The pause need not only be a point along a Watsu or Tantsu progression. Perceive the needs of your partner, and when you sense it . . . you can slow down, open up, be still and let awareness grow in the stillness of the “pause.” Be willing to rest in the pause as nourishment for both you and your Watsu or Tantsu companion.

## MOMENTS OF INTEGRATION

The pause is not falling asleep or just hanging out. The pause is not “stopping”  
The pause (“stillness”) is light and wide full presence awareness of JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE . . . right now. . . and a personal witnessing of how they pulse, change and evolve. It is the willingness to flow with the change.

Pause equals integration. The movements, contact and sensorial input of a Watsu or Tantsu sharing can introduce a myriad of new neurological information to our nervous systems (whether giver, receiver or witness). This new information enriches and complexifies one’s nervous system’s capacity to adapt and respond to new situations.

Integration is very important. Once new “information” has been introduced to the nervous system, a period of pause (or stillness) is essential so that our systems have the “time and

space” to integrate what it has learned. Without the pause, an information overload can occur. In overload, essentially all systems shut down in a mode of self-protection. All healthy living systems thrive in this cycle of input then integration. On a base level, think about digestion. Imagine that you just eat and eat without pause and never give time for the food you take in to digest. What could have been potential nourishment becomes a toxic overload and our intelligent bio-systems shut down to say “enough”. The function is the same with any input to our system, whether food, movement, contact, information, mental process, relationship, etc. All living systems need a balance of input and integration for ultimate health.

As we are all unique, some “systems” integrate more rapidly; others may need more time to absorb. Some need more input, some less. Our objective when sharing Watsu or Tantsu is to remain lovingly open and perceptive to the needs of whom we are holding in our arms, without opinion, without judgment, without imposing our own “schedule” on the other. It is our privilege to hold this fine soul in our arms and help to facilitate their experience.

So, we invite you to simply slow down, notice life happening around you and get used to that long, slow melting into the Pause . . . see what happens! You may be delightfully surprised of all that “occurs” under the busy happenings of every day life . . . life’s intricate and subtle movements are so fascinating and we can become intimate with them in the deep listening of the pause. Ahhhh!

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