

## THE ART OF THE SOMATIC DIALOGUE: How "Explore Flow" Differs from "Free Flow"

By Fabrizio Dalle Piane & Ateeka

A Watsu Explore Flow session is a "multi-lingual" endeavor, in which our range of communication may extend from spoken sharing to subtle perception of the silent inner flow. While the practice is without goal, in order to deepen into the two-way communication, we can engage in a "dialogue" rather than monologue with our partner(s). The "somatic dialogue" is an ongoing exchange of information between the practitioners' inner movements and the outer explorations that manifest. The communication of this "somatic dialogue" is wide and vast and has the potential to go beyond the "role" of personal identity. It is truly the language of the body and the heart.

The language of the body is both primordial and cosmic. It is ancient and it is future. It lands us in the "right-here-and-now." In order to communicate deeply with our partner(s) in an Explore Flow session, we need to become fluent in the language of the body.

The language of the heart is one of coherence. It is when we are able to let go of our ideas of right and wrong and melt into the feeling sense of truly being with another. It is empathetic. It is our first language. We cannot "learn" this language of the heart, as it is already within us, we simply can re-member its soft, natural and very healing tone. The simple act of being with another in a Watsu exchange can help us to access this universal language.

Traditionally, when learning a language, we go to a school or out on the streets of a new country and seek to "acquire" new words, phrases or pronunciations. In learning the language of the body and the heart, the most important step is learning how to perceive and receive. We slow down and first listen to our own inner presence. The first step is a bit like this: *imagine yourself walking in a thick overgrown forest, immersed in all of its activity, and as happens, it suddenly occurs to you that you have lost your way. With no compass in your pocket, you must tap your natural instinct in order to find your way. You stop*

*where you are, take a breath, get silent, listen and follow your way to the sound of running water, which is a flow that will give you a direction to follow and keep you from "walking in circles"*

The spirit and source of Watsu Explore Flow is much like this. The "direction" we follow originates from the inner (often fluid) movement of who we are holding. We slow down, breath, get still, listen and shed expectations to really sense our partner in all of his/her humanness. It is only then that we can truly "follow movement". The uninterrupted following movement is born of the resonance of the two or three people engaged in the sharing. Follow Movement is a "somatic dialogue" of non-doing in the presence of the not-knowing. Talk about limitless possibilities!

"Follow movement" often grows into "explore movement". This phase in the Watsu Explore Flow cycle is not just "exploring some new moves" that an outside source (teacher, book, video, other) has suggested. It is the authentic engagement of our shared life force energy in a playful and curious way. It is respectful, joyful, surprising and neurologically enriching. Explore Flow is different from Free Flow. True Free Flow originates from being highly skilled and practiced the the various moves, holds, techniques of Watsu and being able to use them in spontaneous and highly creative ways.

Explore Flow comes from within. It is born of the moment. It is always innovative and its source is not dependant on one's skills, experience or level of practice. Of course, some basic foundation skills of how to hold and simply move your partner safely and effectively in the water are necessary. However, the great beauty and freedom of the Watsu Explorer path is its immediacy because it is coming from listening and exploration, not from a sequence or techniques. Sequence and mastering technique is certainly useful for a professional level practitioner, but Explore Flow can be a much more interesting and applicable way of cultivating the spirit of Watsu as a way of life. Professional practitioners may find that the practice of Explore Flow gives new relevance to the sequences that they have mastered, and opens up whole new creative worlds and sensitivity for their work with clients.

Who is interested in Explore Flow will benefit greatly by first opening to perceive what is truly arising and from there will be FREE to explore the resonant flow. Many people, whether beginners or seasoned professionals, can tend to become easily distracted or lose their connection with the “inner dialogue”. In the Watsu Explorer Path, we have added the solo “*somatic movement meditations*” (called Explore Water) to help us perceive the flow within ourselves and learn the art of dialogue with that flow. The dialogue is an interplay between simple listening and somatic response.

Some simple observations that may tune us in to the world of our inner movements and natural flow are:

How do I feel my breath as it exchanges between my inner and outer environments?

Can I feel the weight of my body? The buoyancy?

Can I feel the pulse of my heart?

Do I sense the air or water or clothing on my skin?

When I listen deeply, how does my body naturally want to move and express its organic nature?

These are just simple beginnings, but in the course of an Explore Flow sharing, can provide awareness to bring us back into a space of listening and resonance with our partner(s).

Ultimately, the path of Explore Flow is one of naturalness and simplicity. Anybody can practice and enjoy its pleasures. Life’s movements are happening inside of at all times regardless of whether we notice. Our bodies and hearts are engaged in a process of perceiving the world around us and within us and responding in each moment. When we perceive this flow, we more fully touch our humanness and that of others. We can perceive that below our personalities, our differences of opinion, our varied lifestyle choices,

that we are human beings first. We share an ancient heritage, a sacred commonality and great hope for future unity. The flow arrives from the source. We are never separate from the source. The Watsu Explorer path is one way, and a very enjoyable one at that, to know our human connection and future potential more intimately.

[www.tantsucenter.com](http://www.tantsucenter.com)

[www.ateeka-yoga.com](http://www.ateeka-yoga.com)

[www.fabriziodallepiane.com](http://www.fabriziodallepiane.com)