

Somatic Movement and Education:

a phenomenological study of young children's
perceptions, expressions and reflections of
embodiment through movement

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A thesis submitted to the
University of Birmingham
for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Education
University of Birmingham
September 2011

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ABSTRACT

This reflexive account is of a phenomenological study that took place over two years. It explores how a group of primary-aged children perceive, express and reflect on their embodiment through movement.

Children aged between four and eleven years took part in sessions of yoga, somatic movement and developmental play during the school day. The data include field notes, observations, a reflexive journal, photographs of and by the children, their drawings, mark-makings, writing and posters. Children were also interviewed at the end of the study, when they had an opportunity to reflect on all their work and experiences.

All the children were capable of expressing and reflecting on their experiences, and the oldest children in particular appeared to enjoy and seemed to benefit from the reflective process. By linking together a sense of self-awareness and reflection, the children appeared able to gain insight into their embodied experience and reflect on emotions, feelings and events.

Embodiment is a process as much of a state of being, and as such has implications for perceptions of mind and body, learning, and reflective practice. This approach to embodied reflective practice thus has potential for educators and teacher trainers, as well as direct work with children.

DEDICATION

For Summer, Kira, and my parents. Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to Professor Richard Bailey, without whom I could not (would not) have done this at all. You have been there for me in so many ways over the past few years. I must owe you a drink or something. Thank you to Dr Symeon Dagkas, my supervisor. Thank you to all my family and friends for their support, and to those at work for their encouragement.

Thanks also to the staff, pupils and parents at the school for their willingness to participate, explore and share their experiences with me.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The body, our bodies, can be thought of, described and experienced in many ways. They can be seen as vehicles for consciousness, as separate and sometimes troublesome containers for our mind (Plato, 2009). Descartes (1641/2007) wrote that the body was nothing but a machine. In contrast, Whitehead (2007) states that we do not have a body, rather, we are embodied. Bodies can be seen as tools with which we achieve performance in spheres such as elite sport or dance (Dyck & Archetti, 2003; Evans, Davies, & Wright, 2004; Sparkes & Smith, 2002). They can be viewed as mechanisms which are vital for maintaining health and well-being or as machines that come to our attention most when faulty (Leder, 1990). They can be seen as the means by which we experience the world and interact with it in either a philosophical sense (Middendorf, 1990; Merleau-Ponty, 2002) or experiential one (Hartley, 1989). Our bodies are subject to discourse in sociology (Markula & Pringle, 2006), education (Bresler, 2004), sport (Bailey & Kirk, 2008), dance (Pickard, 2007; Stinson, 2004) and therapy (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990). They can be viewed in terms of identity (Dyck & Archetti, 2003), body image (Oliver & Lalik, 2001), disability (Fitzgerald, 2005), sexuality and gender (Wellard, 2002; 2007; 2009). Approaches to working with the body run the gamut from skill acquisition (Bailey, 2003), martial arts or 'eastern movement disciplines' such as aikido (Linden, 2002), from bodywork (Johnson, 1995), to mindfulness training (Langer, 1989) and beyond. Our bodies change as we age, from developing infants (Piaget, 1928) to children and adolescents (Bjorklund & Ellis, 2005), adults and through to old age. As well as aging, injury, disability and ill-health can affect how we use and view ourselves and others (Sparkes & Smith, 2002).

I view my body as the embodiment of me. The physical expression of me within this world. As such I can train, exercise, express and create with it and through it. Although my own perception and understanding of my body is actually at odds with that last sentence, as by terming my body an ‘it’ I am objectifying a part of myself. The practice I have developed and which informs my perceptions and understandings is a reflexive practice. It could even be called an embodied reflexive practice as I use the information from my senses (touch, smell, kinaesthesia, proprioception, sight, imagination, hearing, imagery and internal awareness) to feed into a reflective and reflexive process of understanding myself, the world that surrounds me and others that move within the world. My reflexive process is “rooted in experiences of ...[my]...kinetic/tactile-kinesthetic...[body]” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 112). The exactness of language, and the nature that language can express the experience of my embodied self forms a part of the practice itself. My work combines the embodied forms in which I have experience; primarily yoga (Pattabhi Jois, 1999), Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002) and Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy (IBMT) (Hartley, 1989), as well as a background in science, education and research. I have applied this work as an on-going process in my life but also with infants, families, artists, dancers, athletes, education and health professionals, and with children as part of their school day.

This thesis is a reflexive account of a phenomenological study of children’s experiences of their embodied selves. Children aged from four to eleven attended sessions of yoga, movement and developmental play within school time over a period of two years. In each session they had time to reflect on their experiences using journaling, drawing and mark-making as well as talking to each other. They expressed themselves through movement, modelling and talking. I am not seeking to locate this work within a formal, explicit

theoretical framework, except that that fits with the principles of embodiment and somatic movement.

‘Embodiment’ can be used to describe the way in which our bodies are used to represent ourselves at an individual or cultural level. ‘Bodywork’ thus means work that is done on the body to change its appearance or function (Crossley, 2006). This would be the definition used by sociologists such as Shilling (2005; 2008) or Crossley (2006). For example, Crossley’s work on Reflexive Embodiment includes “practices of body modification, maintenance and...body-image” (ibid p. 1). Although he includes feelings and emotions we have *about* our bodies in his discussions of the social and constructed meanings attached to diverse body practices such as tattooing, eating and exercise, his view of embodiment does not necessarily mean a self-awareness and consciousness being brought to the feelings and sensations *within* the body. Crossley is representative of most sociologists in this regard. Embodiment and somatic movement are used within this thesis to describe the phenomena of movement as experienced from within. Hanna is credited with first using the phrase ‘somatic’ in the 1970s. He uses it to mean the living body, from the Greek root *σωμα*, and the term ‘bodywork’ equates to the skilful touch utilised in hands-on work and manipulation techniques designed to facilitate awareness of the body (Juhan, 1987). My use of the term ‘embodiment’ equates to both a state of being and a process of learning about the self. Embodiment is an on-going process of bringing conscious self-awareness to and about the body. So, it is important to understand that the work reported in this thesis rests on “fundamentally different assumptions” to those of sociologists (Totton, 2009, p. 189). It does not follow that sociologists insights are irrelevant to my concerns.

Somatic movement practices are approaches to movement that involve “the use of sensory-motor learning to gain greater voluntary control of one’s physiological process” (Hanna, 1990), and focus on a client-centred, non-judgemental ethos (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990). Students practice yoga to develop self-acceptance and strength, both physical and mental, clarify the mind and enhance a mind-body connection (Farhi, 2000). Somatic movement therapy incorporates developmental movement patterns, the emotional content present in movement, the physiology of the body and the words in which we speak of and process movement (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). Any activity from observing the breath or paying attention to the motility of the cells in our body can be somatic movement. It includes processes by which the absent or invisible body described by Merleau-Ponty (2002) and Leder (1990) becomes more present or visible. Somatic movement education (SME) is therefore “the educational field which examines the structure and function of the body as processes of lived experience, perception and consciousness” (Linden, 1994).

In contrast to classical theories, ‘somatic’ implies there is an underlying philosophical belief that the mind is embodied. Classically, Plato defined the body as an “endless source of trouble” (Russell, 1946, p. 151) and Socrates is credited with describing it as “a hindrance in the acquisition of knowledge” (ibid, p. 150). This duality of mind and matter, or body and soul has been associated with the power, classically associated with Descartes, imbalance and patriarchal discourses where the body is ascribed the lesser valued nature/female and the mind the more valued intellect/culture/male (Gatens, 1988). Not all somatic movement forms are explicit about their philosophy. They do share an implicit or explicit belief that it is desirable to balance the mind and body through exploring the “relationship between body and mind in

movement” (Hartley, 2004 p. 4) and exploring a balance where “mind doesn’t dominate body, it becomes body– body and mind are one” (Pert, 1999, pp. 82 - 3).

Both yoga and somatics work from the assumption that embodiment is both a state of being and an on-going process (Hanna, 1988). Patanjali states yoga’s aim to be “the cessation of movements in the consciousness” (Iyengar, 1993, p. 46), and that “verbal knowledge devoid of substance is fancy or imagination” (Iyengar, 1993, p. 55). Although yoga has been described as a science, philosophy and an art (Iyengar, 1966) it is very much an experience rooted in the physical as much as the spiritual world. This can be compared to Leder who states “I dwell in a world of ideas, paying little heed to my physical sensations or posture” (1990, p. 1). However, Leder states explicitly that he believes human experience to be incarnated, or ‘embodied’. Is this the difference between thoughts or a theoretical process of embodiment and an experiential one? I will explore the idea of what it is to experience embodiment in an articulate and expressive way, grounded in the both the physical and mental processes of doing so. Further to this, I will consider what it means to reflect in an embodied way, both as an adult researcher, practitioner, therapist, educator and as a child.

My study is not intended to be an intervention study, but an exploration of how children perceive, express, and reflect on their experiences of embodiment, and I have taken a reflexive stance throughout. The study was comprised of three phases of sessions: the first involved working with all the children in the school on themes of Finding Shapes, Organising and Moving On; the second focused on Why, What and How We Move; and the final phase, with only the oldest children in the school, explored emotions, sensations, reflection and expression.

This thesis is organised in two parts. Chapters 1-3 comprise the research context and overview of Eastern Philosophy and yoga, Authentic Movement and Integrated Bodywork and Movement Therapy; and Methodological Approaches, including a breakdown of the three phases of the study, and ethical considerations. Chapters 5-7 are the Findings, Discussions and Conclusions: Embodiment of Children; Embodiment and Learning; and Embodiment and Reflection.

My research questions were:

1. Do children experience themselves as embodied beings?
2. If so, how do they express, create and perceive their embodied self?
3. Does an experience of somatic movement within a school day affect ability to reflect and process in an embodied way?

The main findings of the study were that children can and do experience themselves as embodied beings. They utilised movement, journaling, drawing, mark-making and verbalisation to express their sense of embodiment. They appeared to be able to reflect on their experiences and develop their embodied self-awareness, processing their emotions, sensations and feelings, and relating the material in the sessions to their lives. Several children mentioned how they had integrated and maintained aspects of the work. These included emotional self-regulation, awareness of others and being still. The children spoke about how they valued the playful 'fun' nature of the sessions. The communicative aspects of the approach also seemed important to the children, both the sharing and working with each other, and producing displays for others in the school. The development of an embodied self-

awareness and reflective practice through somatic movement education may also have relevance for teachers, educators, and practitioners.

CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH CONTEXT, YOGA AND SOMATIC MOVEMENT PRACTICES

This chapter gives an overview of the main influences of the movement work used in the study. Firstly I give a summary of the research context and range of methods that have been used to study somatics or yoga. Secondly I introduce the philosophy and practice of yoga, and thirdly explore those somatic forms that influenced this study; namely Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy (Hartley, 1989), Body-Mind Centering[®] (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993), and Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002). These forms, along with yoga, were woven together to provide the basis and material with which the participants worked to increase their awareness of, and to experience their moving embodied selves.

2.1 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

Somatic movement and embodiment are terms that are used to describe the phenomena of movement as experienced from within. These, and similar phrases, are found in work in diverse fields including sport pedagogy (Côté & Hay, 2002), physical education (Bailey & Kirk, 2008), dance movement therapy (Ritter, 1996), psychology (Fogel, 2009), education (Tremmel, 1993), special needs education (Barlow et al, 2006), philosophy (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009), psychotherapy (Hartley, 2004) and health (Junker et al, 2004). The language used in and around somatics and the body is an area that can be approached differently in research studies.

A review of papers that have applied somatic work with groups or individuals and reported on the results, or looked at the effect of somatics on individuals already practicing was undertaken. The papers were found through an internet search using the terms: ‘somatic’, ‘movement’, ‘embodiment’, and ‘yoga’. References were followed up where appropriate.

The selection of papers was not a comprehensive review of the literature, but an overview of the variety of research methods and approaches that have been used. Some of the papers were critical in style, others presented a journalistic view of the work. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilised. A full table of the papers can be found in Appendix 1.

The research methods used in the selection were diverse, and reflected the range of methods and sampling seen within the social sciences. For example Prichard's (2008) study on exercise and self-objectification was a relatively large scale questionnaire based study (n=571), and Green's (1999) qualitative description of the somatic body within dance education was a naturalistic qualitative data collection process of the experiences of participants of one dance course. Three papers were concerned with 'exercise' or physical education (Fitzgerald, 2005; Linden, 1994; Prichard, 2008). Ten of them discuss their findings with relation to adults (e.g. Anderson, 2006), and four with relation to children (e.g. Fitzgerald, 2005). Two discuss both adults and children (e.g. Cullen-Powell & Barlow, 1995). Five of the studies report on direct interventions of work with groups (e.g. Cullen-Powell & Barlow, 1995). Five papers report findings from questionnaires (e.g. Junker et al, 2004), interviews (e.g. Green, 1999) and focus groups (e.g. Fitzgerald, 2005). One paper uses a case study (Linden, 1994); one is a statistical meta-analysis (Ritter, 1996).

The findings of the papers generally indicated the need for further quantitative and qualitative research. The meta-analysis (Ritter, 1996) called for a better design for projects so that they included control groups and used standardised measures for the variables that were under investigation. These variables included; mood, balance, movement ability, anxiety, body-awareness and self-concept. The phenomenological and experiential studies of somatic-type

work identified themes of transference of material into everyday life, enhanced problem solving ability, warmth, an increased ability to focus at work, being more attentive, being more present to the moment, feeling happy and overall feelings of well-being. A range of Complementary and Alternative Therapies were investigated by Junker et al (2004), in which they found that although the therapies had not been evaluated for relative effectiveness, safety or mechanism of action, and that costs were not reimbursed by health insurance companies, an increasing number of people were turning to these methods. The influence of cost, placebo effects and patient expectations were all areas indicated for further research.

A range of methodological approaches were used within the remainder of the studies. The benefits of the Self-Development Program (SDP) (Cullen-Powell & Barlow, 1995) were perceived to be significant by the teachers of the child participants; however no data were gathered from the participants directly. This could be an element in Cullen-Powell's work that might be explored further, if compared with the findings from Fitzgerald (2005) that identified the importance of the nurturing relationship between the students and the teacher. Neither the therapeutic nature of the SDP nor the therapeutic relationship that would have existed between the students and their tutor was discussed. However as Cullen-Powell chose to work with complementary therapists trained to deliver the SDP it is likely that this would have been a professional and therapeutic role developed by the tutor.

Four different self-care programmes intended to affect the low retention rates of staff were offered in Raingruber and Robinson's study (2007). The content of each class was stated explicitly; from the style of yoga, the book from which guided meditations were taken, the format of a reiki session and each tai chi class. Although their study was phenomenological

in nature, they did not choose to focus on how the participants responded to their tutors or the choices of classes. They did not report on why participants chose the class they did, nor whether they wished for it to continue. The reflective questions were focused primarily on work issues. However the participants reported effects and transferences into their daily lives.

Khalsar's study on yoga and chronic insomnia (2004) found positive effects by the participants. Although this was a controlled study, the author did compare the findings to a non-controlled study. The exercises themselves were found to be 'tolerable' by the majority of participants who completed the eight week programme, although no mention is made whether the poses were taught as purely physical exercises or whether the participants were encouraged and supported to increase their body awareness.

The initial stages of work to develop a scale that measures body intelligence were reported by Anderson (2006). She defined this to be comprised of three sub-scales. If standardised and validated, it has potential as a measure that could be analysed quantitatively. This could then be used at baseline and post-intervention in studies that focus on somatic-type work with individuals and groups. It did not seem particularly suitable for those with a good knowledge of somatic practices as there would be a large temptation to answer as 'one should do' rather than be honest.

The case study used to illustrate Linden's concept of Somatic Literacy (1994) only showed positive aspects of Linden's own approach to somatics. He stated the benefits, and used his case study to illustrate it without reference to other cases or research. The client in this case did not speak with his own voice, as practitioner observations and reflections were used.

Green (1999) used a phenomenological approach to gather information from students on a somatics course about body image in dance. She did not choose to produce a critical study of the somatics, but instead used the somatic work to build up a space where the students felt safe and were able to express themselves. In fact, there is a lack of a critical element in many of these studies.

The stories of somatic practitioners were collected in Beaudoin's work (1999), and these then thematised. They were not subjected to a discourse analysis, as Wright (2000) chose to do with the transcripts of a physical education lesson and a Feldenkrais class. Themes were used to analyse the journals from both Green's (1999) and Rainbruger & Robinson's (2007) studies and the focus group transcripts from Fitzgerald's work (2005).

The studies that chose to use questionnaires (e.g. Junker et al., 2004; Prichard, 2008) to elicit information from respondents as their sole means of data collection did not offer qualitative data in the voices of the participants detailing their personal experiences. There is therefore less evidence to understand why they found the results that they did.

When considering the methodology for this research project, this overview was very useful. The importance of capturing the voices of the participants seemed crucial when exploring work that has direct application to an individual's inner experience. The role of the tutor and the therapeutic relationship that can develop between a tutor and the class is an area that merits further exploration. If designing a large intervention project it could be appropriate to use a control group and collect information from standardised tests. These tests could be

determined partly by information gathered in a phenomenological study of participants' experiences.

2.2 PRINCIPLES OF SOMATIC MOVEMENT

Somatic movement, whether it is educational or therapeutic, includes a diverse range of practices and methods. An outline of some of these can be found in Appendix 2. Practices such as yoga are many thousands of years old (Iyengar, 1966). Other practices have been developed by individuals within the last hundred years. Three principles set somatic movement practices apart from other dance, sport or exercise forms.

The first principle sets out the 'What?' of somatic movement. The starting point is that the body and mind are connected and through movement we can increase our body's intelligence and our mind's embodiment.

The second principle answers 'Why?'. Somatic movement is an on-going process, an exploration of self that is undertaken as a life-time commitment or path for many practitioners. It is possible to bring awareness to every movement and moment of our body. The belief that it will enable us to develop towards a higher sense of self is a reason for taking somatic movement off the mat, or out of the room and into every aspect of life.

The 'How?' of somatic movement is through conscious awareness, or the intention behind the practice. Not all somatic forms will look the same, nor will they necessarily feel the same. However each practice, therapy or technique will either have explicitly defined these principles or implicitly adhere to them.

2.3 EASTERN PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA PHILOSOPHY

The many forms of yoga, and the Eastern philosophy that underpins it, can also be considered somatic practices. I use the word ‘can’, as the study of philosophy without the experiential awareness of the embodied self becomes a theoretical practice. Likewise, the practice of yoga as only a means to fitness may or may not lead into an increased somatic awareness. Yoga is not a religion, nor is it easily classified as a philosophy, science or mythology, but can be considered as something more resembling a Western form of psychotherapy, or “a critique of culture” (Watts, 1961, p. 7), as it has at its heart the aim of personal liberation, a concept described as individuation or self-actualisation. The purely physical aspect of yoga, *asana*, has been emphasised in recent years, sometimes to the exclusion of all else, turning yoga practice into an exercise form. As such, it has been “generally accepted as being highly positive” (Carbonneau et al, 2010, p. 452). They describe yoga as focussing on “the development and maintenance of the natural balance between the mind, the body, and the soul” (ibid. p. 456). The benefits of yoga, as separate to those of any other physical exercise, would be conducive to adaptive physical and psychological outcomes.

“The benefits of yoga have been known for centuries and are being increasingly corroborated by scientific research. Notably, research reveals that the yoga practice can enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, promote respiratory and cardiovascular function, and enhance psychological well-being. The yoga practice has also been shown to diminish anxiety as well as to increase positive affect and decrease negative affect.” (ibid p. 456)

The core belief, that a body/mind split or duality as exemplified by Western culture is not a desired state of being, but a cultivation of conscious awareness in the individual, which can lead to a greater health and wellbeing, creativity, choice and responsibility (Hartley, 2004) is

the intention behind many movement practices including yoga. The traditional Eastern view of the body and mind is that they are inseparable aspects of the same human existence (Dychtwald, 1977).

Yoga is often translated as meaning union, yoking or communion, and is “a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly” (Gandhi, 1929, p. ix). Yoga is one of the six orthodox systems of Indian philosophy, and was ordered, co-ordinated and systemised by Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras*. Although yoga has been associated with religion, including Hinduism and Buddhism, it is not in itself a religion. In fact, yoga is more often described as an Art, or a Science by senior practitioners (Iyengar, 1966). The perception of yoga as a religion has led, however, to its banishment from some church halls.

The goal of *samadhi*, or enlightenment is the purpose behind all yoga. By controlling the mind and developing mental discipline the student can reach a state of independence, liberty, or freedom from the world around. This does not mean death, or unconsciousness, but an ability to live, but not be ruled by circumstances. Wood (1959) talks of the will governing “both mind and body...all things of the body and senses, and all states of the activities of the mind are merely phenomena, playthings” (p. 20). In the West, yoga is commonly thought of as only consisting of the third limb of the *astanga* system – of physical exercise. As such it is often found in gyms, and practiced by those wanting to achieve a ‘yoga body’. However, the underlying philosophy of yoga can be present in the practice, regardless of how a student may initially encounter it, as the belief is that changing the physical body can change the mind and emotions. A student, seeing how a yoga practice can transform his body, may then grow in the strength needed to change his behaviours. However, the effect of yoga on a body, and the

intention behind the practice, may be different to that of other activities. Claims about the effects of yoga include: “yoga gave me superior health” (the alternative title to a book by Bernard (1939)); “yoga induces a primary sense of measure and proportion” (Iyengar, 1966, p. 11); “yoga is a self-empowering process which instils within its practitioners a confidence and a deep internal knowledge of the subtle workings of our body” (Swenson, 1999, p. 14); and “[yoga] is the key to a life of peace and contentment” (Devereux, 1998, p. 5).

Bandhas are seals or locks of muscular tissue applied by the yoga practitioner in certain styles of classical yoga. There are three *bandhas*; *jalandhara bandha*, *uddiyana bandha* and *mula (moola) bandha*, which are located in the throat, abdomen and perineum. For the three *bandhas*, “contraction at a physical level activates and awakens hitherto dormant faculties in the brain and mind, usually present in only the most evolved mind. Mastery of the *bandhas*, therefore, leads to the fullest realisation of our potential” (Buddhananda, 1978, p. 6).

Regardless of the esoteric effects that are attributed to the use of *bandhas*, they are seen as “the very core of *hatha* yoga practice. They represent the most subtle and potent difference between the postures of *hatha* yoga and gymnastic exercise” (Devereux, 1998, p. 48) or a part of a practice that first “demands the mastery of *asanas* and the strength and discipline arising there from” (Iyengar, 1966, p. 431). In my own practice, and when I teach adults, I emphasise the use of *mula bandha* in order to engage the sacrum, and the vertebrae in the spine. With children this equates to a focus on posture, finding the muscular support for the back and its movements, and beginning an experiential awareness of the internal structures of the body.

Other aspects of a strong yoga practice include a strong physical contact with the floor. This may be through the feet, the hands, or any other part of the body. A balanced foundation will

mean that weight is distributed evenly through the body. In practice this means that the feet are spread with the natural arch, when standing knees are not locked. The care and attention given to both to posture and a kinaesthetic awareness of posture is integral to how I teach. This may be as simple as asking people to sit, then asking them to slump down and sag and notice what it feels like before finding a more balanced and comfortable sitting position. Children who had not been aware of their body before may use this to start being aware of how they hold themselves in space. In addition I would also use more specific instructions, such as to spread their fingers wide. I am aware of what I do with my own body so that as they imitate me, they imitate a strong foundation. The principles of alignment could be described as those below, and they map well onto the material covered with the children in the research study where sessions included spirals and twists, balance, and ways to be still.

1. Opposition – the balancing of forces of equal pressure in opposing spirals so that left/right, front/back, top/bottom, inside/outside and centre/peripheries are not imbalanced.
2. Stability – so that the muscles are active and pulled into the bones.
3. Balance – a distribution of activeness and awareness through the points mentioned above.
4. Effortlessness – the body as a whole and individual points should feel released and at ease as a result of stabilisation and balance in opposing points (Devereux, 1998).

Breathing and a focus point are two other aspects of yoga *asana* practice that differentiate it from other exercise forms. In yoga, the breath enters and leaves the body through the nose. In a classical *astanga* practice, *ujayi* breathing is done throughout, where the *bandhas* are applied (lightly), and the breath makes a sound in the throat. The practice can then take place

within a set number of breaths. For children, the awareness is brought to breathing through the nose, and a synchronisation of movement with the breath, as well as becoming aware of how the quality of the breath can be noticed and used as a clue and a key to awareness of other aspects of their body and mind. The focal point, or *drushti*, in a classical practice would be the practice of focusing an attentive awareness on specific points in the body. That awareness should be direct, immediate and effortless, and involves not only the entry into and out of a yoga pose, but also the awareness of what it feels like, how it feels, how the opposing spirals of force or energy through the body are balanced, and how the breath moves the body while in practice, and how the practice affects the body after it. Again, elements of this are brought into work with even the youngest of children as they learn to become aware of their bodies as they move.

Stillness, or the “moving into stillness in order to experience the truth of who you are” (Schiffmann, 1996, p. 4) is an alternative way of expressing the focus of a *yoga asana* practice. By allowing our awareness to focus in our body in a non-judgemental and accepting way, it is possible to release the negative perceptions that are held by the mind and the body. A practitioner who endorses a very strong, powerful and dynamic practice describes an experience of “a healing sense of relief followed by a profoundly soothing inner peace, an even ‘at-easeness’ – a stillness” (Schiffmann, 1996, p. 6).

Yoga, as a mind-body exercise, was identified by Prichard (2008) as a physical activity that increases the direct experience of the body, and one that could be particularly effective in reducing self-objectification. The focus on the internal sensations and experiences rather than a competitive, performance based on external foci, allow it to be a process whereby

practitioners can increase their bodily awareness and responsiveness to sensations. The increased practice of, and value given to, listening to the body for guidance, may also diminish the importance that is given to physical appearance in an individual's physical self-concept and sense of self. Both children and adults have been shown to increase their senses of body acceptance after a short course in yoga and body awareness exercises (Daubenmier, 2005). Yoga was shown to be more associated with positive body experiences, less self-objectification, a greater satisfaction with physical appearance, and less disordered eating than no, or only aerobic physical exercise (Prichard, 2008).

Yoga as a philosophy and form has been known of for over 3000 years. The forms that are accessible and known today in the West are varied, however, they do share an underlying philosophy, whether this is made explicit or not. Many aspects of yoga, for example, the focus on the inner experience and awareness of the body in space, are also found in somatic movement practices. Like somatic movement practices, yoga can be used therapeutically, educationally, and for self-development.

2.4 WESTERN SOMATIC MOVEMENT PRACTICES

In the West, somatic movement therapy, practices, and bodywork approaches were being written about and practiced in the first few decades of the last century. The term 'bodywork' implies an element of touch that may include, but is not limited to, massage or physical therapy: "a variety of manipulative therapies" (Juhan, 1987, p. xix). By affecting the nervous system through tactile stimulation and movement it is possible to influence the organisation of the mind and body, and the relationship we have with the environment around us: "movement is the unifying bond between the mind and body, and sensations are the substance of that bond" (Juhan, 1987, p. xxv). Moving the body through different positions, and using it

differently, can affect our emotional attitude (Cacioppo et al, 1993). There are many different types of bodywork. The bodywork practitioner would not necessarily work as an interventionist, but rather a facilitator to aid a growing sense of self-awareness, a sense of the present embodied moment, and from that point a choice of alternatives.

2.4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF TOUCH

Most bodywork practices involve ‘hands-on’ work or touch. The use of touch, and the significance of human touch on the skin has long been recognised as important both to our psyche and within language (Montagu, 1971): “Touch is ‘chief’ amongst the language of our senses” (Westland, 2011, p. 21), and is “intrinsic to communication” (ibid p. 25). If a moment is significant, we call it ‘touching’, if a person is irritable, we call them ‘touchy’. ‘Feelings’ refer to emotions, and someone who is ‘unfeeling’ could be referred to as ‘callous’, which originates from the Latin *callum* meaning hard skin. Being thin or thick-skinned, again implies a judgement on emotional capacity, and to be ‘tactful’ is to have a sense of what is right when dealing with other people. In somatic movement education (SME) and therapy, there is often an importance placed on the expression, in language, of experience (Fogel, 2009).

In the classic experiment by Harlow (1958), he showed that contact from a tactile mother substitute was vitally important in neo-natal monkeys, more so than whether they were nursed or not. If, as children, we grow up without positive touch, then through somatic movement practices, including bodywork, it is possible to address the psychological and physiological issues that may result. The therapeutic potential of touch has been shown in animals, where an immunity to stress hormones was developed in animals that had been gentled after weaning (Montagu, 1971). Touch is therefore a “fundamental and essential ingredient of

affection, and equally clearly, an essential element in the healthy development of every organism” (Montagu, 1971, p. 25). For humans, this process would begin within the womb, and then continue at birth. In an effort to change the practice of Western births, and to make them less violent, Leboyer (1974), an obstetrician in France, wrote about ‘Birth without Violence’. He believed that “to be born means to begin to breathe...To live freely is to breathe freely...Supple and live and flexible...Your way of breathing was established– once and for all- at the moment you were born” (Leboyer, 1974, pp. 99 - 100). Although not all practitioners would agree that the patterns of breathing (and living) are irreversibly set at birth (Hartley, 1989), the importance of a positive introduction to touch and human contact at birth cannot be denied. Leboyer stated the importance of receiving touch in a baby’s early days (1976). He also espoused the practice of yoga as an approach to life, but one that “is not a necessity: it is one among many possible ways” (Leboyer, 1979, p. 6).

In Western society, there can be confusion about the purpose of touch. Weber (1990) put forward the following three different perspectives or approaches to touch. Westland (2011) expanded these and describes the first, physical-sensory view as “reductive, mechanistic, and medical...[where]...the source of the touch is irrelevant” (ibid p. 18). In contrast, the second psychological-humanistic perspective is more concerned with purposive and self-conscious touch (ibid). The third, ‘I-Thou’ way of relating involves “one’s whole being touching another’s whole being” (ibid), and is the description of touch that fits most closely with Eastern approaches, and those developed in somatic therapy, as the touch is said to be intentional and “the intention of the giver makes a difference to the touch” (ibid). In order to address the Western approach to touch, and its effects, from the 1930s individuals began to work with their own bodies, and those of other people, to develop the field that can

collectively be referred to as somatic movement (Olsen, 1998). Some turned to Eastern influences such as yoga (Bernard, 1939), whilst others worked from a physiological perspective to explore how the “whole body carries its meaning” (Todd, 1937). Although the field now appears fragmented, the history of many pioneers can be connected through “an identifiable web of connections” (Johnson, 1995, p. xii). These divisions sometimes occur with the split between theory and practice, or practitioners who work in the field and unaware of their heritage. Misunderstandings also occur when one element of a holistic practice (for example tai chi chuan, acupuncture or yoga) is lifted out and practised independently. Often practitioners “think of themselves as isolated from one another, and more unique or special than they are. They often compete by exaggerating their claims, and devaluing the work of others engaged in the same basic task of regaining a measure of fleshy sanity” (Johnson, 1995, p. xiv). The value of all somatic approaches is that they challenge “the dominant models of exercise, manipulation, and self-awareness that alienate people from their bodies” (ibid).

2. 5 INTEGRATIVE BODYWORK AND MOVEMENT THERAPY (IBMT) AND BODY-MIND-CENTERING® (BMC®)

Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy were developed by Hartley, using the principles of Body-Mind-Centering® (BMC®) as developed by Bainbridge-Cohen in the United States in the 1970s. Bainbridge-Cohen was an occupational therapist and trained dancer. She worked with children with cerebral palsy as well as teaching dance and working with dancers on alignment problems. She trained as a physical therapist with Bobath, who developed a revolutionary approach to working with cerebral palsy, and worked within hospitals seeing both physical and psychological suffering. Bainbridge-Cohen wished to work within the mainstream population, to “bring physical principles into the culture, where

they are accessible to the average person” (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993, p. 8). She began to use ideas of effortlessness, and the lengthening rather than the stretching of muscles, taking inspiration from modern dancer Erik Hawkins, who used Japanese aesthetics, Greek civilisation and Zen Buddhism in his work. Rather than conform to the policy of bracing children and mechanically altering their muscles through surgery, Bainbridge-Cohen wished to reorganise the brain through a combination of movement and touch. She began to work privately, using the developmental work with dancers and adults interested in movement. She included experiential anatomy– the lived and experienced exploration of the body.

Bainbridge-Cohen continued to develop an approach to somatic movement that, “involves a study of the relationship between body and mind in movement, through a detailed and subtle exploration of human anatomy, physiology, infant development, movement and perception” (Hartley, 2004, p. 4). The classes and groups that she led began with explorations of the musculo-skeletal structure, then grew to include the organs and the nature of the other tissues within the body; including the nervous system and the endocrine glands, the bodily fluids (blood, lymph, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, tissue and cellular fluids), and also the perceptual movement process including the mouth, hands, eyes, nose and skin. She began to notice that the quality of movement of each were very different, depending on what the person was putting in his mind, and where he initiated movement from. Her students and trainee teachers began to “perceive the different mind-states and feelings which emerged depending on the place of initiation...as we change from one body area to another, the mind of the room changes” (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993, p. 10). Although this type of exploratory movement and bodywork was considered different and new by some, Bainbridge-Cohen herself said:

“for yoga to have developed, somebody somewhere must have had the awareness that one could initiate from all of the various organs. And in the martial arts, people speak of points or centers, and I think it must be internal, organic energy they’re talking about. I don’t feel what we’re doing is new; what I feel we’re offering is some kind of translation into the Western vocabulary.” (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993, p. 11)

As one of Bainbridge-Cohen’s original students and teachers, Hartley developed her own framework of therapy and training, integrating elements of her trainings in dance movement therapy and transpersonal psychotherapy of psychosynthesis and process-orientated psychology. Hartley’s identification of the ways in which “somatic work does touch upon deep emotional and psychological processes” (2004, p. 28) and use of Authentic Movement developed her graduates’ ‘Therapeutic Presence’, where “the therapist’s perceptions can be offered to a client, but owned for what they are— her own interpretations, judgements and projections” (Hartley, 2004, p. 30). In IBMT there is great importance placed on the practitioner or therapist’s role in reflecting back to the client her own experience of the body, and the intention of the practitioner’s touch.

This idea of the practitioner’s thought and will shaping the process has similarities to Husserl’s approach to phenomenology where “through intentionality we will our entire world into being and give it shape” (Zuesse, 1985, p. 53). Indeed, Thorburn states that “the essence of an experience is its intentionality: the meaning of events, the meaning of embodied action including kinaesthetic awareness of one’s movements and the importance of sensations as they are experienced by the body” (2008, p. 265). This resonance between somatic movement and phenomenology has implications for methodological choices within the study. Merleau-

Ponty articulated a concept of lived space, where, rather than being bound by reason/emotion mind/body dichotomies, the subject's experience is referenced through movement and language (Thorburn, 2008). The psychological process of the client is emphasised in IBMT, alongside experiential exploration of anatomy and movement patterns. Within IBMT, there is a need for the client to be held in an unconditional and positive regard. In addition, the practitioner needs to be aware of the psychological and emotional processes that may be touched through somatic bodywork, whether they are addressed specifically or not. This approach is termed Person, or Client-Centred (Rogers, 1967).

The line between therapist and educator in this area of somatic work is thin. There is debate among somatic movement practitioners about what constitutes therapy or education— in part driven by legislation in Europe and the U.S. regarding the qualifications, insurances and status of practitioners. The somatic discourse is on-going in the UK in 2011 as the government prepares to regulate psychotherapists and counsellors within the Health Professions Council (www.hpc-uk.org, 2009). Due to the wide variety of somatic practices, the fact that often they are associated with 'New Age' or 'Alternative' health practices, with a lack of evidence to show effect, they are not widely accepted as bona fide therapies. Used educationally, they are not necessarily subject to the same regulation. The UK Association for Humanistic Psychology Practitioners has a category of Bodywork Therapist, which is defined as "someone trained in one or more of the schools of body therapy, such as bioenergetics, polarity therapy, postural integration, rebirthing etc, which tend to take the client into deep emotional or unconscious material quite quickly" (www.ahpp.org, 2009). This definition would include many somatic movement practices, if their training met the requirements for hours and content. However, the definitions of therapy and education in somatic movement

education (SME) do not bear resemblance to ‘therapeutic education’ as described by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009), which has more to do with their perception of a change in the purpose of education rather than an exploration of the therapeutic and educational aspects of a particular body of work.

In a rationale and explanation of IBMT as both a therapeutic and educational tool, Hartley relates the development of her current work to that of Reich and Jung, who both emphasised the need to treat a whole person. Reich saw character as a whole body attitude, with muscular body armouring, and focused his work on healing the body/mind split. He was also the first to articulate the concept of somatic resonance. Research has begun to show empirically what the somatic practitioner, the meditator and the intuitive mover reported through experience; that the mind, emotions and bodily processes are not separate, and that each influences the other through subtle and complicated interactions. For example, neuro-peptides research revealed that the body stores and receives these chemicals in many more locations than just the brain as was originally thought (Pert, 1999), but was postulated by Bainbridge-Cohen in her initial explorations of the body (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). Pert has the view that, “mind doesn’t dominate body, it becomes body– body and mind are one” (1999). The idea that the Western view of a body/mind split is not based in physiological fact, may have begun to have had an influence on the philosophical views. IBMT works to consciously align the body and mind, identifying, articulating and differentiating and then integrating the smallest internal cellular movements to the external expression of movement and mind, so promoting more efficient functioning (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). This efficiency, together with an awareness of the relationships inside our embodied self, and the acting from that awareness creates a state of knowing, of inner wisdom (Hartley, 1989).

2.6 AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT

Authentic Movement is a ritualised form of movement or dance therapy created by Whitehouse (1911–1979). It focuses on the relationship between a mover and a witness, and gives equal weight to both the moving process and the verbal sharing of the mover's and witness' experiences of the movement (Hartley, 2005). Because of the ritual of the form, it is challenging to describe it without the words becoming jargonistic, as is the case with yoga and its Sanskrit vocabulary. At its simplest, Authentic Movement involves moving from felt internal impulses, and nurturing the feelings and emotions that are released. According to Dance Movement Therapists, Authentic Movement offers a powerful form within which the depths of the inner psyche can speak directly through the body: "making use of spontaneous body movement that arose from inner kinaesthetic sensations, individuals recognised the symbiotic nature of their communications which then opened the door to self-awareness and possible change" (Chaiklin, 2009, p. 7). It is claimed that the discipline of bringing the bodily experience into language works to heal the split that language can cause in the experience of the self (ibid.). It offers a holding space, a feminine container, and a "practice of embodied awareness that goes beyond therapy" (Hartley, 2004, p. 56). The differentiation of movement originating from the unconscious rather than the conscious was part of Whitehouse's practice of embodying Jung's process of active imagination. She separated movements that were intentional, unintentional, and those that came from within the self, i.e. the sense of 'I am moving', 'I am being moved', and an embodiment of both experiences. She believed that by working with the unconscious self, we are able to access the emotional core of our complexes. Further to this, it is possible to move between personal, transpersonal and collective impulses.

Further evolutions of the discipline of Authentic Movement were developed by Adler among others. Whereas Whitehouse focused on the direct experience of the mover (Whitehouse,

1995), and the process of active imagination in movement, Adler addressed the direct experience of both mover and witness (Hartley, 2004). Authentic Movement can be practised in its ground form, with one mover and a witness. It is the role of the witness to create the witness circle, a safe, held space in which the mover moves with eyes closed, following internal impulses. The shutting of the eyes enables the mover to give her full attention to what she senses internally and imagines. The form and expression of the inner story is allowed to unfold, until, usually after a mutually agreed time, the witness signals the end of the movement session by the ringing of a bell or other signal. Both the mover and the witness attend to their own experiences whilst the mover moves, however it is the role of the witness to contain the experience by marking the time boundary. The experiences are anchored into the consciousness by recalling it to the witness, or recording it through artwork or writing. The witness then offers her personal responses to the mover, helping to bring unconscious material into consciousness, and to help integrate the unconscious with the conscious. According to the Jungian process of active imagination, the final stage of integration occurs without great effort and resistance, and from there it is possible to make changes in everyday life (Adler, 2002).

When beginning Authentic Movement practice, the mover learns to become aware of her bodily, kinaesthetic sense, to track her movements over time, and to be aware of the feelings, sensations and images that evokes. This process is part of developing an inner witness. It is more common to “observe with a critical, comparing or judgemental mind” (Weiss, 2009, p. 7) than to just observe. The inner witness can be compared to *sakshin*, the non-judging friendly witness without expectation, that can be developed through yoga (Rosen, 2002), or the Buddhist idea of an internal observer who, “if correctly trained, will be able to look at

ourselves without judgement, with equanimity, benevolence, acceptance, curiosity, passivity and calm” (Weiss, 2009, p. 7). The soul is also translated as the seer, or witness, in Sanskrit (Iyengar, 1993). The role of the external witness is to provide the containment within which the mover can move. Usually she would sit at the edge of the space, and have a non-judgemental, non-intrusive and compassionate presence towards the mover, and herself. The witness embodies the process of her own encounters with the unconsciousness, and so facilitates a depth in the movement work and process of the mover. It is the role of the witness to support the mover. To own her own experiences, to provide a structure that is contained, so that the mover can learn to contain herself as she develops her own inner witness. The witness acts in service to the mover, not judging, analysing or interpreting the mover’s experience. Any words offered that contain images, fantasies, thoughts, feelings or sensations to the mover, are owned as such. After moving, the mover speaks first, and the witness responds by sharing some of her own experience, choosing what is appropriate. The process can enable the mover to feel clearly seen and accepted. Witnessing is likened by Hartley to meditation (Hartley, 2004), and can have applications beyond the form of the moving circle, in both professional and personal relationships. It is the process of sharing through words that allows the expression into language of the experiences of the body, both as mover and witness.

As the mover develops her inner witness, a skill that “becomes stronger only when we practice it” (Weiss, 2009, p. 7), and learns to witness others, as a moving, silent or external witness, she can begin to explore other forms of the discipline. Similarly, in a mindful approach to psychotherapy, a therapist might introduce the idea of an internal observer, or inner witness, and guide her client towards developing this (Weiss, 2009). In Authentic

Movement forms, the long circle is one whereby movers are able to move at the same time as others. An agreed number of witnesses hold the space throughout, and movers are able to move into and out of the moving space and witness circle throughout the time. Movers may encounter each other, contacting another, and then choose to move with or from them. In a long circle there may be one person who leads the session, who does not move, and contains the time. Alternatively, there may be a peer responsibility, wherein the time keeping is shared. In a long circle, after moving, and maybe transitioning through drawing or writing, movers may choose to share their experience within the circle, and receive witnessing from the others if it is offered. The witnessing may take more time than the moving, as a small pool of movement may be the ground for a rich and wide variety of experiences for both movers and witnesses. Another form of the discipline is to work within dyads, where one mover and one witness work together. Dyads may work within a larger circle of movers or not. Different themes, emphases or foci may be used within Authentic Movement. A group may agree rules around the use of sound, to move in silence, or to be free to vocalise, stamp or scream. Various rituals form part of the discipline—movers and witness speak of their experiences in the present tense ‘I am moving...I see a mover...’ As well as a bell to signal the end of the moving time, witness and mover make eye contact before the mover closes their eyes to begin, and as they end their movement pool. Within the long circle form, this means that as a mover returns to her place, her eyes are met by those who were holding the witness circle.

Authentic Movement is a discipline, and not psychotherapy, although it can affect therapeutic changes. It may be used within a therapeutic practice, but it is recommended that it is only done so by practitioners with a therapeutic training. Some practice Authentic Movement as a

tool towards mindful living, as a contemplative tool to aid spiritual growth, or as a creative resource. The form was taught to me as part of the IBMT training in order to learn the skills of therapeutic presence, an embracing attitude in which speech is clear, and an accepting, non-judgemental acceptance of others.

2.7 SUMMARY

Yoga has been described as a form of physiological and psychic hygiene that was snapped up in the West due to the disenchantment with religion (Phillips, 2001). My first movement training was in yoga, and throughout my time training and practising as a somatic movement therapist I have seen a similarity and resonance between that, IBMT and Authentic Movement. Many Western somatic approaches were connected to, or influenced by the practice of yoga or martial arts. Cultural differences have led to the diverse systems of thought in the East and the West, and the holistic and analytical approaches to movement and the body can be explained in part by these (Bailey, 2001).

This chapter has given an overview of the variety of research that has been conducted on yoga, embodiment and mindfulness, and an outline of the history and principles of yoga and the Western somatic movement practices (IBMT and Authentic Movement) that have been used within this study. Yoga, IBMT and Authentic Movement can all be considered somatic movement practices, and although all may be used either therapeutically or educationally, in this study I was concerned with somatic movement education (SME) and not therapy. However, even used educationally, SME may have therapeutic benefits (Fogel, 2009). The language used in and around yoga and SME could be seen to be a barrier to participation, and as such, in this study, the philosophical and historic aspects of these approaches were not part of the content. I did not want to alienate the participants, nor confuse them with words

that they could perceive to be jargonistic. The vocabulary used to describe yoga poses for example, was the Western translations of Sanskrit words for example 'Warrior pose' rather than *Vibrabhadrasana*.

The purpose of including the background and philosophy of these approaches is that they give insight into my personal knowledge of the subject matter. According to Phillips, such personal knowledge should be "explicitly utilize[d]" (Phillips, 1971, p. 159), as total involvement allows a greater understanding of a given situation or experience. By taking an involved position, I also need to be explicit, "self-conscious and open" (ibid, p. 173) about how my personal knowledge and involvement affects my assumptions and research activities.

The following chapter discusses the methodology of the study, my methodological approach, and the material content of the sessions.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Methodological approaches can be classified according to the data they collect (quantitative or qualitative), the means by which the data is collected (for example actively or passively, directly or indirectly), and the analyses that are applied to them (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). The validity of a piece of research does not rest with the methodological approach, but the validity and appropriateness of the methods used to measure a particular outcome (Phillips, 1971).

This chapter sets out my research questions, methods and data analysis, as well as describing the setting in which the data were gathered, the organisation of the phases of the study and an overview of the material covered in the sessions with the children.

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

The methodology has been designed to answer my research questions as set out in Table 1.

1. Do children experience themselves as embodied beings?
2. If so, how do they express, create and perceive their embodied self?
3. Does an experience of somatic movement within a school day affect ability to reflect and process in an embodied way?

Research Question	Research Method	Sourced Data	Notes
1	Phenomenological approach to find out children's own perceptions.	Images of and by the children, artwork, models, field and session notes. Observations and reflexive journal used to triangulate data.	A mosaic approach was adapted to capture the voices of the children and record their experiences.
2	Analysing the data from the children with respect to the age groups of the children, their gender and other factors	Images of and by the children, artwork, models, field and session notes. Observations and reflexive journal used to triangulate data.	The ages of the children ranged from four to eleven years. The children were taught in mixed groups, however gender may be a factor in children's perceptions of embodiment. I separated the data gathered and analysed them in discrete groupings by chronological age or year groups, and gender. The sessions were delivered within an educational setting as part of the school day. These and other factors may have effected children's perceptions of themselves as embodied beings.

Research Question	Research Method	Sourced Data	Notes
3	Interviewing children, the making of displays of the work, analysing the data from the children with respect to the age groups of the children, their gender and other factors	Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews with participants, display posters, images of and by the children, artwork, models, field and session notes. Observations and reflexive journal used to triangulate data.	The reflective process was encouraged throughout the sessions through drawing, talking about experiences, journaling and sharing. The children were given the opportunity to talk through their experiences and reflect on their work and the process as a whole in interviews. Groups were also given the opportunity to reflect and share their work through displays that were presented to the school and open to be seen by staff and family.

Table 1 Table to show research questions, methods and data sources

The data were collected throughout the duration of the project. There was a close connection between the data collection and the data analysis. Data were from a mixture of journal entries, field notes, session notes, drawings, models and images from the children and interview transcripts. This multi-modal analysis is “especially suited to the investigation of affective phenomena” (Cromby, 2011, p. 90), as feelings and experiences are not always available in words.

The data collection and analysis interacted at each stage of the project (see Figure 1). In addition to my analysis, the older children, and those selected as case studies, were given the opportunity to review all the work they had completed over the sessions, to comment, elaborate, change and explore their thoughts.

I felt that it was important to find a methodological approach that fitted as much as possible with the focus of the study. Phenomenological and participatory methods seemed to resonate most with somatic movement, developmental play, yoga and a Person-Centred approach towards education and therapeutic work. Although the fit was not exact, and tensions were evident between my roles as practitioner and researcher at times, these all became part of the reflexive process that was detailed within my reflective journal and was discussed during supervision.

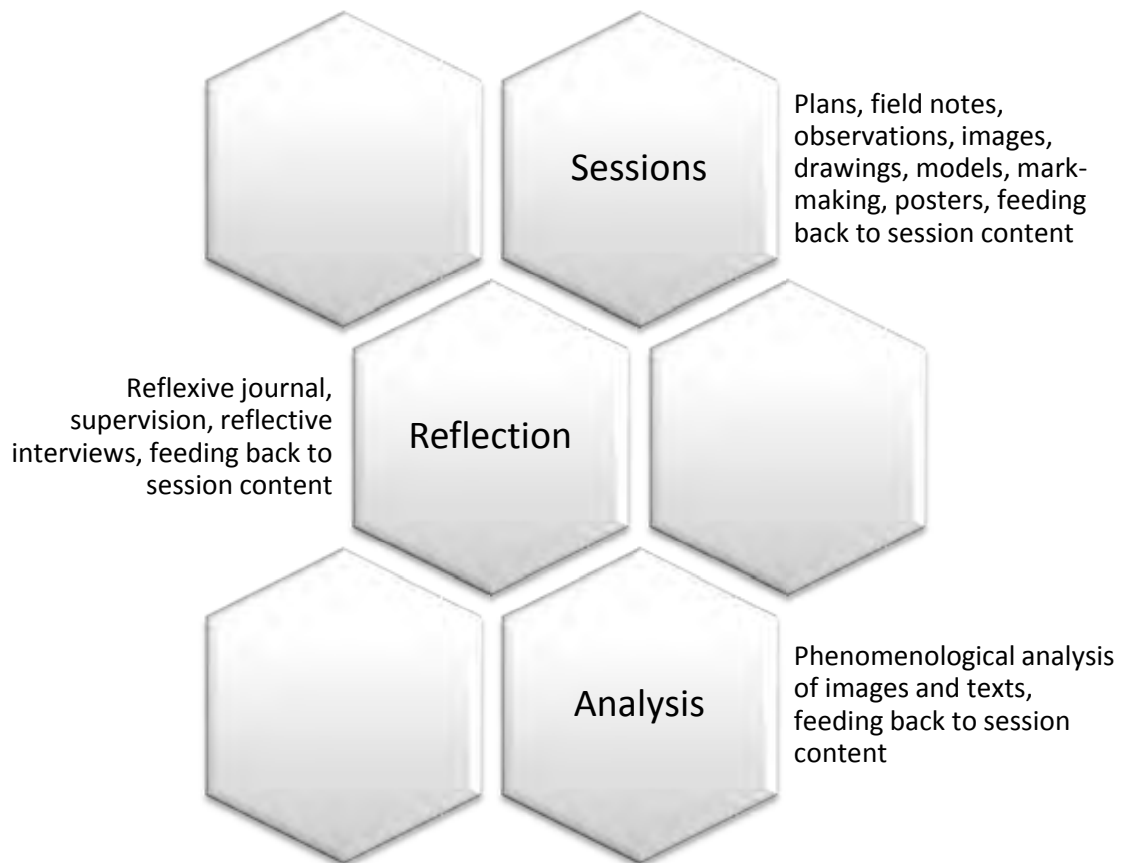


FIGURE 1 INTERCONNECTED PROCESS OF SESSIONS, REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.2 PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACHES

For my research I have chosen to take a phenomenological approach, and use qualitative and participatory research methods in order to explore how the participants make sense of their personal experiences of their world (Smith, 2008). The data were collected and analysed from a phenomenological perspective (Leder, 1990; Merleau-Ponty, 2002). Phenomenology is that form of enquiry concerned with the nature of human experience, and is a rigorous qualitative approach used to study everyday human activities and experiences (Pollio et al, 1997). Due to its rejection of mind-body dualism and the importance of the ‘lived body’, “phenomenology has particular relevance to the study of movement” (Bain, 1995, p. 241) as

experience, and the description of experience are its “fundamental concern” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 111). In fact, yoga has been interpreted as a philosophy and phenomenology of the ‘inner’ body (Sarukkai, 2002). A phenomenological approach uses the reflection of experience to give meaning, and a systematic reflection extends the shared understanding of meaningful experience. In this, and the data collection, the study bears some resemblance to a sensory ethnographic study, which is described by Pink (2009) as “a reflexive and experiential process through which understanding, knowing and (academic) knowledge are produced” (ibid, p. 8).

An important element of phenomenological data collection is to create an environment in which the research participant feels comfortable enough to respond honestly and comprehensively (Moustakas, 1994). Although the long interview is a typical method (ibid.), my research is more experiential and with young children, and I did not think that it would be the most appropriate method. Asking what it is to express, create and reflect with and on our bodies could be taken as an existential question if out of context. However, through movement work it is possible to show to a witness (as in Authentic Movement) or to write about a moment of experience. In fact, Bain (1995) cites phenomenology as the field out of which somatics arose, although somatic practices such as yoga were in evidence long before Hanna coined the term to describe the field (Hanna, 1988).

Movement exploration and education, such as yoga, is concerned with the experience of the self (Iyengar, 1966), as is phenomenology. In a description of Husserl’s approach, Zuesse writes that his analysis “has a fascinating resemblance to the psychology of Hindu and Buddhist yoga” (1985, p. 56), and states that according to Merleau-Ponty “the body and its

movements...are the foundations for all reflective thought” (ibid p. 64). The phenomenologist and philosopher Heidegger’s work is also thought to have been influenced by East Asian texts and ideas (May, 1989). A key aspect to yoga is that it is the inner experience of moving that is the focus, rather than the external performance. It seems to be more congruent to use this approach rather than to measure external factors that may be associated with stretching or cardio-vascular exercise. If, for example, individuals perceive that their ability to stretch has changed, then they can express this verbally, or through journaling or mark-making, and it will be part of the data collection process. Similarly, information concerning the participants’ perceptions of their well-being, capacity to learn, body awareness and kinaesthetic awareness could be measured (Anderson, 2006). However, the material in each session was delivered to the children with their needs as students as the focus, and not with the intention to ‘gain’ results or reach a specific outcome. The focus was phenomenological, that is, on their own experience of movement. However, phenomenological understanding of self-movement remains ‘incomplete’ (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 113). Whilst particularly true for the “actual experience of one’s own movement” (ibid) this may be because the phenomenon of self-movement is under-examined.

The intention to gain “more fully the essences and meanings of human experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 105), in this case the nature of embodiment, is one of the characteristics of a human science research question. The other characteristics mentioned include; a desire to uncover qualitative elements of behaviour and experience, no seeking to predict or determine causal factors, an illumination through description and a process that engages the total self of the research participant sustaining passionate and personal involvement.

Emotions and our experience of emotions, are areas that are well suited to phenomenological explorations, as “to be in an emotion state *is to be in a particular phenomenological state*, because emotion states are personal-level attitudes that themselves are essentially something it is like to be in or to have” (Lambie & Marcel, 2002, p. 220). An emotion such as anger which can be perceived negatively, and the expressing of it, is a natural part of the therapeutic element of the work. Not all feelings and movements are ‘nice’, although this might be expected or even preferred within an educational or therapeutic context (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). Whilst discussing the idea of teaching self-control through somatics and dance education, Stinson (2004) reflected on the edge of empowering children to make choices and manipulating them subtly to choose only within carefully presented options. In this scenario, while children are free to express their emotions, there can be a denial of any but the happiest emotions. An important element of the Person-Centred approach is that all feelings are allowed, and there is no expectation of what should be felt (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990). In fact, in a group session exploring emotions “many negative emotions were asked for by the children– although we ended with a happy” (Field notes).

Educational interventions are often evaluated through an analysis of the outcomes of an experimental or intervention study, as in medical research (Hutchinson, 1991). This study is not a ‘measures’ based thesis, but a phenomenological exploration. Phenomenology can be seen to be interventionist, if an intervention is understood as implying an “intentional action to bring about an immediate and effective form of beneficial change” (Edwards, 2001, p. 3). Phenomenology may be seen “as psychotherapeutic in its potential to bring about a whole new lived world” (ibid), and of course, any research event “essentially constitutes a form of intervention” (ibid). This study, however, has more in common with a case study approach,

which has been shown to be more suitable for in-depth, holistic research (Feagin et al, 1991). Case study methodology is used to assess complicated phenomena within their contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

My study was not at any point intended to be an intervention study; I was not attempting to solve a problem, but to explore the human experience of embodiment and its expression. An intervention study may well have indicated a mixed methods approach (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). In this case I would have defined measurable desired outcomes and tested them pre- and post-intervention. However, my view of somatic education, and yoga, is that it is not the external appearance of progress that could be measured in terms of muscle strength, flexibility or endurance that is important, but the experience of oneself as a living, moving being.

In a phenomenological study, it is also important that a researcher is reflexive (Pollio et al, 1997). My reflexive practice includes my awareness of my body. This bodily awareness has been cultivated through my bodywork training and Authentic Movement practice (Adler, 2002). I am conscious of my breathing rate, my heart rate, my feelings, emotions and images associated with the moment. I am also aware of the stream of consciousness, and how my gaze and focus are directed around the room. I am open to the physical signs I see from those around me, whilst not projecting my own interpretations onto them. This level of awareness from my embodied self allows me to access and recall detailed information that would be recorded in field notes. When I am in therapeutic practice or researching, I then reflect again on my experiences as part of my reflexive practice, write a reflective journal, and take any questions that I have into professional supervision.

Movement is described by the philosopher Sheets-Johnstone as “the change itself, the dynamic happening, and needs to be phenomenologically analysed and properly understood as such” (2010, p. 121). Similarly, Scaravelli and Stewart, two yoga and movement teachers, are attributed with saying “it is not so much the performance of the exercises that matters, but rather the way of doing them” (Phillips, 2001, p. 45). This approach, which is a soft and fluid one to practice, ties in well with my approach to somatic education. A similar view was taken by Gindler, who described the purpose of her work, *Gymnastik*, as “not the learning of movements, but rather the achievement of concentration” (1995, p. 5). I did not feel that it was appropriate to collect quantitative data, but instead wanted to elicit comprehensive and honest responses on the experience of embodiment (whether in movement, written or spoken form), and this led me towards a participatory research approach.

3.3 PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH WITHIN THIS STUDY

A version of Clark and Moss’ (2001; 2005) Mosaic Approach was employed to gather a body of mostly phenomenological data in the form of:

- observations from the sessions;
- my reflective journal;
- artwork from the children;
- photographs of and by the children;
- posters designed by the children;
- children’s reflective writing; and
- follow-up interviews.

The Mosaic Approach is the name given to a type of participatory work where a mosaic of evidence is gathered to support or falsify a hypothesis, or to record and analyse the voices of the participants. Young children are seen as “experts in their own lives” (Clark & Moss, 2005, p. 5). This approach is not only a way of listening that acknowledges children and adults as co-constructors of meaning. It combines a multi-method approach, it is participatory, reflexive, adaptable, and focused on children’s lived experiences (Clark & Moss, 2001). The Mosaic Approach is an “integrated approach which combines the visual with the verbal” (Clark & Moss, 2001, p. 1). When working with young children it is not always possible or desirable to use text based research methods (Thomson, 2008). A variety of methodological approaches that employ the use of cameras, maps, interviews, models, mark-making and discussion among others can be used. This means that a proportion of the data gathered is visual in nature, and can be analysed with reference to visual research methodologies (Rose, 2007). In practice this involved a range of research methods and a combination of approaches, and is similar to that taken in some ethnographic studies that include “participant observation, interviewing and other participatory approaches” (Pink, 2009, p. 10).

The data were all exploring the children’s understanding and expression of the material. The use of different tasks and activities “allowed the young people time to think about what they would like to express” (Punch, 2002, p. 54). For example a particular concept of an organ or physiological system may involve the children being asked to find a pose with their bodies that can be photographed, to take photographs that represent what it means to them, to draw pictures, to model with ‘play-doh’, and to find words that express their understanding in

addition to moving their bodies in the sessions. This type of work has ethical issues that are discussed in section 3.6.



FIGURE 2 SOURCES OF DATA

The data have been analysed to form a picture or mosaic of evidence (Greig & Taylor, 1999) of children's perceptions of embodiment. The research involves not only the young children from age 4-11, but also their teaching and support staff and myself as the practitioner/researcher. The intention of researching in this way is to capture the voices of the

children through a variety of practical methods that play to their strengths as co-researchers, as language is only one medium or route to understanding a child's experience (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). My reflexive process and experiences form part of the study, as "the researcher learns and knows through her or his whole experiencing body" (Pink, 2009, p. 25), which is perhaps particularly pertinent given the subject matter.

In addition, I undertook two case studies. These illustrate in a phenomenologically descriptive way a single phenomena within a general context (Kyburz-Graber, 2004). In this case, working with two individual children within the context of a class.

Many of the data in my study were visual as well as verbal in nature. The children were given opportunity to take images and record their own pictures, models and poses. The teachers and teaching assistants were invited to record images from the sessions. The data collection was designed to allow space for the 'expressional style' of the children as much as possible, in order to yield "more complete and more naturalistic expressions of children's experiences (Irwin & Johnson, 2006, p. 826). These images, the models and the writings of the children as well as observations and reflexive journal form the basis of my data collection. Within a discussion of photographs within the social sciences, Prosser (1998) talks about the issues of ownership and empowerment with relation to the subjects of the study and the researcher. By giving the participants cameras in order to take their own photographs they can also take ownership of the images that are produced, and give assent to which best represent what they were trying to say. The issue of the researcher as an 'outsider' is also less evident in co-constructed research. Here, the participants and the researcher can take on the roles of 'photographer', 'artist', 'documenter' and 'researcher' as appropriate. The analysis of the

visual matter may also differ depending on the research approach. For example it may not be appropriate to use an analytic approach like compositional analysis when the research question is concerned with meaning-making of the photographer.

Children's drawings have a value in research, as well as in process therapy and therapeutic interventions (Driessnack, 2005). By giving them a chance to draw, or to take pictures, they are able to pay attention to sensory and internal cues: "when children are interviewed, the brevity of their verbal responses may actually relate more to their ability to retrieve information than to their knowledge or understanding" (Driessnack, 2005, p. 420). Drawing can help children relax, be fun and establish rapport (Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin, & Robinson, 2010), as well as provide a means through which they can reflect on their experiences. Listening to children talk about their drawings can also provide insight into their understanding (Clark, 2005).

It is important with visual data (as any data) that an appropriate methodology is chosen to analyse as well as collect the data (Rose, 2007). With images of people, particularly of children, and taken by children it is also necessary to consider the ethical implications of the research (see section 3.6).

Follow-up interviews were conducted at two stages of the study. The end of the academic year coincided with the end of phase 2. The six children who were in Year 6 and due to leave the school were interviewed. Their work from all the sessions was collated into individual folders, and they were given opportunity to reflect on this, and their experiences. At the end of phase 3, several children from throughout the school were interviewed. These children

were chosen because they had responded well to the material, or because they had expressed themselves within the sessions as understanding it or ‘not getting it’. Although all children participated in the sessions, I did not select children who had not produced much work they could reflect on. The children looked through folders of their work and reflected on it and on their experiences. The interviews were semi-structured, and phenomenological in that the children were asked to expand on their answers, to explain why they gave the answers they did. The questions asked included:

- “What do you remember most? Why?”
- “Do you remember I used to ask you to think about and talk about and write about and draw about what it felt to do all the stuff you did? What was that like?”
- “Is there anything you wish we’d done more of?”

After the selected children had been interviewed, each class was asked whether anyone else wanted to speak to me about the work and the sessions. The interviews lasted between 10 and 40 minutes. The interviews were individual, and digitally recorded so they could be transcribed. In total 24 children were interviewed.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analysed using phenomenological data analysis (Pollio et al, 1997). A phenomenological approach to data analysis is congruent with the somatic movement education approach that the self is an “ongoing project to be unfurled” (Smith et al, 2009, p. 19). Phenomenology connects with everyday experiences when we listen, pay attention to and reflect on our perceptions (ibid). This study was concerned with my experiences as researcher and practitioner in addition to those of the participants. The data involved a

“considerable amount of reflecting, thinking and feeling” (ibid, p. 3), and as such Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) could have been utilised to examine them. IPA has roots in phenomenology and hermeneutics and is “concerned with the detailed examination of personal lived experience, the meaning of experience to participants and how participants make sense of their experience” (Smith, 2011, p. 9). Smith (2011) describes IPA as a double hermeneutic, as the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their experiences. IPA is a methodology that urges researchers “to listen and understand...collaboratively with researcher and participant. It urges us to trust” (Todorova, 2011, p. 37). IPA, like other qualitative research, values individual subjectives and voices that may otherwise be ignored or silenced (ibid.). IPA would have been an appropriate method of analysis had I been concerned with the question ‘how do the participants make sense of being embodied?’ Similarly, had I been investigating the factors that influenced a child’s sense of embodiment a grounded theory approach would have been indicated; a focus on how children talk about embodiment would suggest a discursive analysis and a study of how embodiment is constructed may have implied a Foucauldian discourse analysis of texts. My focus was on the experience of embodiment and utilised narrative, images, mark-makings, drawings and field notes in addition to interview transcriptions.

The data were collected with sensitivity to the context of the participants. I formed positive relationships with the children as participants. This sensitivity continued into the data analysis, as I immersed myself in the data, committing myself to understanding and interpreting the participants’ experiences. The interpretative process is transparent in the narrative write-up of findings that follows. A narrative approach to data analysis also had the “power to reveal the embodied experience” (Stephens, 2011, p. 62), as it may be used to

understand experiences from a phenomenological perspective. Narrative analysis does not limit the researcher to using textual data, as “stories may be related using media such as words, imagery, sound, movement or combinations of these” (ibid p. 73).

The information was analysed with the help of qualitative software tools such as NVivo. The analysis occurred through several steps (Holloway, 1997). First, the material was organised and ordered. This included transcribing notes of interviews or sessions. Also, at this stage the data were collected into discrete groupings with respect to age and gender of the children. Next, the data were read and re-read or viewed as appropriate, until I, as the researcher, was fully immersed in them. The material was then broken down into manageable sections, with meaningful phrases identified, coded and highlighted. Categories were built, compared and contrasted with each other and with my own thoughts. Consistent patterns of meanings were sought. Relationships and groups between the categories were looked for, as well as patterns, themes and typologies. Themes and sub-themes were identified, an approach used to analyse phenomenological interviews to gain information on the nature of human experience (Pollio et al, 1997). The concepts and themes were continuously adapted and new questions formulated as the incoming data changed or modified my findings. In practice, the analysis of data was an on-going process throughout the study. My own embodied experiences were connected to the data analysis, both in terms of the data analysed as my reflexive journal was included, but also because “embodied and sensory memories of fieldwork likewise informed my own analysis” (Pink, 2009,p. 123).

3.5 WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Working with children brings with it the need for further consideration. There has been a move away from research that is *on* children rather than *with* them (Fargas-Malet et al, 2010). Whereas children were once considered as objects, they are now more likely to have their views and opinions sought out, although this brings with it methodological and ethical challenges (Einarsdottir, 2007; Mauthner, 1997). Research studies have demonstrated that children as young as 4 years old (or even younger) can provide important insights into their lives and experiences (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). Researchers must be careful that they do not make assumptions about a child's capabilities, and to be clear about the internal images and assumptions they make about childhood that inform their approach, methods and data analysis. Three different approaches towards research were reported by Fargas-Malet et al (2010, p. 176):

“One which considers children as practically the same as adults and employs the same methods as those used with them

One which perceives children as completely different from adults and uses ethnography (participant observation) to examine the child's world; and

One which understands children as similar to adults but with different competencies, and which has developed a plethora of innovative and adapted techniques.”

Typical research methods with children would include; observations (including the Tavistock model of observation and target child observation), correlation methods, experimental and survey methods, case studies, ethnographies and developmental tasks/tests. Participatory methods tend to orientate themselves to the strengths of the children, and draw out their voice and experience through methods that are designed to capture their individual views. The idea

of capturing the voices of children and its importance in research and policy making was present in the 1989 Children Act. This set up a legal requirement to consult on the wishes and feelings of children when their physical, emotional and educational needs are assessed. This had a direct impact on the decision and policy makers who are responsible for dealing with children, and the ways in which researchers and practitioners used research tools and techniques with children. This moves away from the idea that children are, “‘becomings’, that is, people not yet mature enough to have an opinion or act responsibly [as opposed to] competent ‘beings’ whose views, actions and choice are of value”(Thomson, 2008, p. 1). This view of children has obvious implications for the analytic, interpretative or meaning-making phases of a research project.

Young children, as defined by Clark (2005) are those under the age of five. In this study some of the participants would be under five, and would fall into this definition. However, the idea that active listening to a child enables them to express their views is relevant to children of all ages. Listening is understood by Clark to be an active process of communication that involves hearing, interpreting and constructing meanings, not limited to the spoken word, and necessary for participation. Rather than being about the extraction of information from children, it is a dynamic process that involves them and adults discussing meanings, whilst avoiding giving the children cues or assistance (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). Listening means not trying to guess what the children are saying (Mauthner, 1997). It also includes all the different verbal and non-verbal ways in which children communicate, which for this work would necessarily include the medium of movement. Methodologies for listening to the views of young children need to be supported by the environment where possible, which may include being in somewhere familiar with trusted adults. Activities

should be fun, enjoyable and varied as well as recognising that different children express themselves in different ways. The purpose of the research and the extent that the children can contribute should also be made clear (Clark, 2005).

Very young children may have limited communicative abilities relative to older children, however this does not mean that they are not competent in other ways. A mosaic approach of research tools seeks to draw out these competences. It is important to consider the cognitive abilities of the children, the validity of the statements they make, and also the researcher's interpretations of those statements. This last issue is a strength of the mosaic approach and participatory research. It is possible to gather data co-constructively with participants and allow time for the participant to reflect upon it, and discuss it as well as any meaning the researcher may have interpreted. The developmental capacity of the child may affect their ability to understand the questions being asked. Children may be vulnerable to suggestibility and be influenced by the status of the researcher. This may be particularly evident if the research takes place in a school setting and the children perceive the researcher to have the role of or equivalent to a teacher (Greig & Taylor, 1999). Ideally, prior to the start of an interview, or work with young children, one would develop rapport, by taking time to get to know the children, and gain their trust so as to allow a fuller disclosure of information (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). This approach has been developed as an alternative to traditional methods of research with children as the subjects of research. In the case of this study, it should be noted that my presence, as an adult responsible for teaching groups, and in some cases taking classes as a cover teacher, could be interpreted as that of one of authority and as such may have affected the children's perception of me (Pearce & Bailey, 2011). The children may have felt pressure to "say what they think adults want them to say" (Fargas-Malet et al, 2010),

although throughout every session I did my best to ensure that all the children were reassured that there were no right or wrong answers, that I was interested in their experiences. In fact, by allowing the children to explore ‘tangents’, it was possible to come closer to hearing their authentic voices (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). I was also present in the children’s environment as a parent, and a regular presence in the classrooms, and so could be seen to have ‘trusted adult’ status. This allowed the children to explore the work and express themselves freely, maybe more so than they would with an ‘unknown adult’ (Irwin & Johnson, 2006). I needed to allow the students to trust me enough to say what they felt and thought, and not what they thought was the ‘right’ answer or what I wanted to hear. This issue of ‘getting it right’ was spoken of by one child when she came to talk about her experiences.

“E: I felt excited and nervous and I thought that I could get it right or I could get it wrong.

Me: Do you think there was a right or a wrong answer?

E: I thought the two answers were the same.

Me: Okay. Do you think in the work we did there were rights and there were wrongs?

E: Yes.” (E Year 2)

After further questioning, and mostly with reference to drawing, which was what she had remembered doing most, E said “I thought it was right when I had to draw my face...I thought it was going to be wrong when I didn't draw my body right”. However, E. was the only child that mentioned that she thought that there was a need to be right, to do things right. In

contrast, many children spoke of the freedom that they had to choose, say, or draw what they did when they were interviewed.

“It’s pretty fun because you do whatever you want, no-one can tell you what to do and that, you can do whatever you want to do, really.” (C. Year 4)

“Me: What do you wish we'd done more of?

R: Probably the free one where you can do anything.

Me: What, when we were in a circle and you got to show everybody what you did?

Why did you like that best?

R: Because you could just do anything and do stuff.” (R. Year 4)

“No wrong answers whatever you said was true in its own way.” (W. Year 6)

It seemed that the majority of the children were assured that their experiences were valid, and accepted. These feelings may have been strongest when participating in the circle game, where the ‘rules’ were made explicit each time we played. In the game, all of the children could do what they wanted, whether it was showing a movement they had made up themselves, something we had all explored in the session, or something another child had already done.

The research methodology was in keeping with the phenomenological tradition that “has taken a step on the path towards an ontology which combines the mind and the body” (Alerby, 2003, p. 18). It was at all times designed not only to be enjoyable, but to ensure that the children were recognised as “the real experts of their lives...in this context the child is the

authority, and can choose to reveal whatever s/he wishes. There are no right or wrong answers” (Pearce & Bailey, 2010). The emphases on the children’s own perceptions being valuable, and there being no correct answers was present throughout the study (Punch, 2002). The sessions themselves combined playful movement explorations, with time to share, draw and write. The interviews took place at the end of the study, when the children were all familiar and comfortable with my presence, and were thus less likely to say things only because I wanted to hear them (Punch, 2002). Drawing and mark-making was used as an “avenue for young children to express their views and experiences” (Clark, 2005). Mark-making and drawing can be a creative and fun method to encourage children to be actively involved in research, and to discover what they believe to be important aspects (Punch, 2002). In order to minimise issues of conflict over materials (ibid), I ensured that all the children had access to oil pastels and high-quality paper to draw on, as well as pencils to write with if they chose. The quality of the materials was important, as it differentiated the work from that of ‘ordinary’ class paper and felt pens (ibid.).

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Participatory research has inherent ethical issues. Firstly there is the issue of consent and assent to participation. Gaining consent on behalf of and assent from children has its own ethical considerations (Jago & Bailey, 2001). According to English law, consent must be obtained from the parents or guardians of the children, not the children themselves (ibid.). Because the research project took place within the school day, it was also prudent to seek consent from the governors, Headteacher and the class teacher: “it is widely recognised that in order to gain children’s consent and involvement in research, one has to go via adult gatekeepers” (Punch, 2002, p. 325). Consent has to be informed. In practice this means

detailing the subject and nature of the research. For a project like mine this has to be accessible for the intended audience. I prepared separate consent forms for the parents of the children and the adult teaching staff who would participate. As a researcher it was imperative that I worked within the ethical guidelines laid out for research by the University of Birmingham. Because of the nature of my work, it also fell under the guidance of two of my professional organisations, the British Wheel of Yoga and the International Somatic Movement Educators and Therapists Association, and I also had to work within the ethical guidelines that they set.

Consent to use images and artworks must be given by the legal guardians of the children. In addition to legal consent, it is ethical to ask the children themselves to assent to participation. They must have opportunity to assent to take part and for their work to be used as part of my research. Their right to withdraw from the project at any time must also be made clear to them. Participatory research of this kind has its own particular ethical issues as young children are used to doing what they are told by adults, particularly in an education context (Punch, 2002). There is an implicit compulsion that the children and their parents will assent to participation as the sessions are taking place within a school day. They, and myself, have been approved by the Headteacher and the governors and I have the trust of the class teachers.

As well as gaining consent from parents, I also asked the children to assent to take part, explaining how this work would be a bit different to that of the previous year. “I introduced the project and explained that it would be a bit different to before as I was trying to find out what children thought. I asked them if they wanted to do it and they all said yes” (Field Notes phase 1). Due to phase 3 taking place in the following academic year, and new children

joining class 4, further explanations and consent forms were sent out. As the children were older, and were interested in what I would do with the data, I explained more about the process. Although the school assured me that photographs taken of and by the children would be covered by general consent given by parents, I decided to ask for additional permission from them, and until the slips were in, no photographs were taken. The following extract from my field notes sets out how I explained the study, and asked for assent.

“I started by sitting in a circle with the children and explaining a bit about the work. I said that the research was finding out about what children thought, felt about moving and what it was like to be them. I told them that lots of adults tell them lots of things about what they should do, but that not many asked them what it was like to be them. I said that the permission slips would be going home in the newsletter and would ask for permission to take photos, that we could use cameras to take pictures (of themselves, and each other) and that those and their writing and artwork would be used for my research. I asked them if that was all right and they all assented to take part. Two children asked if it would get published in a newspaper, and I said that it might get published in special education magazines, called journals but none of their real names would be used. They seemed disappointed at that!” (Field Notes phase 3)

The active and hands-on nature of the work means that I have to adhere to the Child Protection Policy of the school. The importance of touch and its impact on the psycho-social wellbeing of children with special educational needs and their parents and caregivers has been studied by Cullen-Powell and Barlow (Cullen & Barlow, 2003; Barlow et al, 2006). They found that touch, whether from an educator or tutor on a Positive Touch programme, or the giving or receiving or simple massage techniques from parents or carers, was beneficial to all

parties in the vast majority of cases. A reduction in the amount of positive touch that a child receives in his early years, may decrease the sense of body awareness that a child experiences (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). This body awareness, can also be affected by processing and developmental disorders. Donna Williams, an adult with autism, described her sense of body: “I failed to identify with it properly as ‘self’” (Williams, 2003, p. 23). Williams is describing a disembodied sense of self, in part due to her hypersensitive sensory awareness.

Touch “does provoke anxiety” (Westland, 2011, p. 20). The use of touch with children, has become problematic in some instances as “professionals have become wary about touching children in their care— from putting an arm on a child’s shoulder, to putting a plaster on their knee” (Piper, 2007, p. 4). Many in society are ambivalent about touch, and are afraid of the intimacy of it, “the roots of this lie in how we were treated and how we continue to treat children” (ibid p. 21). Those working with children and young people are often advised to avoid touching them at all not because of restrictive laws, but due to cultural pressures that have “created a negative and self-sustaining no-touching culture” (ibid p. 10). And yet, touch is a central component of human interaction (Pink, 2009). Many child-care professionals see touch as “essential for proper child development” (Piper, 2003, p. 880), and attempts to comply with a ‘no-touch’ policy even in early years settings has “resulted in a mind-body split” (ibid. p.881). Instead of being natural, and spontaneous, touching children has become sanitised, organised and therapeutic (ibid). Massage and other touch therapies have become an acceptable way for children to receive touch. Approaches that utilise touch in a positive sense, have been shown to increase quality of life indicators for adults (Gregory & Verdouw, 2005), as well as with children with additional needs (Cullen-Powell & Barlow, 1995), and autism spectrum disorder (Cullen et al, 2005). I decided that use of touch would be beneficial

within this study. In addition to my touching children if needed to draw their attention to a particular part of their body (e.g. their toes, or their back), on many occasions children would want to run up to me, sit on my lap and hug me. If touch had not been allowed in this context, the children could have experienced physical rejection, which would have been contrary to the ethos of the work. The groups of children were always accompanied by at least one member of staff in addition to myself as the practitioner, and if a child showed any signs of discomfort, or unease at being touched, then that would be taken as an indicator of them refusing consent, or withdrawing assent to receive hands-on work.

The type of movement work that was explored in the sessions, although educational in this particular context, can also be used therapeutically. To this end, all sessions adhered to Rogerian Person-Centred principles (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990). In practice this means that every child is held in unconditional positive regard. This is also in accord with a mindful practice, where a non-judgemental attitude is adopted (or embodied), which “involves perceiving stimuli simply ‘as they are’” (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 824). In order to hear the voices of the children participating, it was vital that they were not directed to have ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers. During the sessions together we established rules of behaviour including that their experience, insights and shapes were valid and viewed positively. Due to time limitations of the project, I felt it was important that this stage of building a relationship with the school happened before the start of the data collection. The experience of most of the participants is thus their developing awareness of the work rather than their initial perceptions. Some children did encounter the work for the first time, albeit in an environment where the approach had been established. This included all children entering Reception (age 4–5), and any children joining the school.

3.7 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The study was separated into three phases of work. These were differentiated by themes, and at times by the participants. My initial timetable was for contact sessions over one academic year, however the study actually took place over two academic years. Due to external factors (such as building work at the school and changing commitments), the different classes of children did not each attend the same number of sessions, nor cover identical content throughout. I had originally written the outline for the content of the entire project as below:

Finding Shapes – This section will be based on exploring the shapes that our bodies can make; geometric shapes, twists, bends, balances, and animal shapes. The children will be working in pairs and small groups as well as individually. Using yoga poses and familiarising the children with sensations of stretch, exploring how our posture affects us and practicing finding still and quiet-time will be the initial aims. We will use a selection of art-materials for drawing and mark-making, and I shall record images of the children in poses, and allow them to use cameras to take images of the shapes that we find. There will be an emphasis on the children’s exploration of shapes. There will not be “right” or “wrong” ways of doing anything. The poses and shapes the children find will be as valid as any “yoga” *asanas*. Behaviour and class-management will be established in this section. It is vital that the children are free to explore the material safely without injuring themselves or others in the class.

Organisation – This section will be an exploration of the organs of our body. Many exercises and movement forms focus primarily on the musculo-skeletal structure of the body. We shall explore what the children understand about their own internal

anatomy; the words and phrases that we use that contain organ words (for example, vent your spleen, feeling liverish, heartache, nervy, under my skin, in my bones, gut feeling). We'll use some of the shapes and inspiration from the first section to lead into explorations of our organs and emotions and expression. For example, we might stretch and be aware of our skin stretching. Much anatomy is learnt from pictures and this section of work will allow the children to build an idea of how their body is made up from the inside. Resources such as balloons filled with warm water to show the size of the brain, digital cameras, 'play-doh', and art materials will be used. An emphasis will be placed on our living moving bodies.

Moving On - This section will build on the material covered so far and translate it into the moving body. Using developmental movement patterns such as crawling, creeping, rolling and bear walking we can explore how the shapes we have been working with move and travel through space. We will explore how different organs initiate different movement patterns. The psychological and developmental psychology that underlies such developmental patterns may also be explored if appropriate. With the youngest children it may take the form of games. With the older children this may take the form of discussion and exploration as well as games. It may be appropriate in this section of work to combine some of the groups for sessions. The resources needed for this section of work will be a combination of those used so far. Taking a lead from the children's favourite methods of recording their work I will offer them an option to produce a display, or some work that we can share with their schoolmates and/or parents.

The original content above was adapted, and extended to fit around the needs of the children, and as a result of the on-going process of reflection and analysis. Examples of plans and outlines of sessions are included in Appendices 3–6. Some plans were detailed and timed, whereas others were outlines for a session. Every session was also recorded in my field notes, and reflected on in my journal.

As with many kinds of teaching it is necessary to have a plan that can be altered as necessary to fit the needs of the class before you (Kyriacou, 1998). I did not work from educational style lesson plans as might be found in a teacher training course, because each session, and the content over the whole study, was adapted to the needs of the children. Neither did I plan out a scheme of work. Instead, I wrote brief outlines, then reflected on each session, using that as a guide as to what to include in the next. There was an overall shape to the content as described, however, the intention was not to deliver a course of material, but to shape the content to the needs and desires of the children. The sessions were educational, although within somatic movement with a trained educator/therapist these boundaries may overlap.

3.8 THE SETTING

The school is a small school in a rural village setting where few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a few from other White European or Asian heritages. A lower than average proportion of pupils had special educational needs and/or disabilities. In 2010 the school was rated as ‘good’ by OFSTED. In 2012 there were 72 children on the roll (33 boys and 39 girls). The year groups range in size

from 8–15. There were no EAL pupils¹. At the beginning of my time with the school, it had less than sixty pupils from Reception class to Year 6. An additional class was added with two members of staff, so that by the time the study finished it had four teachers and five teaching assistants on its staff. I worked within every class at the school at some point. The relationship between the children, the teaching staff and me built up trust and ease of communication. This enabled the children to express themselves freely in a supportive and non-judgemental space. The children experienced sharing their poses, thoughts and ideas with each other.

Before beginning the data collection for this project, I had volunteered to teach yoga and movement sessions at the school for most of a year. My own children were attending the school, and I wanted to contribute and offer what I could. Permission was granted by the Headteacher, and I worked with each class one afternoon a week. These sessions were a combination of yoga, Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy, and exploratory movement. Although there was always space to talk, communicate, and to share experiences, the children were not offered drawing materials or time to reflect on their work routinely. I was, at that time, in a role of instructor and parent. A large proportion of parents contributed to the school, for example by reading, or fixing the computer systems. Parents also gave their time to help tidy up outside spaces, create art and run parent association events to raise funds. By volunteering I got to know the Headteacher, the class teachers and the teaching assistants. Many of the parents knew me and were informally aware of the work that I was doing because both my children were attending the school. When identifying a setting to use for my research project, I initially thought I should use another school because of the personal

¹ Figures provided by current Headteacher, and taken from OFSTED report 22/03/2010 inspection number 339278, Kent Schools Mosaic Profile 2008, RAISEonline 2011 Summary Report and data from Dover District Council.

connection. However, that personal connection meant that the sessions would be an extension of, and not an introduction to, the work. After discussion with my supervisory team, and with an awareness of the implications that it might have, I approached the Headteacher and asked if he would like the school to be involved. He was keen for the continued input, and I formally approached the Governors for permission; and then the parents for consent.

The children knew me as I had been involved with the school in my role as a parent. During the course of this study I completed my Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), and also acted as a volunteer in a cover teacher capacity. At the school there were some children who belonged to a religious group who did not participate in assembly or church services. Some parents did talk to me part-way through the study and after consenting, to clarify that the content was not religious. In addition, I was asked for advice with regard to how best to build strength in a joint that had been in plaster, as well as general questions about content of the sessions and physical fitness.

One other aspect of my project, and of my approach to my work and my practice, are my other roles as a woman, and a mother. I have two children, and at times both have been in my classes and sessions. This added to the dynamics of the group sessions. I think it changed the way that the children viewed me. I could be seen as a teacher, as an instructor, and also as a parent, as Daisy's mum. Some of the children have been to my house, and I have fed them dinner, played with them and even helped them on the toilet. Other teachers and assistants have had their own children in classes before, so this was not an unusual situation in this particular school. The children talked to me in the playground, their parents saw me and spoke to me and I imagine that this helped to build a positive and trusting relationship. The

children knew that I was a part of the community, that I was there and present in their lives and perceived me to be around for a long time to come. The children were not participating in a project with a limited life, but in sessions that they thought could continue whilst I was still associated with the school. My relationship with the staff may also have been affected by my being a parent in addition to a researcher. Again the school may have trusted me more as the well-being of the children and the school is important to me as an individual, and I am committed to the school and the community. I have spent time helping out in classes in addition to the research sessions and this too showed my support for and of the school.

3.9 PHASES OF THE STUDY

The first phase of my project involved five weeks of sessions at the school. I had six sessions at the school each week, each session lasting for about an hour. I was also at school one afternoon a week volunteering as cover for the class teacher's Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time. This phase of work was very intense for me.

The following phases of work were arranged differently, as I had to fit around time on placement as part of my PGCE. I worked in the school one afternoon a week, and saw two groups each time, from the same class. Due to external circumstances the second phase was not as long as originally intended, and I did not get to work with all classes. However, I led a workshop as part of the school Science Week with twelve children from across the school. We had an afternoon to work, and then prepared a display to be put up as part of an open afternoon for the school and parents.

The last phase of work was again different, as the school was undergoing extensive reorganisation, moving from three classes of children to four. This meant that the space previously used for sessions was now permanently occupied as a classroom. Only one class was big enough for movement work. This was the room belonging to class 4, with children in Year 5 and Year 6 (age 9–11). During this time I also worked voluntarily with two of the younger classes in their physical education sessions. Although this movement work had similarities to previous research sessions, this contact was not officially part of my research study. I made notes on these sessions, and gained feedback from the teachers, but no data were gathered from the children. The last phase of work with class 4 was comprised of nine sessions, and a final visit to finish and put up a display.

I made field notes on my observations as well as collecting data from the children in the official sessions in the form of artwork, journals, models and words. I kept a reflective journal in which I recorded my thoughts, perceptions and ideas each week. From this journal I took questions to professional supervision, which I attended with a counsellor and psychotherapist. There were three main issues that arose for me personally within the fieldwork. These included the pedagogical aspects of the sessions; the theoretical and analytical thoughts on the work; and around my own process, which included physical sensations, and the emotional reactions that I had. Where relevant to the planning and delivery of the sessions, excerpts from field notes and my journal have been included within the descriptions of the phases of the study.

3.9.1 FIRST PHASE

The first phase of the project involved working with all the children in the school once a week for five weeks. I worked with half of each class within a session, and each session was about 45 minutes to 1 hour in length (except for the very last session with class 3 (age 9–11), which was the whole class for 1³/₄ hours). During the previous year at the school I had worked with classes on a voluntary basis, taking the whole class at a time. A large class necessitated me taking a more didactic teacher-led style than I envisioned for these sessions, which I wanted to be more exploratory in nature. This boundary between the need for an orderly (yet fun) class, and one that allowed students the space to be more experimental was a theme that ran through my reflexive journal and lesson plans throughout the whole data collection.

“In some sessions I feel that I am having to focus more on behaviour-management and the drill sergeant ‘copy me’ style is then most effective, although this does not elicit, nor allow time and space so much for the children to explore their own experience. Partly this seems to be where there are more new children in the group who are less used to me and the way in which I work.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

“Generally the class was noisy and active, though by the end producing really interesting and different work. Very clear difference to me with research as opposed to education– if I had been in charge of the class as their teacher I would not have wanted so much noise, but for this I want them to have the freedom to be creative and expressive. Interestingly one of the loudest groups were actually working very safely.” (Reflexive Journal phase 3)

I had a duty of care to keep the children safe, and to maintain behaviour standards, and yet I wanted to establish an environment where they were secure, and no answer was ‘wrong’ or ‘right’. This was an integral part of my intention to keep the sessions, and my research, Person-Centred. My approach did work, as can be seen from my entry early into phase 1, “how the children are free to have different experiences” (Reflexive Journal phase 1). In order to minimise behaviour issues, I arranged with the class teachers to split the classes as they wished. This enabled them to focus work with the children remaining in class whilst I led the sessions. Smaller groups also allowed the children to feel as if they had more space. Although the room we used was big, a lot of furniture was stored against the walls. I tended to arrive early, help clear up after the lunch time school dinners, clean the floor and lay out mats. We used a set of yoga mats as the gym mats kept in the hall were not ideal for movement work. At times the transitions between groups were challenging. The room we used was off-site, so a teaching assistant would walk the group of children to the space, stay with them for the session, then return them to the school. If two groups overlapped, then both groups had the potential to become distracted.

The first sessions were designed to take the form of balanced, stand-alone workshops that would build up knowledge and experience. Each session was designed to incorporate a range of guided movements that were physically balanced, and so included twists, forward bends, backward bends and time to be still. These aspects of the class were fairly recognisable as yoga, although at all times there was an emphasis on allowing children to copy me rather than conform to an ‘ideal’. This approach is recommended by many teachers (Fursland, 1989; Gibbs, 2003; Weller, 1996; Phillips & Stewart, 1992), and was borne out by my experience of teaching yoga to children over the previous ten years. A balanced yoga session combines the

short-term needs with the long-term goals of those in the practices, and also takes into account what they have to do next (Desikachar, 1995). The somatic education aspect of the work was present both in the approach to the material and the content, in that it included body awareness, time for relaxation, a focus on posture and movement, emotional, social and environmental awareness (Linden, 1994). The sessions also had more time within them for drawing, mark-making and writing, so the participants could start to journal and reflect on the work, as in Authentic Movement.

Because the phases were not equal for all the children, the initial phase was adapted to include elements of the initial course outline, so that the participants were able to gain a rounded experience. The content of the first phase of sessions was based around ideas of finding shapes to be still, balance, bends and twists, our moving bodies, animals and our organs (the heart). The plan for the first week can be seen in Appendix 3.

I took a slightly different approach with the older children than the youngest. The first session was about gaining assent for their participation, and introducing how the work was slightly different to that of previous classes with me. For each session I also wrote out a detailed plan, with timings, and an example for Week 2, themed around balances, can be seen in Appendix 4.

I wrote detailed observations on every group and every class, and reflected on the sessions in addition. My reflections from the first two weeks show how the material was received.

“Sessions going well, teachers receptive... Most groups are keen and eager. There is a big variation within each class and the material is being received very differently within and between each group. In general there are lots of words and thoughts and movements that are incredibly fascinating

-many children confident to speak and to express themselves within the group- this was less so in the groups with more distractible children- eg class 3 group 2 (B.) and week 2, class 1, group 2 (lots of the boys)

-gender split fairly evident in choices of partners, poses, willingness to work together or not.” (Week 1&2 Reflective Journal)

The differences between groups as well as classes, continued throughout this phase. For example, in a session with a focus on the heart I noted “whereas the first group mostly drew anatomical hearts, this group drew mostly romantic hearts” (Field Notes). The two groups in question were from the same class, the same range of ages and mix of gender. The material shown to them was identical. The children did not work closely together, but each had their own space, spread out around the hall, so copying from each other does not explain this. If the children had copied from each other though “this was not necessarily problematic as the drawings still represented children’s ideas as a group” (Punch, 2002, p. 36).

I worked with the children in this way for three afternoons a week, which, at the time, proved to be challenging both physically and emotionally.

“I am quite tired as the preparation for each session includes lots of exercise and the sessions themselves are particularly bouncy.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

“Need to be aware of all the issues this has for me– emotional response...Need to be careful.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

In order to accommodate this, I arranged for professional supervision in this phase of the project, and used my journal to help process my experiences.

“I realised that one difference between this work (as my doctorate) and my normal therapeutic/educational work is that it is a lot more challenging to let go of this. In part this is due to my working habits– fitting it in around everything so that it is an intrinsic part of my life it feels as if there is always a part of my brain working, analysing and churning it about...This is not particularly useful for the letting go part that is necessary in normal therapeutic work! I talked to a friend who is a counsellor about this, and have made a note to take it to my next supervision session with my professional supervisor. I have been keeping my academic supervisors up to date with what I have been doing but due to the summer, the on-going transfer...I have been feeling a bit adrift.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

Supervision is an aspect of reflective practice that will be discussed later. The differences between this project, and my previous work with children were becoming clear even in these first few weeks: “this is a big difference for me between these sessions and those in bham (sic. Birmingham) which were always after/out of school and voluntary” (Reflective Journal) and I had to ensure that the purpose of the work was kept clear at all times, whilst I began to feel

the edges of my roles as educator, therapist and researcher: “the data collection part of the project is separate to the education aspect– it is a phenomenological account/study/exploration of children’s education in ‘embodiment’” (Reflexive Journal Phase 1). My role as a mother also had implications for me, and the opportunities that I had to witness the children of the school in different scenarios, and relate this to my work.

“Observed an out of school choir– aware of differences due to context? Within the school day even if children have to assent to take part reality is that they are in a mode of doing what their teacher wants. They have to choose to go to an after school club so those children who are less willing, who may be more distracted/disruptive not present. If they do not behave they do not get to go. Also a child that ‘needs’ more support may not get the chance to go as the parent perceives that they would not be welcome?” (Reflective Journal phase 1)

Some individuals in the sessions had recurring behaviour issues: “F. and M. and C. are very distracted...All the children got a big star except for F. and C. and M. I asked them to fiddle a little less” (Field Notes). Over time I was usually able to engage the children by one way or another. I gave out star stickers to those who worked well, I talked to some after the sessions if appropriate, to encourage better behaviour in the future: “lots of stars (all the children, big well done to C. and M. and F. as they had done really well)” (Field Notes phase 1). Because I spent time in the school covering teachers’ preparation time and helping out in classes, I was also able to observe the children in normal lessons. This allowed me insights into where behaviour issues were specific to the sessions with me, and were more general issues within school.

“From observing F. in class I don’t think her behaviour is particular to the sessions— she often appears unengaged, distracted and has issues with the other girls in the class (picking fights, being ‘spiteful’ other children unwilling to partner her) yet she has those that are keen to be her friend.” (Reflective Journal)

My main tactic to elicit positive behaviour was to use positive encouragement, and this worked well.

“Lots of verbal positive encouragement “I like how A. is using her face...”; “look at how J. is being a twist snake”. J. did not want to join in until he became a standing up twisty snake which was fantastic.” (Field Notes)

The behaviour in the sessions was an issue on which I reflected throughout the study, and took to supervision sessions along with other aspects of the study that I found particularly challenging or interesting. I wanted to adjust the pattern of working within the next phases of work, to support my own process as much as ensure that the sessions continued to be of the most use to the children as well as providing data for this research.

3.9.2 SECOND PHASE

The second phase of work at the school was scheduled to run throughout the spring term 2008-9. I had arranged to work with one class at a time, giving each three sessions on how, why, and what they move. I chose these themes to encourage expression of the children’s qualities of movement. I wanted them to begin to notice their own moving body, and begin to be aware of the different ways in which they could move and how that would be perceived by others. This approach was designed to enhance the children’s inner awareness, “the dialogue

between inner and outer experience in relation to the whole person” (Olsen, 1998, p. 11). Olsen talks of the capacity to listen and be sensitive to our body as something that closes down as we grow older. “As children we are necessarily involved in our relationship to the outer environment for survival” (ibid.); she implies that children are more embodied than adults. This was borne out in the session on ‘why we move’ with Year 3 and 4 children (age 7–9), when I noted “some were confused/wanted to have more direction– interesting as the littler ones were happy just to draw a picture of why they moved” (Reflective Journal). This ‘natural’ embodiment of children is in part due to their physical interaction with the world around them. Tobin (2004) discusses how the body, and children’s experience of their bodies is being threatened by societal changes to pre-school and early education. The moral panic over what constitutes appropriate touch along with emphases on the importance of words rather than physical expression have resulted in children who have access to less contact and bodily movement in their early childhood educational settings. Tobin also talks of the effect of new academic, medical and legal disciplines of sexuality, logocentrism, brain research, phonics instruction and the decline of classical psychoanalytic influence as being factors that collectively contribute to the disembodying of young children (ibid.). Restrictions on early educators may include “childcare workers...routinely prohibited from...even assisting them to change their underclothes and clean off after having a bowel movement in their pants” (Tobin, 2004, p. 112), or, even if not explicitly forbidden, then the picking up or comforting of a crying child is frowned upon. In my own experience as a mother of young children, I have been asked to sign consent forms allowing nursery workers to cuddle my child. I have heard stories in the playground of a nursery setting where a child with diarrhoea was left in soiled clothes until his mother came to pick him up, because the careworkers were not allowed to change him for fear of child abuse allegations. As a student teacher I attended child

protection training, and at one school was told to never touch a child. If I touched a child, or was touched by a child I was to report it to my head of department immediately. The school this research takes place in, has a more human attitude to touch. One teacher told me that she felt that it would be damaging to her pupils if she pushed them away when they ran to hug her. The children here, particularly the youngest ones, are affectionate towards their teachers, and that affection is reciprocated.

Each class was split into half for these sessions, and the teachers chose the groups so that they could maximise time with those remaining behind in the class. I would have a teaching assistant to work with me. I began with the youngest children, in class 1, which combined Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children (age 4–7). In the first session, we explored ‘how we move’ by starting in mouse pose. This pose, also called child’s pose or *balasana* (Yee & Zolotow, 2002), is where the body is flexed forward at the hips and the legs are folded underneath in a kneeling position. The head rests on the floor, or on the legs.

This position allows the children to focus in on their own experience, to shut out the world around them and to be still. The contact between the belly and the legs also stimulates physiological flexion (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). This is the process whereby the flexor muscles on the front of the body increase their tone, and this in turn decreases the tone of the tissues of the body, facilitating relaxation. The opposite effect, to increase tone (as might be indicated for an individual with low muscle and tissue tone for example someone with Down’s Syndrome (Sumar, 2007)) is achieved by being in a position where the back of the body is contact with the floor or support, such as a large exercise ball (Brook, 2001).



FIGURE 3 CHILD'S POSE, *BALASANA*

The groups were then asked to think about how they moved, before doing it, and to start moving just one part of their body. They progressed through moving the head whilst lying prone on the floor, the spine in forward back and twisting motions, their fingers, toes, legs and their arms. The children continued on to moving two different parts of their body, all the time being asked to think about how they moved. Quality of movement was then explored, using slowly, softly (how are they different?), then quickly as prompts: “E. said that softly was different because it was calmer. She had been lying down, stretching, rolling and twisting her body” (Field Notes phase 2).

The next step was to explore mood, emotion and movement. The children were asked how they were feeling, and then prompted to show me. “I asked them how they were feeling (happy) and asked if they could move happily– very bouncy– lots of jumps” (Field Notes phase 2). I took suggestions for other emotions for the groups to show through movement “excited (very bouncy), nervous, scared (very inward, foetal, withdrawn), embarrassed, angry, loving” (Field Notes phase 2). I noticed that “the mood of the children altered with every mood or emotion that the children moved– however they were at all times choosing to join in– as well as choosing the emotions” (Field Notes phase 2).

The older children (Years 2, 3 and 4) chose to explore happy, excitedly, relaxed, sad, silly/crazy, lazy, amazed, hot, grumpily and confused. The groups were asked to draw or write how they moved, before finishing the class with the circle game and quiet time in mouse pose.

The second sessions focused on the idea of ‘what we move’. This time I introduced the idea of what is inside our bodies, using props including an organ dolly, which is a soft toy with removable internal organs, and a skeleton made of plastic bones that attached to a Velcro sheet. However, before using either of these props, I again asked the children to start in mouse pose, and to think about what is inside them. After a minute of quiet, they stretched, and I asked each child to name what they had thought. Answers varied from “heart”, “brain”, “blood” to “lots of sweeties”, “x-rays” and “power”. We then used the dolly to show the organs, and asking the children to feel and show where their own organs are. They put the bones of the skeleton in order, and named some. We explored how moving like the bones, the

brain or other things inside us at the children's suggestions, were different. The groups showed different movements and qualities of movements.

“bones– jumps, runs, handstands

brains– on the floor head on the floor as well as sparky quick hand movements from L.

hearts– running, and modelling of hearts

blood– again running, and use of arms” (Field Notes phase 2)

Drawing time was given so that they could mark-make and also talk to me about what they were drawing, and then in the circle game, children were asked to show something relating to the work.

“C.–heart-standing up tall, bouncing on heels up and down

M.– brain–mouse pose

A.–blood-running blood backwards and then forwards on the mat

R.– power–jump” (Field Notes phase 2)

The third session focused on ‘how we move about’. This theme was intended to explore patterns of locomotion, and developmental movement patterns. By using animals as examples, I was able to cover a range of the patterns described by Hartley (1989), including spinal patterns, homologous push (upper and lower), homologous reach and pull (upper and lower), homolateral push (upper and lower) and contralateral reach (upper and lower). The range of developmental patterns can be found in Appendix 7.

The children were asked to move their heads whilst prone (Symmetrical Tonic Neck Reflex) (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993), and then to reach out and look around them (Asymmetrical Tonic Neck Reflex) (ibid.). I asked them to move like snakes, then like lizards and to roll over and move their limbs whilst on their back to notice any differences. They were asked to move and to crawl; like a dog, a bear, a cartoon, and to hop like a frog or a rabbit, moving forwards and backwards as each of these, noticing if any were easier or harder. The animal movement patterns covered developmental movement patterns in an experiential not therapeutic way. If I was working therapeutically with an individual, then we would explore a pattern in depth, re-patterning where it was inaccessible initially. The process of re-patterning in somatic bodywork is described by Hartley and Bainbridge-Cohen (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993; Hartley, 1989). These movements were intended to be experiential and educational, giving the groups an experience of choosing between different modes of locomotion and noticing which came more naturally to them.

After drawing time, we played a game where the children had to either balance, or move on two, three or four limbs depending on the number I called, before finishing in mouse pose. I observed that “F. worked out that lizarding is easier on the wooden floor and they moved about a bit as lizards, and rocking and crawling. T. frog hopped and they played with the difference of frog hopping, and rabbit hopping (which J. did perfectly) some complained that they couldn’t do one or the other” (Field Notes phase 2).

The material described here bears resemblance to ‘Jenny’, one of three case studies of Dance Education in an exploration of the dance curriculum by Bresla (2004). She describes three aspects of dance education as; rhythmic movement, form and conscious awareness. This last,

the ‘how and why we do something’ draws on the kinaesthetic sense and awareness of our interactions within our bodies and with the outside world. I believe that it is this aspect of my work that shares similarities to dance. These close associations may explain why many students on somatic education courses like my own training, are from a dance background.

3.9.3 SCIENCE WEEK

Due to unexpected conflicts with the requirements for my PGCE, I was only able to complete phase two with the youngest children. I had one week with class 2, as they had to cancel one session. However, I was able to complete the workshop and display that was part of the school Science Week. For this I took twelve children (two boys and two girls from each class), and with a teaching assistant, led a workshop based on a story by Paul Geraghty (1988). The playful nature of this was chosen deliberately, as “with children the distinction between dance-movement and play acting is often blurred” (Wengrower, 2009, p. 21).

The story, ‘*Over the Steamy Swamp*’, is a tale about a hungry mosquito, who is hunted by a greedy dragonfly, who is hunted by a famished frog, who is hunted in turn by a peckish fish, and likewise a hungry heron, a starving snake, a craving crocodile, a hostile hunter and a great big ravenous lion. The mosquito bites the lion, who yells “YEOW!”, and in turn all the beasts see each other until frightened creatures flee in all directions. The story has a lot of repetition and rhythm, and as such is engaging. It is not a story that is well known, like Michael Rosen’s ‘*We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*’, which also has a repeating rhythm and structure (Rosen & Illus. Oxenbury, 1989) and uses animals, imagery and expressive words and can be used to explore developmental patterns. The children in the Science Week workshop listened

to the story, showed me their animals, and came up with a display. Some of the images and words that the children put together can be found in Appendix 8.



FIGURE 4 CHILDREN WRITING AND SKETCHING IN SCIENCE WEEK

The words, along with pictures drawn by and of the children were arranged onto three large posters which formed part of the display for children and parents at the culmination of Science Week. The children and I met to put together the posters, and to add drawings from the material gathered and generated in the workshop.

3.9.4 THIRD PHASE

The final data-gathering phase of the research was with the oldest children. As mentioned, the school had reorganised the classes into four, rather than three at the start of the new academic year. Class 4 now had children from Year 5 and Year 6 (age 9–11). Before the end of the year I had spoken to all those leaving the school and moving onto senior schools to ensure that they had a chance to review all the work they had done with me, and to talk about it. For the new sessions I arranged with the class teacher to come in one afternoon a week, on the day when the teaching assistant only worked a half-day. This allowed the class teacher to have some extra time to get on with her own work, and meant that although the class teacher was present, she did not participate or assist in the sessions. In the past, some of the teaching

assistants I had worked with had sat out, however most had joined in, and all had participated in terms of behaviour-management when necessary. I had also, apart from on one occasion, always worked with half the class, at my request. This was in part to ensure that there was enough equipment, and that behaviour was more manageable. It was also to foster a sense that the work was different to normal class-work, and give the children freedom to share, speak freely and explore the material in their own way. This was, however, no longer possible. We were working in the children's normal classroom, with tables and chairs pushed back as much as possible. The space left was narrow, had no walls free and meant that the children were quite cramped. The whole class would be present, and although the class teacher would be in the room, she would not be participating, nor contributing to behaviour-management unless at my explicit request.

I decided to use the time in the sessions (an hour and a half each week) to work on strong physical exercise based around *suryanamaskar* or the sun salute. I used the principle *vinyasa karma* or "the technique of progressing step by step from the known into the unknown" (Devereux, 1998, p. 46) by beginning with a structured set of postures before moving into more progressive work. Although Devereux talks of this as steps towards a wider range or more advanced set of *asanas*, I used a familiar series as a prelude to the experiential and reflective material. Traditionally a yoga practice begins with *suryanamaskar* as it "warms up the body, awakens the breathing, initiates the breath/body synchronization, focuses the mind" (Devereux, 1998, p. 68). This approach is most often used in *astanga vinyasa* yoga (Pattabhi Jois, 1999; Scott, 2000; Swenson, 1999), which is a very physical form of practice. I have found this approach works well with energetic youngsters and with men, as it is athletic as

well as tiring. Before the first session, I wrote my intentions and a plan in my Journal, and these can be seen in Appendix 6.

From the beginning of these sessions I wanted to introduce concepts that would encourage the class to think about their experience and reflect on it. We spent a few weeks thinking about the idea of stretch. Of what it felt like emotionally and physically, of what it looked like in ourselves and in others, and how we could use it. I included sun salutes every time, in part because they are a series of exercises that can be done taking up only a little space. We also addressed the ideas of pain, of happiness and of recognising emotions in ourselves and in other people. The class was encouraged to think about the meaning of the words as well as the emotions in themselves and what it meant for others. As a group we explored how we could show and express emotions through our bodies as ‘frozen’ images as well as through movement. This was used as a game “strike a pose– for an emotion (sad, happy, fear etc.) count from 5 strike a pose to show that emotion and think where in your body you feel it” (Plan phase 3) as well as the basis for individual, partner and group work.

In preparation for a display we explored how stories are told through words and pictures, and I visited the class in Book Week and read to them. This work fitted well with their on-going literacy themes which were also to do with characterisation, emotion and expression. We had six sessions, and then stopped as the class had other commitments. In the following term I met with them again over three days as we worked intensively on a display to put up in their classroom. These sessions were very child-led, as apart from a structured warm-up, the class worked individually or in small groups to produce posters. They outlined their ideas, practiced and took photographs of their movements and poses then compiled them. They

were free to choose any aspect of the work that they wanted to. Some chose to share the work on emotions. Others shared the work on understanding what makes them (and their friends) happy. Some drew yoga poses or wrote poetry. A theme for many groups was balancing on top of each other. Although this was not something I had taught them, I did want to allow them the freedom to move as they wished within the bounds of safety. “Because of all the balancing and stretching do a longer a warm up...Enforcing again the need to be aware of each other particularly when balancing or climbing on each other” (Reflective Journal). The classes were often very loud, and looked slightly chaotic, yet nearly all the children were taking very good care of each other because they were aware. One child was in a group that appeared to be very loud, but were in fact being very safe, so I asked him to speak to the class about “what it was like to be hung between two friends– said he felt safe, trusted them not to drop him” (Field Notes). However, not all children were paying this much attention, and I noted that two children who had joined the class after the six sessions earlier in the year and so had not worked with me before, were “least aware” (Reflective Journal). I also “spoke to the teacher– about how this is different to ‘education’ need for more creativity and freedom but has the edge of being less in control as a teacher. She agreed and said they were enjoying it. They need in this research to have the freedom to express what they want and not what they think I want” (Reflective Journal).

3.10 CONSIDERATIONS NEEDED IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Research methods are tools used by researchers to gather certain types of data, and as such have inherent strengths and limitations. One strength of participatory research is that it allows the participants to actively contribute and allows their voice to be heard and recorded. The concept of voice in the social sciences has different meanings. It can be taken to mean,

‘having a say’ but can also encompass the language, emotional components and non-verbal means used to express opinions (Thomson, 2008). Children, just like adults, do not speak as one voice. They have different perspectives, experiences and opinions. Individuals also use more than one voice, and Thomson (2008) identifies five as follows:

1. **Authoritative**– a representative voice used to speak on behalf of a group, elicited through surveys or discourse analysis;
2. **Critical**– intended to challenge the current state or portrayal;
3. **Therapeutic**– this is heard in safe spaces where difficult experiences can be discussed and supported;
4. **Consumer**– expressing preferences about lifestyle or culture and choices about identity;
5. **Pedagogic**– a voice that is created by the experiences of being educated by particular kinds of people and regimes. (ibid)

Within each research project it is up to the researcher to define which voice she is aiming to capture and the best methods of achieving this. Participatory research methods, in which the participants are actively involved with the research, may allow situations where the participants feel safe, and able to say what they think without fear of judgement. Participatory observations involve watching, listening, engaging with the participants and reflecting with them with regard to meanings (Clark, 2005). Children may be reluctant to say anything that they feel would displease the researcher. Thomson states that children may “feel more at ease in a pair or a group” (2008, p. 6); however in my experience this is not always the case.

Within groups that I have led it takes time for the children to be confident in the facilitator’s ability to deal with any situation so that an opinion does not lead to ridicule or have a negative

impact for the child within their peer group. I feel that this aspect of facilitating a group draws heavily on holding a therapeutic Person-Centred perspective (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990). This involves creating a space where all the children feel secure to express themselves physically and verbally and know that their contributions are valid. The relationship between a researcher and her participants, the methods she chooses and the way in which she then analyses the data are all important in a phenomenological approach that aims to give voice to the participants (Larkin et al, 2006). However, this emphasis stems more from my training in somatic psychology and movement therapy than participatory research methods. Participatory research methods may elicit the ‘therapeutic’ voice mentioned earlier, but may not provide a safe space in which the participant can be supported and held within a therapeutic context. Not all researchers using this approach to gather data are trained in therapeutic skills. The eliciting of data for research purposes that may not be in the best interests of the participant to share in that moment for that purpose could be considered as a limitation of this approach.

Other limitations of participatory research would combine those of all the research methods that are used within the given project. Potential weaknesses of qualitative research in general include the bias of the researcher, over analysing results, under analysing results, producing work that is lacking in validity, reliability and relevance (Silverman, 2006). One aspect particular to participatory research is the level in which participants are engaged and active within the project. There are different levels of participation. The participants may be considered co-researchers throughout the project and be included and consulted throughout the project. This could include the formulation of the hypothesis (or hypothesis generation from initial analysis if a grounded theory approach is taken (Holloway, 1997)), data

generation and/or collection, data analysis and construction of meaning and also involvement as the research audience. The level of participation of the participants will affect the relationship between the participants and the researcher. This relationship between the researcher and the participants is one of the issues that needs careful consideration in participatory research methods. The researcher may view herself as a co-researcher however this may not be how she is perceived by the participants. There may be power inequalities where the participants try to please the researcher and say what they think is wanted, rather than what they 'really' feel. This is particularly the case when children or young people are participating in research (Lewis et al, 2004).

If the participants are co-constructive with respect to the meaning and interpretation of the data, and after reflection they choose to withdraw participation or significantly change their words then this may have implications for the researcher. This in part depends on how much the researcher allows the participant to be active within the project and the analysis of the data. It may be that the participants are active within certain phases of the research and not others. This may include actively including the participants in the generation of data and reflections, but not in the analysis and authoring of the final study. The role of the researcher within the project may change throughout the research, from that of co-constructor and co-researcher to author and presenter. It is also important to remember the role of the research audience for any given project as this will in turn affect how the research is disseminated and how the participants feel about their active role and their privacy. This distribution of the roles of researcher and of participant can be more complex in participatory research projects than in those that have less active collaboration. The nature of the data affects how active the participants can be within the analytic and interpretative phases.

Further considerations include elements of the design and methods used in the study. The sample was chosen because of the relationships that had been previously built up between myself as practitioner and the school. This was seen to facilitate open and honest communication from the children (Irwin & Johnson, 2006), and make them less likely to only say things they thought I wanted to hear (Punch, 2002). However, in some sense this was a sample of convenience. The sample was small in size, which can be considered to be a positive for phenomenological analysis (Smith et al, 2009), but does limit the generalizability of the findings. The design of the sessions was aimed to fit in around both my needs and those of the school. Due to changing external factors these needs necessitated that elements of the study; such as class size, frequency and duration of sessions and the number of sessions each age group attended, did not remain consistent. The methods used for data collection were intended to be diverse and facilitate participation from all the children. Some approaches may have inhibited this participation for children; if they did not like moving, drawing, writing, mark or model-making within a group. The interviews were conducted individually, rather than in groups or pairs which may have inhibited some individuals (Thomson, 2008). Children were interviewed after the study, and due to the timing of the phases, a considerable gap had passed for some between their experience of the sessions and their reflective accounts.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach adopted in this thesis, given an overview of the setting and study and set out the ethical and other considerations of the research methods.

The three phases, and the Science Week workshop all had distinct flavours of content. The approach, however, remained consistent. It was focused on exploring how the children perceived aspects of their embodied selves, expressed them through movement, mark-making and writing, and reflected on them. Working with the youngest children allowed very creative elements into the work, as they appeared to have the fewest pre-conceived ideas about what was expected of them. They allowed themselves to embody the experiential anatomy, and explore what it felt like to move and to be still within their body and mind. The very oldest children seemed to enjoy the journaling and reflective side of the work, which was why phase 3 of the study focused more on this aspect. The longer sessions and larger groups in this phase, as well as the increased number of sessions meant that we explored perceptions of emotion alongside the more structured yoga elements over some weeks. The work fit in well to topics that were covered in class, as well as issues that were affecting the children generally.

I did my best to be aware of the curriculum topics that each class was learning at all times, so that the sessions could relate well into the rest of their school work. I felt that this was part of a good professional communication with the staff. The sessions were seen by staff as enrichment, and as part of the school's commitment to increased physical education and activity rather than educational per se. The sessions did have an educational aspect, however, and not least that of exploring the connection between the mind (what we think and feel), and the body (how we hold ourselves, move, and feel). This link between the mind or consciousness and the body is explored in the next chapter, the first of three chapters of findings and discussion.

3.12 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion have been divided into three chapters. The first; 'Embodiment of Children', discusses the data from the study with respect to themes of mind and body, which includes the ideas of a 'bodymind', mindfulness, and perceptions of the body and emotions. The second; 'Embodiment and Learning', discusses the boundary between somatic education and somatic therapy, examines two school sessions using a therapeutic framework and includes two case studies of children who participated. The final chapter of results and discussions is 'Embodiment and Reflection'. This chapter explores the ideas of reflective practice and embodied reflective practice, discusses data from the children's reflective process and includes a case study on how reflective practice can be perceived in teacher education.

CHAPTER 4 EMBODIMENT OF CHILDREN

This section discusses findings of this study in relation to the bodymind, the concepts of mindfulness and mindlessness and examines the children's perceptions of the body, its internal structure, image, and movement.

4.1. BODYMIND

The importance of the bodymind (or embodied mind) as opposed to a body/mind split in the philosophy of psychotherapy can be traced back through Freud and his discovery of the power of the unconscious over the conscious and his work on the power-relationship between therapist and client (Hartley, 2004). Psychology has historically had “a sorry history with the body, tending either to ignore it (cognitive and social psychology) or treat it as exclusively functional (biological and neuro-psychologies)” (Cromby, 2011, p. 79). Hardy (1996) speaks of the schisms between spirit and matter, and masculine and feminine (with the association of the feminine to nature). She credits this to Descartes' belief in the authority of mind over the body, and states that they are entirely separate, or that there is nothing included in the concept of the body that belongs to the mind, and nothing in that of the mind that belongs to the body (ibid). This view is still held by some, such as Ecclestone and Hayes (2004) who believe “it is the rationality and the logocentrism that make us human” (ibid, p. 152). In contrast, Damasio (1994) puts forward the view of Spinoza, a contemporary of Descartes, who believed that the body and mind were composed of a single continuous substance. The philosopher Clark (1998) asserts that the body and mind are interwoven together, whilst body psychotherapist Totton works from an embodied perspective (2003) and Dance Movement Therapist Chaiklin (2009), states that “mind is indeed part of the body, and the body affects the mind” (ibid p. 3).

The ascendancy of the mind over the body and its importance in the development of Western philosophy and later medicine and psychology can be traced back to the days of Plato, the Orphic and Socrates: “the body is an endless source of trouble...only the mind can reach existence” (Plato (trans. Gallop), 2009). Descartes’ dualism was firmly anti-organic, built on earlier notions of the physical world as “the domain of corruption and evil” (Watts, 1961, p. 94). The division or schism between mind and body can thus be seen to have affected Western society from its earliest days, with the body being seen as inferior to the mind.

Eastern philosophy has a different starting point and language when talking of the mind and body, illustrating “the irrelevance of Western theories to non-Western contexts” (Reed, 2008, p. 668). For example Neo-Confucianist Chang-Tsai (1020–77) states “therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I regard as my nature” (Chan, 1963, p. 497) and Ch’eng Hao (1032–85) wrote “the man of *jen* [humanity] regards Heaven and Earth and all things as one body. To him there is nothing that is not himself” (ibid). There is no opposition of mind and body in this Chinese view of the world. Instead, all of us, all of the universe, is seen to be made out of the same stuff, *ch’i*, or energy. This could be compared to the reality of the physical world in which we know that all matter is energy.

In a discussion of Eastern philosophies and their resemblance to Western psychotherapy, Watts (1961) states that both are concerned “with bringing about changes of consciousness” (p 4). Western psychotherapy has a primary concern with the study of the mind or psyche as a clinical entity, whereas “Eastern cultures have not categorized mind and matter, soul and body, in the same way” (ibid.). The body marks the boundary between the self and the world:

“my outline, which is not just the outline of my skin but of every organ and cell in my body, is also the inline of the world. The movements of this outline are my movements, but they are also movements of the world– its inline” (ibid, p. 70). As such, movement of any kind could also be seen to be part of the relationship an individual has to the world around them. By increasing awareness of the bodymind and its movements, it is therefore possible to increase awareness of that boundary of and relationship with the world (and all others in it). The first stage of this, as in the philosophy of non-interference, is “that people must accept themselves as they are” (Watts, 1961, p. 74). There are obvious parallels to Rogerian non-directive therapy, where the therapist would trust that innate, or ‘embodied’ wisdom of every individual to overcome problems once they are “clearly and consistently stated” (Watts, 1961, p. 76). This level of acceptance is where psychotherapy “falls some way short of liberation...The weakness lies...in tacit agreements– in particular the continued acceptance of the dualistic view of man” (ibid, p. 101). As therapy implies healing, or making whole, to accept within this a fundamental schism, is to accept a non-healing and therefore non-liberation of the self. The aim of psychoanalysis, therefore, is to repair the division between the soul and the body, and thus allow true liberation or the “recovery from the tactical split between the soul and the body which seems necessary for the social discipline of the young” (ibid, p. 181).

Theories of mind and consciousness have also been of interest to physicists. As part of work on reflections, fantasies and essays on the nature of the mind and consciousness, Hofstadter and Dennett write “it is an attractive notion that the mysteries of quantum physics and the mysteries of consciousness are somehow one” (Hofstadter & Dennett, 1981, p. 43). In their opinion, mind can be modelled by non-quantum mechanical computations, and that the ‘observer’ inherent to causal quantum mechanics is a concept that is not precisely defined.

Rather than worrying about possible eigenstates and branching multiple universes, the effects fall back into the random of ‘it either happens one way, or it does not’. The role of physics and where it lies in the Cartesian mind/body discourse and the nature of consciousness is unclear. Whilst the ability of biologists and psychologists to uncover the detailed physiology of the body and brain increases down to the molecular levels and beyond, “psychology becomes a branch of physics, a result that may cause some unease among both groups of professionals” (Morowitz, 1981, p. 36). The theory of quantum mechanics, and the ideas that observation and conscious observation or intention effect events in time and space linked new physics to consciousness. Whilst some physicists, such as Heisenberg, stated that the laws of nature no longer dealt with elementary particles but with the contents of our minds, others, like Schrödinger, moved towards mysticism and a sympathy with Eastern philosophies (Morowitz, 1981). Hartley states definitively “the profound changes in the world of physics since the beginning of the twentieth century have uprooted the old mechanistic and dualistic world view of the Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm, creating a radically new perspective and understanding” (Hartley, 2004, p. 19). She goes further to say that whilst psychology has been slow to ‘catch up’, the field of holistic body-orientated therapies is based on the view that spiritual, physical, psychological and social dimensions are intrinsically linked.

4.2 MINDFULNESS AND MINDLESSNESS

Somatic movement is a way of educating someone to be more mindful. The term mindfulness is, however, “often used in an unclear, even confusing way” (Brown & Cordon, 2009).

Langer (2000) offers a psychological view of mindfulness, whilst Zen Buddhism offers an alternative definition (Kabat-Zinn, 2004). Both traditions historically and generally agree that mindfulness is “rooted in the fundamental capacities of consciousness, namely, attention and

(meta-) awareness” (Brown & Cordon, 2009). In addition, mindfulness can be understood as a cognitive ability, a personality trait, or as a thinking style (Sternberg, 2000). Somatic movement allows us to pay more attention to our mind and body, so that we do not become ‘mindless’ (Langer, 1989). Mindfulness practice “makes us more aware of the context and perspective of our actions” (Langer, 2000, p. 2), giving us a greater sensitivity to our environment, openness to new information, and enhanced abilities for problem solving (Brown et al, 2007). Mindfulness can allow a connection to habitual character patterns through an observation and study of them in the present moment from the removed position of an internal observer (Weiss, 2009). Mindfulness, or perceived control, has been seen to have positive effects on stress reduction and health (Brown et al, 2007). The perception of control, which is not present when acting mindlessly, has been shown to be the significant variable (Langer, 2000), and “shows promise for cultivating positive psychological qualities” (Shapiro & Carlsom, 2009, p. 141). The Western view of mindfulness “develops gradually by looking at aspects of mindlessness and then at the other side of the coin” (Langer, 1989, p. 78), and is not, according to Langer, necessarily the equivalent of the Eastern idea of mindfulness. This is in part due to differences between the open and creative idea of mindfulness described above versus a meditative state in which “the mind becomes quieter and active thought is discouraged” (Langer, 1989, p. 79). The Eastern literature would classically point to a mindfulness practice that utilised the body as the first and easiest object to observe, as the “somatic realm...deeply ties into all our emotional and mental processes...[and] reflects them precisely” (Weiss, 2009, p. 10). Langer does point out that some Eastern views see the meditating mind to be in a state of ‘de-automisation’ in which old categories are broken down and freedom is gained from stereotypes and distinctions.

Mindlessness, according to Langer, can be caused, by among other things: being trapped by categories; automatic behaviour; or acting from a single perspective. The education system in the West usually has a focus on goals rather than the process by which they are achieved. It is an arena in which mindlessness abounds (Lu et al, 2009): “this single-minded pursuit of one outcome or another, from tying shoelaces to getting into Harvard, makes it difficult to have a mindful attitude about life” (Langer, 1989, pp. 33 - 4). Outcome orientations can induce mindlessness throughout life, as we do not have to pay attention if a situation is believed to be familiar and so only notice minimal cues relating to carrying out the scenario. Conversely, if a situation is strange to us, then we can become preoccupied and so miss nuances of our own and others’ behaviour and so become mindless with respect to the immediate situation. With regards to education, if facts are presented unconditionally, then mindlessness is encouraged and accepted truths are not challenged. With regard to embodiment, this also applies to how educators are embodied themselves, as so much of how children learn is through imitation and observation. If the adults around them accept and move and interact with the world in a way that precludes the idea of an integrated bodymind, the children will observe and imitate that. The possibility of attaining and utilising awareness of the whole self is not part of the context or habitus within which children operate, and that context will affect their behaviour and attitudes towards their own expression of themselves in the world.

4.3 LEARNING MINDFULLY

The idea of learning through imitation is discussed by Downey in relation to Bourdieu’s habitus concept (Downey, 2010). Downey uses the example of Brazilian capoeira, a danced martial art that is traditionally learnt primarily through imitation, experimentation, and bodily exercises as an example of “embodied knowledge...not simply the acquiring of technique or

skills but a whole body transformation in strength, flexibility, mobility, perhaps even personality” (Downey, 2010, p. S22). Capoeira, like many other martial arts, somatic movement forms and yoga, can, according to practitioners, affect a person’s kinaesthetic style, the way they interact with the world around them and perceptions they have, and thus affect the unremarkable daily habits and gestures that make up the habitus. Bourdieu uses the term ‘hexis’ to signify “deportment, the manner and style in which actors ‘carry themselves” (Jenkins, 1992/2002, p. 75). Although the terms ‘habitus’ and ‘hexis’ are similar, bodily hexis is described as the “mediating link between individuals’ subjective worlds and the cultural world into which they are born and which they share with others” (ibid). The bodily hexis is deemed to be an unconscious thing, the essence of how a body exemplifies the basics of the culture of the habitus, which itself derives from the thoughtlessness of habit and habituation. It is sometimes claimed that it is possible to ‘see’ by how an individual moves and relates with the world whether they are ‘embodied’ and in many cases the type of awareness training that they have had can be identified. This may be that experts have an ‘education of the attention’, they look at the correct things, and thus seem magically aware (Bailey & Pickard, 2010). Alternatively, it may be due to “highly developed skills of observation and interpreting the body” (Totten, 2003, p. 80) that body psychotherapists and somatic practitioners develop through training. This effect may be explained in terms of Bourdieu’s habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), where an individual moves in a certain way not because of the activities they do, but by the social context in which the lessons take place.

If embodied and learnt knowledge can be accepted as affecting the habitus, then the definition may not be as simple, consistent and unconscious as has been thought. Downey stated:

“practical bodily action instilled and was guided by a socially generated habitus, a ‘structuring structure’ internalized through interaction with people and the physical environment...the habitus in Bourdieu’s model, is history made flesh, a corporeal enculturation that assures social and symbolic continuity while underwriting an individual’s sense of autonomy.” (Downey, 2010, S23)

However, this concept of habitus leaves certain aspects of embodied knowledge unexplored. Through imitative learning, a form of learning almost unique to humans that may shape perception and cognition, it may be that somatic movement forms such as capoeira or yoga can change bodily movement style and affect a gradual but often profound transformation on an individual.

Whilst Bourdieu asserts that behaviour in activities like sport is learned through silent and practical unconscious communication, Downey develops this to state that embodied learning is “neither so quiet nor closed to reflection” (2010, S26). He disagrees with the notion that movements that are conscious and learned cannot form part of the habitus even if they transform key habits, posture and characteristics of the habitus. Downey notes, as was described in relation to the work in this study, that the body needs to be brought into consciousness in order to focus upon a technique before it becomes habitual and automatic. Bailey & Pickard (2010) reported a similar process in the skill learning of young dancers. Langer’s (2000) concept of mindfulness also incorporates a conscious awareness of the self in order to avoid mindlessness. Mindfulness practice may aid learning, as in order to learn “abilities to pay attention and sustain attention are essential” (Shapiro & Carlsom, 2009, p. 18). The idea that “what is learned by the body is not something that one has, like knowledge

that can be brandished, but something that one is” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 73) does not take away from the fact that conscious awareness and embodiment can be taught and learnt, and do not have to be only observed and transmitted at a level below consciousness. The body enacts the past, it does not remember or reflect, it enacts and performs, bringing those moments and feelings back to life. Bodily or embodied learning can in fact bring to consciousness movement traits, postures and tendencies that have become both conscious and problematised (Fogel, 2009; Hartley, 2004), and it is through the embodied learning, training and increased awareness that the individual is able to “demonstrably affect physiological change in the brain, nervous system, bones, joints, sensory organs, even endocrine and autonomic systems...altering the organic architecture” (Downey, 2010, S27).

Embodied learning happens in part through imitation, in part through skilled teachers and in part is facilitated by the brain’s ability to perceive the actions of others in a fashion that significantly overlaps that which it uses to map imagined and actioned actions of the self. The neural mechanisms of the brain do not cohere to the hypothesis that perception and action (mind and body) are fundamentally separate. There is no need for a ‘language of thought’ or an articulation to occur to negotiate a pathway and communication between the two, but instead it is possible that an internalisation occurs so that movements, attitudes and even alternative social constructions that are learned consciously become part of the habitus as they are affected by physical, neurological, perceptual and behavioural changes. In this way, it may be possible to change the habitus mindfully, and to learn new ways of being and skills, such as those in capoeira, music, yoga, dance, other somatic movement forms or sports. Similarly, mindless imitation and action can also have consequences for a person (Langer, 1989).

Mindlessness can have effects on an individual, including, according to Langer (ibid), an inhibiting self-image, unintended cruelty, loss of control and stunted potential. An inhibited self-image can result from a narrow or single pointed view of the self and one's abilities. A judgemental and unhelpful critical perspective that arises from a focus on outcome and comparisons between ourselves and others' accomplishments can hinder us as we go through life, as it will stand in the way of the self-acceptance needed for self-actualisation or liberation (Watts, 1961). If we expect to fail, to be poor, to be uncoordinated because we perceive this to be a permanent part of our character, then unless the mind-set changes, these illusory limits become real. It is also possible to self-induce dependence on others through a mindless acceptance of labels. If we accept a label, for example 'girl' and the associated limitations 'girls are nurses', and allow ourselves to be defined by the label, then we do not consider medicine in any other role, e.g. a doctor, as a career choice (Ford, 2007). Mindlessness can also result in unintended cruelty to others. From Milgram's classic experiment on obedience and authority in which subjects administered electric shocks to 'learners' and continued to do so up to a lethal level in 65% of cases (Milgram, 1974) comes the finding that if small steps are taken after the initial decision is made, then we fall into a routine rather than make decisions each time. A loss of control happens when mindlessness limits an ability to make intelligent choices. Loss of control and autonomy can also result from a mindless attribution of troubles to one source, blaming another for a relationship breakdown, or up-bringing for alcoholism. Helplessness can be learned through repeated failure, and this too can lead to a loss of choice and control.

4.4 BECOMING MINDFUL

Mindfulness can be defined by the key qualities of creations of new categories, openness to new information and the awareness of more than one perspective (Sternberg, 2000). It can also be seen as “an enhanced attention to and awareness of current experience or present reality” (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822). Being able to create new labels, new categories and to redefine the world around us contributes to a mindful, playful approach to the world.

Mindfulness and psychotherapy can be said to share common goals (Weiss, 2009), and a personal practice of mindfulness to cultivate a mindful presence in therapeutic work can lead to “relationships characterised by empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence” (Shapiro & Carlsom, 2009, p. 17). By looking at movement, and the self in a creative way that allows the re-categorising of experiences rather than simply attributing to them those already known, we allow mindfulness to be brought into both the situation and the context in which it is found.

For example, in a physical education lesson with a theme of festivals and fireworks, I asked the children to think and feel a colour, then to move as that colour: “the class teacher was struck by the different qualities of movement she observed. Green was quite calm, red running, orange spikey, yellow bouncy, blue slower, purple spikey and balancy, gold swooshy” (PE class 2 Field Notes). This is an example where the children had to pay attention to and be aware of their feelings and sensations and re-categorised an experience (colour) into movements, and it was playful, as well as being mindful. Langer’s definition of mindfulness also includes openness to new information, and that must include new ways of looking at the world, moving through it or processing it. Her thoughts on reducing mindlessness in education include changing the language used to open up possibilities

(Langer, 2000). This would include using terms such as ‘could be’ rather than ‘can only be’, or, as in the example outlined, allowing learners to have free expression without inhibiting or censoring their responses.

Meditation is one way that is possible to develop mindfulness, and can take many guises, only one of which is abstaining from thoughts. Awareness of the body, of the breath (whilst lying, sitting or moving) are also ways to practise mindfulness and a form of meditation. Rest can also be meditative in yoga, as it is not going to sleep or napping, but instead an awareness and process of being still. Traditionally practised in *shavasana*, or corpse pose, it is a preparation for death, when “the inside of the head needs to rest the two hemispheres of the brain slide away from each other there is new space between the two and the head is able to be more silent more quiet this silence travels to the rest of the body” (Sabatini, 2000, p. 213).

Traditionally this pose is where an individual lies supine, with their arms by their sides and feet slightly apart, symmetrical about a mid-line. With young children (and any individual who finds themselves to be easily distracted), it may be more conducive to rest in a prone position with the arms making a pillow for the head and the big toes touching, as the underside of the belly is then stimulated by the contact with the floor, which helps to relax the body, focus the mind and decrease tone in the tissues (Brook, 2001).



FIGURE 5 RESTING IN PRONE POSITION

Learning to be still in body and in mind can be one of the most challenging aspects of a mindful practice for many people. Sabatini quotes the song of Mahamudra to illustrate the processes of relaxation and breathing with awareness “at first, the mind tumbles like a waterfall in mid-course, it becomes calm like a river flowing slowly in the end, it is an ocean where two halves merge in one” (Sabatini, 2000, p. 215). If children are taught this skill, then they are more likely to retain it as adults.

Zen Buddhist ‘mindfulness’ is the practice that informs how Tremmel approaches the idea of reflective practice. Although he is not a Zen teacher, and explicitly states that it is not within his remit to teach *Zazen* (Zen meditation), he does bring up mindfulness within the context of reflective action to help his students pay attention. Similarly to SME, Zen is a practice that allows an individual to tune into her senses so that she becomes fully aware of what is going on around her, thus developing the ‘eyes in the back of the head’ that experienced practitioners can seem to have.

Mindfulness, or somatic awareness, is holistic in the sense that it assumes an embodiment of the soul or spirit in the physical corporal body (Hanna, 1988). This is in opposition to the view espoused by Derrida (1987), who stated “spirit is not the thing, spirit is not the body” (p. 15). Derrida also states Heidegger’s view, that certain terms such as ‘spirit’ should be avoided. This avoidance of spirit is in almost direct opposition to the incorporation of mind/body/spirit that is central to somatic principles. In fact, the body, along with the outside and the inanimate is described as being “the opposite of spirit” (Derrida, 1987, p. 25).

The next section looks at the data from somatic movement sessions with children, and how they expressed thoughts about mind, body and bodymind.

4.5 CHILDREN’S SOMATIC MOVEMENT AND BODYMIND

Somatic movement by its nature is ‘embodying’ and promotes mindfulness, as it brings conscious awareness to the body and its movement and processes. The bringing together of language, communication and movement experientially reinforces a sense of an integrated bodymind. The children in this study were not asked to comment specifically on their perceptions of mind, consciousness and Cartesian duality. My presence as a somatic movement educator may have implicitly reinforced an idea of bodymind unity in that I used language that included all their feelings, emotions, and images as well as thoughts. However, these are children who have grown up in the West, and are subjected to more traditional views of the body/mind split in most other aspects of their lives. For example, when asked as part of a session on shapes to be still in, “can you still your mind?” there was a mixed response of yes, no and maybe. I did, however, ask them about how and why they moved, and the responses give insight into how they see their bodies and minds.

“How I move. I move gracefully, happily and joyful. Why I move. I move because standing in one place will get me nowhere. Things I do. I do birds, bunnies and tigers.” (C. Year 4)

Here, C. seems to identify herself with a moving, natural world, and expresses a need to progress forward within it. An older girl, E., struggled to conceptualise her experience just through thought, but found that processing through other mediums allowed her to reflect on her moving self.

“I found that like quite hard to like think about it but then it was easier to write, to draw and write about it.” (E. Year 5)

The experience of the older children appeared to be that they were less comfortable considering this type of open and exploratory question. At no point did I try to guide them into giving me a certain type of answer, but allowed them to express what it was they felt, which included that sense of confusion at or ‘not knowing’, or ‘hardness’ that E. spoke of. Some of the older children enjoyed the opportunity to consider this type of question.

“Me: How did it feel when I used to ask you to think about what it felt like and to draw about it and to talk about it and to write about what it felt like to do all this stuff?

K.: Sort of -- there was -- it makes me calm.

Me: It made you calm? What, thinking about how it felt made you calm?

K.: Yes.

Me: Yes? Why’s that?

K: Well, I think it's because you really have to think about it and be quiet.
Sometimes you have to be loud and things." (K. Year 5)

Being given time to consider questions like 'how does this feel?', 'how does this make me feel?' and 'how or where do I feel it?' was an experience that the children seemed to appreciate and was a fundamental part of the sessions. Sessions were not just about the moving, creating body, but also about how that could be expressed. K. continued to talk about the journaling aspect of the work.

"Me: What was it like writing it or drawing it as well?

K: It was very fun drawing and writing.

Me: Why was it fun drawing and writing?

K: Because you got to write how you felt and what you done and things.

Me: And you liked doing that?

K: Yes.

Me: Yes? Why did you like it?

K: Because people get to see how you feel.

Me: Is that important?

K: Yes." (K. Year 5)

For K., feeling was not enough, she also wanted to be seen to feel, to be witnessed or observed by others. Her sense of self needed to be validated by those around her. MI., in Year 6, wrote about how he sensed the world around him and how that changed dependant on whether he was moving or still. He separated his brain as an organ, or as thoughts differentiated from his body.

“Me: This is all about finding shapes to be still. And you've written “when I'm moving I can't see things. What I can see when I'm still. My brain I see is a big grey colour. And you've drawn a box and you've written I feel stuck. And I think the wood is like a maze. My brain is thinking a bug could be there”. So you've written thoughts and drawn pictures about the thoughts that you were having when you were still. That's what it looks like. Is that what it was?

MI: Yeah, I think so.” (MI. Year 6)

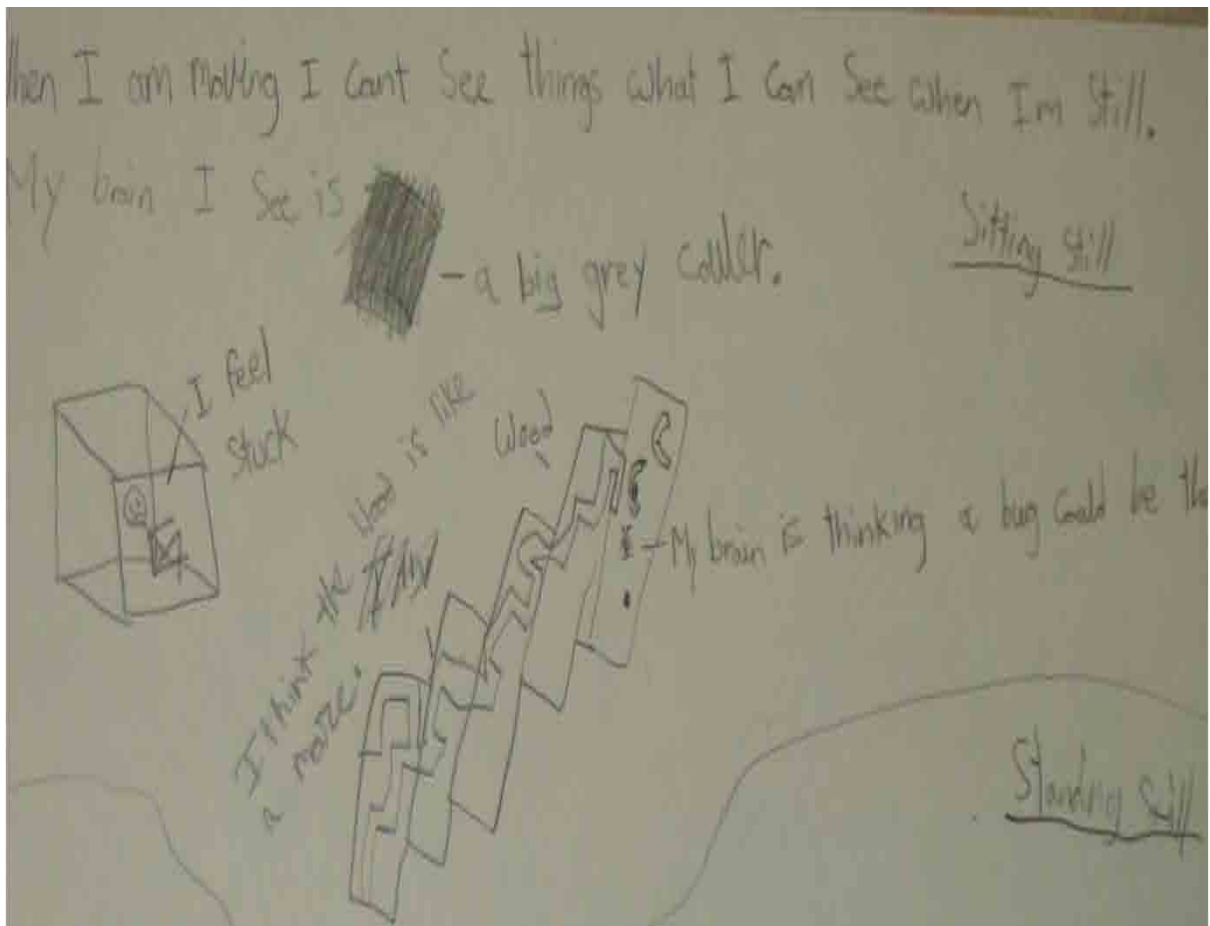


FIGURE 6 MI.'S REFLECTIONS ON HIS BRAIN

This drawing of the brain, is of an owned “my brain” that is seen by MI. to be part of himself, rather than the whole of his rational being. He writes “my brain is thinking a bug could be there”, as opposed to ‘a bug is there’ which he may have done if he had identified solely with the thoughts originating in his brain. Embodiment does not mean that we do not recognise our mind and thoughts as part of us, rather that we do not see our thinking self as the totality of who we are. We become “conscious of thoughts, motives and emotions as well as sensory and perceptual stimuli” (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822). Consciousness is of course a large part of who we are, and embodiment does not seek to annihilate the soul and only leave a body as in the short story ‘An unfortunate Dualist’ by Raymond Smullyan (Hofstadter & Dennett, 1981, pp. 383 - 4). These children were free to express what they felt. For example, at the beginning of one session with the oldest children I “asked the children to sit for one minute, then take two minutes to write/draw what it was like what they felt. One child drew her mind” (Field Notes phase 1).



FIGURE 7 L. DREW HER MIND

Another said in an interview about his work “I used dark colours because I was bored at first and then light colours because I was happy and stuff because we had to use our brain and stuff to be still and concentrate.”



FIGURE 8 DARK THEN LIGHT MIND

4.6 THE BODY

The body has an intrinsic phenomenological significance. Its centrality has been discussed by many philosophers including Husserl (Carman, 1999), Merleau-Ponty (2002), Sartre (1969), Marcel (2011), Straus (1935/1963) and Jonas (2001) among others. Foucault regarded discipline of the body as one of the means by which the mad could be brought back to an “affirmation of social standards” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 9), and “a crucial site of conflict between various forms of power and resistance to power, like a contested territory”

(Totton, 2009, p. 191). The idea of the absent body has also been raised by Derrida (1987), Sokolowski (2000), Merleau-Ponty (2002) and Leder (1990). The idea of a 'decorporealised' existence in Western society can be in part attributed to the hold of the Cartesian paradigm which separates the mind from the body, with the body often relegated to a secondary or oppositional role from a Platonic 'purified soul' (Leder, 1990). This, which could still be seen as the dominant paradigm of the body, is the one that is promoted through dogmatism or indoctrination (Bailey et al, 2010), much as dominant paradigms are transferred to the young in other fields, such as science education (Bailey, 2006).

Many people disassociate themselves from their body to one degree or another, or differentiate between aspects of their body and consciousness that in turn affects their perception of their body. For example, Hardy (1996) describes a model of the Higher Self, a context of personality, which is comprised of the physical, feeling and mental body.

Lu, Tito and Kentel (2009 p. 354) describe how taking a subjective view of the body often requires a qualitative methodology, and an appeal to phenomenological thinkers who argue for a "qualitative, hermeneutic approach to the body (the lived body as a text to be interpreted)". They go on to explain 'hermeneutics' to include things such as body image, how one comports oneself, how one relates to the world and to others. Also included is the body's function to problematise one's identity, to alter it, to serve as a political statement and how it can be used to transgress stereotypes and to change power relations. This type of discussion of an 'embodiment' is a theme often found in works of a more sociological nature (Crossley, 2006; Evans, Davies, & Wright, 2004; Pickard, 2007; Oliver & Lalik, 2001). This idea of embodiment is an alternative to a spiritual view, indeed, the body's 'unspeakable'

aspect, or ineffability “has long been remarked upon by philosophers...consequently it is something to be managed rather than resolved” (Cromby, 2011, p. 83).

Using the body to increase a sense of embodied self-awareness through movement practices can be an aim of somatic movement practices, education or therapeutic techniques (Fogel, 2009). The use of Eastern Movement Disciplines (EMDs) to develop mindfulness is described by Lu et al (2009). They talk of EMDs as embodying a “philosophy of mindfulness which they teach through physical movement” (ibid, p. 356) and state that all address the three core issues of philosophy, health and education. It is fairly contentious to lump together so many disparate forms and practices into one category of ‘EMDs’, as they include “Yoga, and Qi Gong...Eastern martial arts and Eastern meditations” (ibid). Even within one form of movement discipline there may be many schools, views and allegiances. The fragmentary nature of the history of just one field, somatics, is addressed by Johnson (1995). Such divisions have contributed to the underground nature of this work as each school or form has a tendency to use different language to describe the work they do. Within the educational and therapeutic fields there is a move towards an integration of somatics under the umbrella of the International Somatic Movement Educators and Therapists Association. These differences may have lead people to believe that their own practice is different from others’, with a different intention behind it, rather than viewing it as an alternative means of reconnecting with their body.

4.6.1 PERCEPTIONS OF BODIES AND MOVEMENT

Perceptions of our bodies can change depending on our context (Brown et al, 2010), or habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). Duncan (2007) explores six ‘bodies’ of knowledge that inform

perceptions of bodies; the imagined body, the consumer body, the transgressive body, the disciplined body, the practiced body and the discursive body. The imagined body is described as the body image that an individual holds, the external perception of a body “how our own bodies look to others” (Duncan, 2007, p. 56). This imagined body is seen by a “panoptic gaze, a kind of self-surveillance, in which a woman or girl regards her body through the eyes of others...Are her clothes too tight? Do they make her thighs look big?” (Duncan, 2007, p. 57). This inner gaze that encourages a surveying, “with degrees of distress, their own bodies for signs of abnormality against an unrealistic image” (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 43) is a long way from the non-judgemental and compassionate inner witness developed through somatic practices such as Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002), yoga (Rosen, 2002) or mindful psychotherapy (Weiss, 2009).

Secondly, the consumer body refers to the body that consumes through purchases, or sport (through identification with a team, or for one who identifies as an athlete through participation at a health club) and views their body as an object to be altered through consumption of exercise, diet or surgery to meet a desired ‘ideal’ outcome.

The transgressive body and the disciplined body are described as two sides of the same coin. The transgressive body is one that “deviates from the social norm and defies social expectations. Some examples include the pierced and tattooed body, the disabled body, the hypermuscular body” (Duncan, 2007, p. 60). Whereas the disciplined body is one subjected to disciplines such as exercise and dieting, or one that has been medicalised or where the body is the object and target of power (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Duncan links the disciplined body to the moral imperative, to a body that adheres to ‘good’ behaviour. These definitions

and identification with ‘good and ‘bad’ raise questions about where a body would fit if it overlaps between these two domains, for example the disabled athlete who adheres to a strict training regime or diet, or the tattooed dancer who does the same. This theme has been explored within physical education research (Dyck & Archetti, 2003). Certain types of dance also raise a separate issue, for although it would surely fall into the disciplined body category, many practices within dance can be injurious, and the individual following them would almost inevitably fall outside of the social norm, thereby crossing into the transgressive body domain.

The practised body is identified with a skilled athlete, one who rehearses movement sequences again and again. Duncan highlights the importance of social practices within this structure, and gives an example of becoming adept at the Korean martial art Tae Kwon Do, where a critical part is the learning of the correct social code of discipline, strength, and self-confidence that comes from being part of a group. For many, “mastery of the body is second to the social benefits of the martial arts” (Duncan, 2007, p. 62). This could be interpreted as exercise being used as a social practice to control and transform the individual, and to bend them to the will of authority. Tae Kwon Do is particularly hierarchical, as are many martial arts (Delamont, 2006; James & Jones, 1987). Other sports, for example gymnastics and football also have hierarchical elements in their talent development systems (Bailey & Toms, 2010). How would this theory relate to other practices that require skilled movement and a ‘practiced body’ but that are not in their nature so dogmatic?

Lastly, the discursive body is the body evoked in language. Once again, the language used by Duncan is that used to objectify the body, as the examples of the medicalisation, and reactions

to obesity are used (Duncan, 2007). This can be compared with the language used in Authentic Movement and somatic forms to express the experiences of the body (Adler, 2002; Da'Oud, 1995). The importance of language cannot be underestimated, as it is a vital element in our understanding and experience of our bodies.

“Our understandings of these things are embedded in our words, not separate from them. In a real sense language is constitutive; there is no reality that stands apart from it, nor is language merely a reflection of the actual thing...For this reason words have power.” (Duncan, 2007, pp. 62 - 63)

There are different discourses regarding perceptions of the physical body and identity within the context of physical education, sport and dance. One such discourse is the negotiation of the male identity in regard of men whose previous experience of sport was more traditional, as discussed by Wellard (2006), as he explored the attitudes of male physical education degree students who took part in a dance group. Although somatic movement is not dance, it may share more characteristics with dance than with more traditional games-based physical education, and as such may elicit similar responses from those whose prior experience was only in traditional sport. Initially the men in Wellard's study viewed dance to be outside of their definitions of sport and 'girly', however within the context of physical education they were aware of its value for both boys and girls; even if it was seen as “an enticement for those non-sporting types to take part in sport” (ibid, p. 6). In sport, the body plays a “central role in determining who the participants should be” (ibid, p. 109), and this relates to social normative codes and requirements.

By introducing an emphasis on embodied self-awareness and a non-judgemental acceptance of the body as in somatic movement education (SME), it may be possible for a child (or adult) to develop an understanding of their own body as it relates to the world, rather than a view of a gendered and socially constructed body. Body theory has been described as being disembodied and masculinist (Sparkes & Smith, 2002). But are there differences between how a 'sports' man, and one practised in a somatic movement form perceives their body? Are there further differences between female and male 'sports' people and somatic movement practitioners? Are there cross-over activities that encourage a more 'feminine' or embodied body view?

In a discussion of masculinity, gender and the construction of men's sporting identities, Wellard seeks to "provide evidence of the way in which early experience of sport contribute to the formation of individual sporting identities" (Wellard, 2006, p. 111). He does this with an emphasis on the gendered masculine body. Where prowess in sport, and bodily strength attract the most cultural capital, one participant found "his body was a major source of humiliation as he felt unable to compete physically" (ibid, p. 112). Within SME, there should be no competition with peers. In practice, establishing a non-competitive atmosphere can be challenging.

In this study I wanted the children to elucidate how they felt about and viewed their bodies. Within the sessions with the children in the study, the children were able to feel that all their experiences were valid: "no-one can tell you what to do and that, you can do whatever you want to do, really" (C. Year 4). Without an emphasis on strength, or other form of bodily prowess attracting capital, the children were "free to have different experiences" (Reflective

Journal). When moving, there were no significant differences in preferred movement patterns between the boys and the girls. Both genders enjoyed the more acrobatic sessions on balancing, locomoting and the like.

In contrast to this similarity of experience between genders, Bailey et al (2005) found that girls' participation in physical activities and sport show differing patterns and influences. The report was in response to concerns that girls have lower participation in sport and physical activity in school, and then later on in life. Young girls may be able to take part and enjoy sport as children, but the onset of puberty "creates problems in terms of the social understanding of their bodies, which effectively precludes them from taking part" (Wellard, 2006, p. 113). Recommendations were made to implement strategies that built upon enjoyment, feelings of fun, and to "listen to voices from outside mainstream sports, for example, dance, mixed ability, non-competitive and co-operative activities" (ibid, p. 10). If, as suggested "recognition of the individual experience of the body has often been overlooked", and there is the "potential for the individual to be exposed to negative emotional experiences of shame and bodily embarrassment" (p. 18), then it seems that experience of activities and forms of moving which are not goal or ability orientated but are instead focused on an experience of the moving self, such as SME, would help to combat negative experiences of physical education and school sport.

With respect to adolescent girls, Oliver and Lalik (2001) discuss the normalisation of societal acceptance of girls' anxieties over their bodies. The adults involved with physical education and the view of the body within educational curricula "often objectify the body, constructing it as an object to be controlled or manipulated" (ibid, p304), rather than acting as sources of

support and comfort, to aid girls resisting harmful attitudes and behaviours. Self-objectification of women was shown to decrease in those that practised yoga as opposed to those who did not exercise or practised aerobic exercise (Daubenmier, 2005). In addition, yoga practitioners showed a greater satisfaction with physical appearance, and fewer disordered eating attitudes, along with a greater awareness of and responsiveness to the body. These findings were thought to be as a result of the mind/body focus that exists in yoga, differentiating it from a purely body orientated exercise. It was suggested that an increasing sensitivity to the awareness of bodily sensations as encouraged through yoga classes minimised self-objectification and its negative effects on body image and eating disorders. The oldest girls in my study were 11, and on the verge of puberty. Developing a more positive relationship with the body through somatic movement and an increased embodied self-awareness may 'protect' them from the self-objectification and negative self-perception common in adolescent girls.

Whilst discussing embodied reflexive practices in young ballet dancers, Wellard, Pickard and Bailey (2007) talk of how the "bodily pleasures experienced through sporting activity have to be managed within a social understanding" (ibid, p. 81), and this would include how individuals experience their bodies differently, and for some, such pleasures may be through practices that include discipline, hard work, or pain (Pickard, 2007). They equate the dancer's body to the disciplined body as described above, and although they talk of embodied reflexive practices and processes where the "body is contemplated" (Wellard et al, 2007, p. 81). They also refer to dance as being 'performed', and use language that dissociates the body to some extent, for example "the possession of specific physical characteristics" (ibid, p. 82), or the interviewer referring to certain areas of the body that "are a problem" (ibid). A somatic

movement approach stands in contrast, where ownership of the body and the self is emphasised, along with an accepting and non-judgemental attitude. It could be argued that dance is for performance, for the external appreciation of an art form whereas somatic movement is for the personal experience. Wellard et al (2007) talk of the importance of the embodied experience, and how it felt for the dancer to move, and their pleasure in the dance as a vital factor to understand their continued participation. They quote a dancer as saying “it is a beautiful experience...a way of expressing myself” (p. 83). The language used around some forms of dance, such as ballet, does not always seem to allow for a truly embodied and holistic experience of the body as it is caught up with the socially constructed ideal of what a body is and should do within the context of the dance, which historically has had to conform to a physiological ideal (Sparger, 1949). This may help to explain why “in comparison to non-dancers, many dancers tend to have low self-esteem and can be preoccupied with body shape and image” (Pickard, 2006, p. 2). It may be that perceptions of what ‘dance’ itself is or means to an individual is relevant. In this study, one girl in Year 4 expressed her feelings about how she used her body (see Fig. 9). To her, dance was an integral part of moving.

The explicit focus of the work was on the physical moving body, but never excluded the language, thoughts or feelings that were associated with them. Within sessions I asked them specific, open questions about their experiences, for example, “what do you think is inside you?”, or, “why do we move?” One child answered: “we move our legs to walk in line, we use our eyes to look, we use our mouths to talk, we use our hands to pick up things” (K. Year 5).

We use are body to
move and dance
wherever
we are.

FIGURE 9 WE USE ARE (SIC) BODY TO MOVE AND DANCE



FIGURE 10 A. WHAT AND WHY WE MOVE

I noted down responses in my field observations, and collected what they had written or drawn. In the interviews, however, I deliberately chose to use open language and questions that would not lead them towards one type of answer. Within the sessions I did not talk to the children about health and exercise generally. However, health, and the need for health, along with the ‘good-ness’ of exercise was one aspect that was associated with the body by some. This tendency of children to identify fitness and movement in terms of both intrinsic (enjoyment) and extrinsic (health) benefits was found by Dismore and Bailey (2010), and has been a recurring theme in physical education literature.

“Me: What do you remember most about the stuff that we did?”

C: I can remember the yoga that we done.

Me: What do you remember about the yoga?

C: We done lots of stretches and lots of poses.

Me: Yes? What was that like?

C: That was really good, stretching our muscles and get them healthy again.

Me: Did you like doing the stretching?

C: Yes.

Me: What did you like about that?

C: Just the feeling of getting more health into your bones and stuff.” (C. Year 4)

“Me : What do you wish we'd done more of?”

E.: More of that stretching stuff.

Me: What did you like about the stretching stuff?

E.: I thought it was good for me because I thought my body would get more exercise.

Me: Is it good to get exercise?

E.: Yeah.

Me: Why is it good to get exercise?

E: So your body can keep on going and not get low– like your fuel doesn't go low and lower, you want it to go high and higher.

Me: Okay. And does stretching do that for you then?

E.: Yes. Because I always go to my auntie's and we walk from home.

Me: Wow, that's a long walk, isn't it?

E.: Yeah.” (E. Year 2)

“Me: Why did you draw a picture of you running?

K.: Because I would draw a picture of running because I would be more fittable and lose weight.

Me: Do you like running?

K: Yes.” (K. Year 2)

K. wrote further about moving in one of the sessions. She again mentioned fitness, as well as conflating the need to move with being alive. Movement (along with respiration, sensitivity, growth, reproduction, excretion and nutrition) is one of the seven signs of life: “we move because if we didnt we woud not be alive and we woudent be fit ever (sic)” (K. Year 2). K. went on to link moving with a variety of emotions “sometimes we fill (sic) happy sad cross when we move” (K. Year 2).



FIGURE 11 K. RUNNING

Other children also chose to draw and write about their perceptions of moving. T. (Year 5) equated movement with an instinctual quality that we have from birth “you can’t stop moving because that how your born (sic).” She illustrated her reflections with types of movements, possibly answering the question of what, and why she should move her body.

In answer to the same question, ‘why, how and what do we move?’, D. wrote that “we move so we can do stuff and feel. We move so we can swim we you’s are arms and legs to swim (sic)” (D. Year 3). For D., movement is about doing and feeling. At the time he wrote this he

had recently started swimming lessons, and been in a pool for the first time. He had begun to experience his moving body in a new environment.

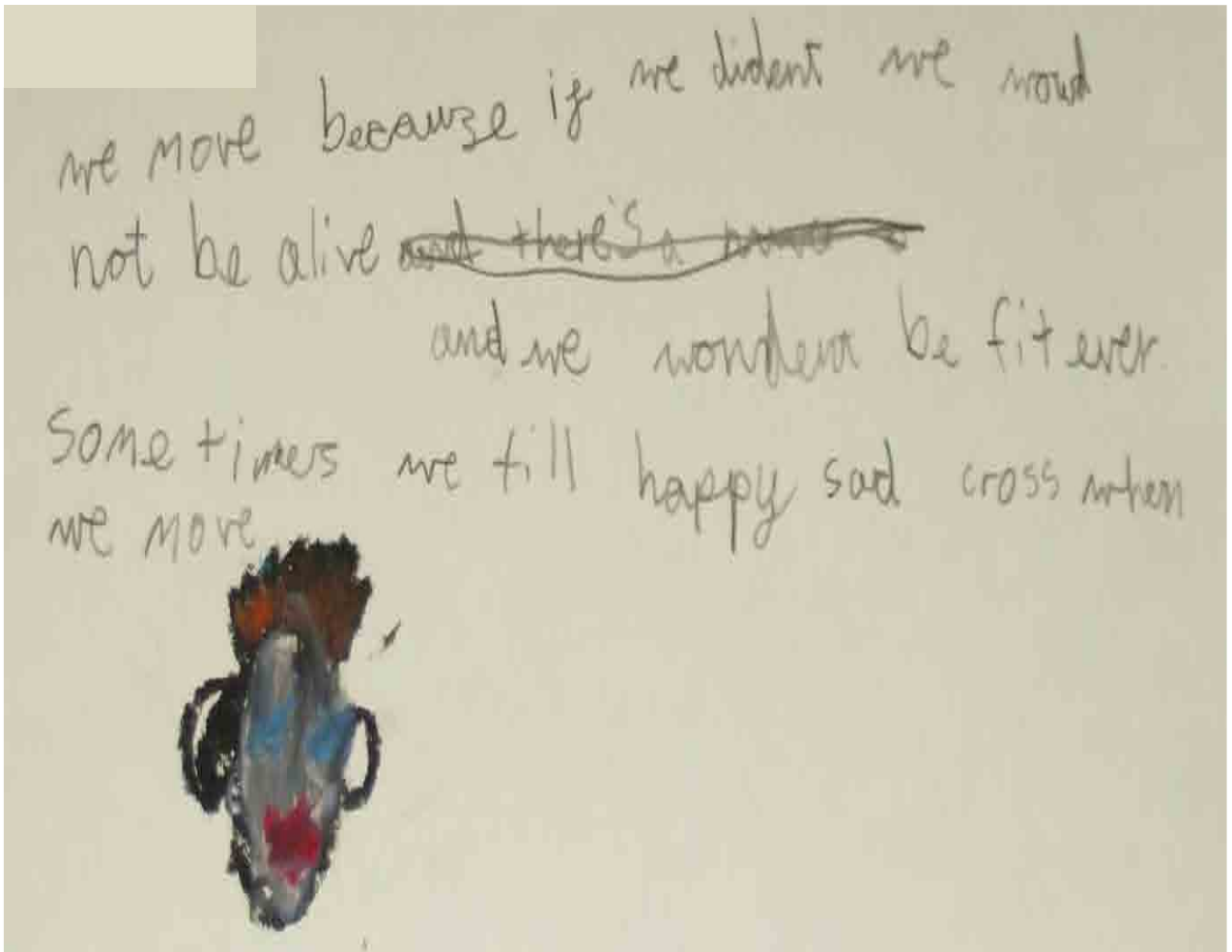


FIGURE 12 K. WHY WE MOVE

As part of her reflections on moving, E. differentiated her body into moving parts; her feet, her eyes, her hands and her lips. She identified movements that each part was associated with (walking, running, blinking, seeing, clapping, picking up and putting down, talking, shouting etc.). Interestingly, she wrote that “we move are (sic) eyes to...go to sleep” (E. Year 5). For her, sleeping may be equated to shutting her eyes rather than a change in consciousness. E. also wrote that “different moves can be use when we are happy, sad, exited shy and lots more

(sic)” (E. Year 5). The implication is that we use movement or moves to express our feelings deliberately, rather than we are moved by our feelings.

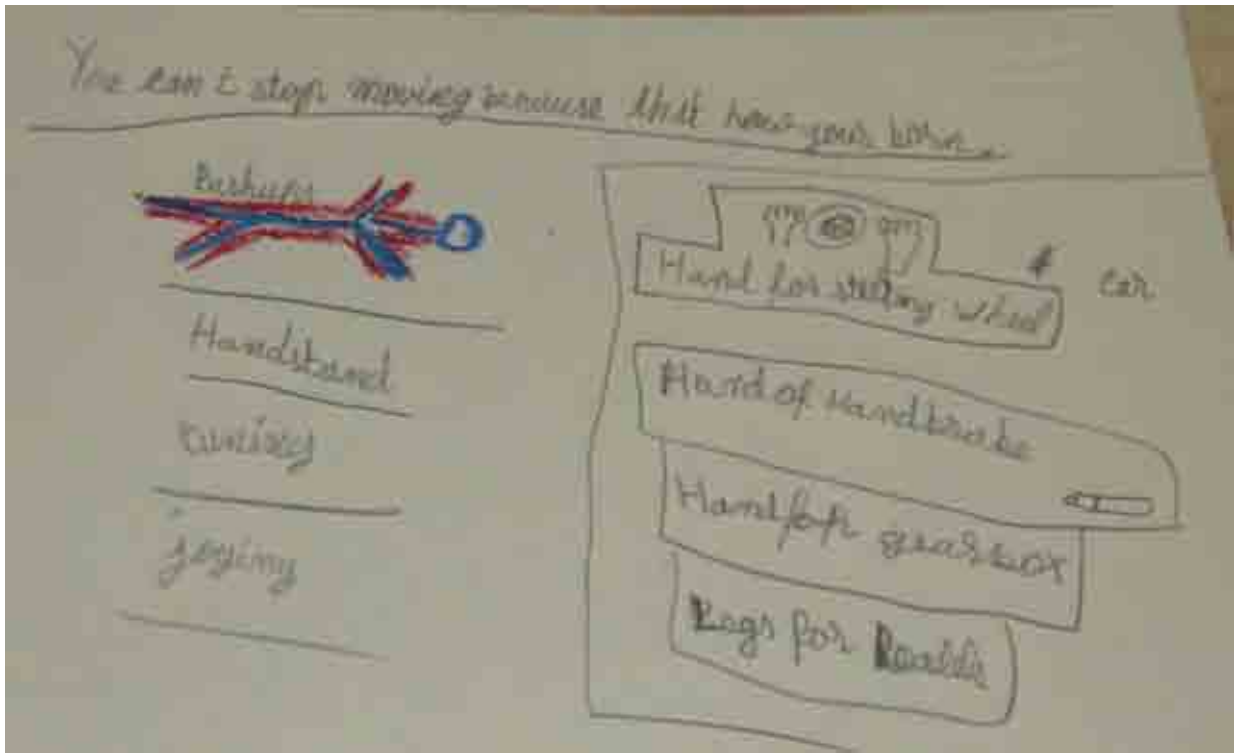


FIGURE 13 T. WHY, WHAT AND HOW WE MOVE

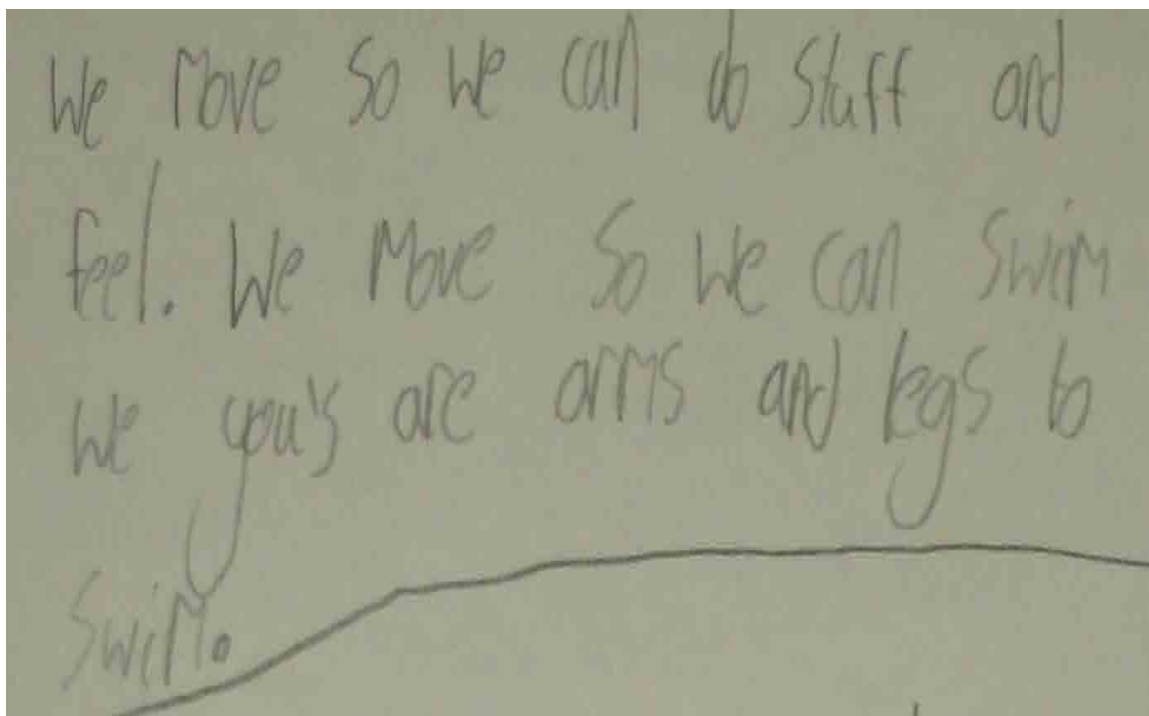


FIGURE 14 D. WE MOVE SO WE CAN...

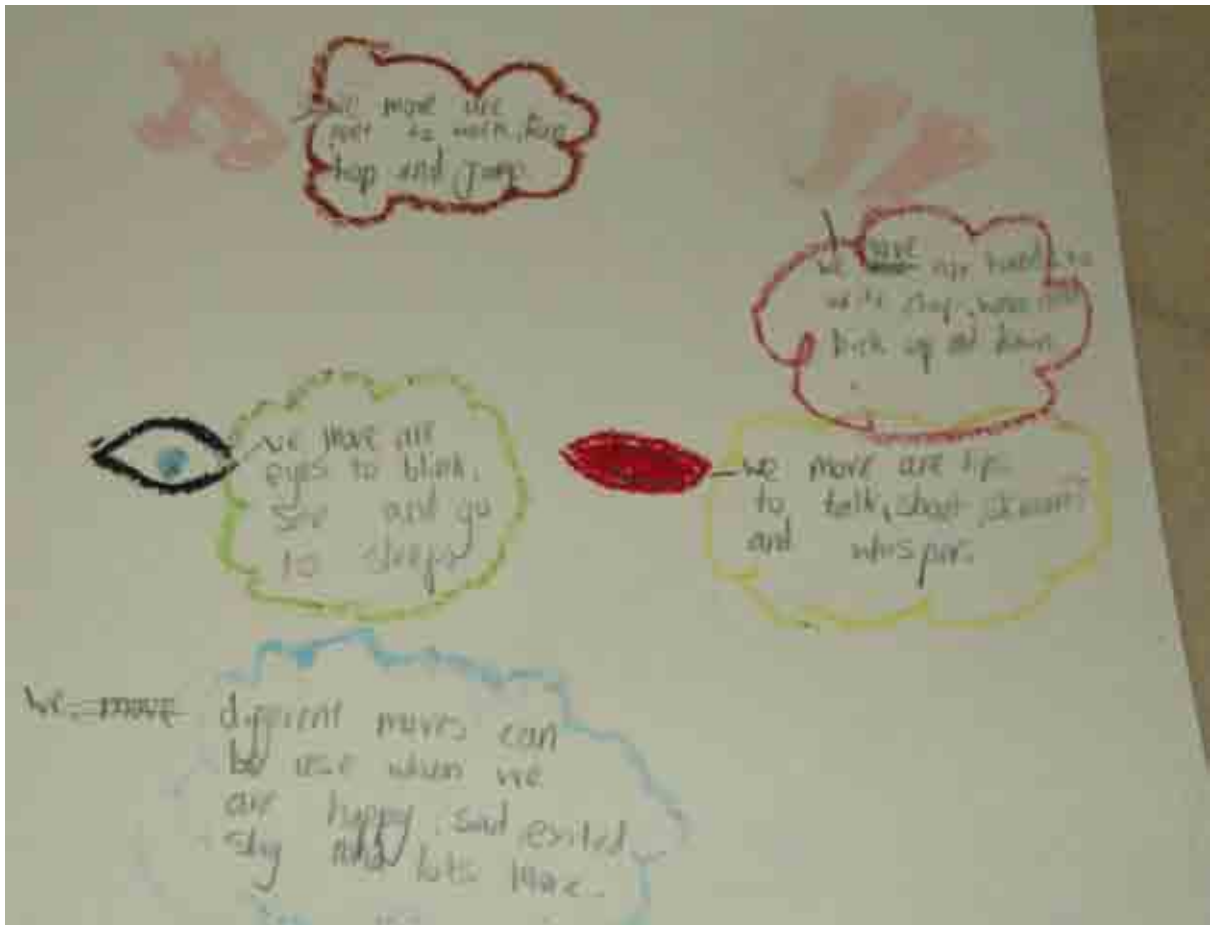


FIGURE 15 E. DIFFERENT MOVES

Within the sessions we used various ways of ‘seeing’ our bodies as well as showing them. One week they used pipe-cleaners to make pipe-cleaner people into shapes, and then make and show those shapes with their own bodies. The idea behind this was to link the external image of the body with the internal sensations. Using different forms of materials to relate the expression of movement with the ‘grounded’ movement experience is a technique used in Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002). Methodologically, using different materials increases engagement and facilitates expression from participants (Punch, 2002). I asked the children in the interviews what they thought of the approach of using pipe-cleaner models in this way.

“Me: How is making the model and then trying to be the model with your own body?

CH.: It’s pretty fun because you do whatever you want, no-one can tell you what to do and that, you can do whatever you want to do, really.” (CH. Year 4)



FIGURE 16 CH.'s PIPE-CLEANER MODEL

In general the children chose to make shapes that were physically possible and achievable, although some chose to stretch the limits of what they could do.

“Me: How was it to make them into shapes and then to find that shape with your own body?

C: It was fun because like you could experiment, like what your body could do and then you could make it into like a little person.” (C. Year 6)



FIGURE 17 C.'S PIPE-CLEANER MODEL

Although most of the children enjoyed this activity at the time, and some spoke about it as one of the things they remembered most, not all found it easy to ‘see’ or have an awareness of their body while making pipe-cleaner people or drawing.

“Me: And what did it feel like when you drew pictures of you doing stuff?

EM.: A bit nervous because I didn't know what I looked like because I didn't have a mirror to look in.

Me: Do you need a mirror to see what you look like?

EM.: Yes.

Me: Why do you need a mirror to see what you look like?

EM.: Because my eyes can't go on my hands so I can see.” (EM. Year 2)

This idea of not being able to ‘see’ your own body, except when it is in pain or threatened or otherwise suddenly brought into consciousness is discussed by Leder (1990) and is described as in part due to “the body’s own tendency toward self-concealment” (p. 69). By this he means that the visceral organic nature and senses of the body fade into the background when compared to a more ‘engaging’ verbal consciousness. He cites the example of his awareness of his legs disappearing as he sits and reads a book as his mind becomes engaged with the information. For him, and maybe for many people, the body tends to fade into the background. By increasing levels of embodied self-awareness and proprioception (i.e. the sense of their body in space when still and locomoting) through practices such as somatic movement education, yoga and Authentic Movement, it is possible to have one’s body as part of continued consciousness, to build a sense of ‘knowing’ about what it is feeling, experiencing and where it is in space. In Authentic Movement, this is practiced through ‘tracking’ movement and sensation. One convention of the form is to share movement experiences or ‘pools’ in the present tense. For example:

I sit writing and thinking, and I am aware of my left-leg folded up underneath my right sitting bone, the toes of my left-foot extended and pressing against the arch and top of my right-foot. My weight is balancing mainly through my left-hip and I balance my

computer on the outer-side of my right-leg. I am aware that this unevenness in posture will mean that soon I will stretch and shift my body to find another shape in which to work. For me, engagement in one activity does not necessarily equate to the disappearance of my body nor a sense of disembodiment. I focus on this task of writing whilst I remain present to my body and the environment in which I find myself, which includes the sounds of my children playing a make-believe game.

(Reflective Writing)

Leder postulates that whilst an individual learns a new physical activity “the problematic nature of these novel gestures tends to provoke explicit body awareness” (Leder, 1990, p. 31). This fits well with the view that teaching embodiment can be achieved through activities where the body is moved and experienced in new ways such as somatic movement or yoga. For example, some children found it easier to feel their bodies when they moved, or stretched.

“Me: And you’ve written: “When I stretched, I felt in my back and my legs, when you stretch you don’t hurt other people, we stretch so we don’t pull our bones out when we do stuff.” And this is all about feelings and stretching, “when somebody is mentally stretched they can be angry or sad or really excited. When somebody is...” ...What does it say?

C.: Is physically.

Me: “Physically stretched, they look like they go red in the face. I feel more stretched in my legs and my arms”

C.: I put the red in the face bit as a joke.” (C. Year 6)

Another girl, A., said “I learnt that don’t, like, push your body too much because it can hurt you. And like you’ve always got to stretch before you do like the...like when you do the handstands and all that, because if you don’t stretch you can really hurt yourself.” The idea of taking care of her body so that she could use it in the ways she wanted to (in this case to balance or to do handstands) was something that she related to. For C. the awareness of what her body was feeling, and how she could choose her movements to take care of herself and so not cause herself pain is contrary to Leder’s perception that “a trained yogi can learn to ignore pain entirely and suppress reflexive motor responses. But the powerful distractions, training or strength of will necessary to resist pain’s call bear testimony to its original strength” (Leder, 1990, p. 73). I disagree with this view that yoga would train someone to ignore, suppress and resist one’s body’s responses to pain or any other body sensation. On the contrary, yoga is a means to accept the body as it is in any given moment (Yee & Zolotow, 2002). Yoga is practiced, it is not something in which you train (Pattabhi Jois, 1999). A small distinction, but one that I believe is important as it differentiates yogis from athletes. Other SME forms use different verbs to describe their forms– for example some say that tai chi is played (www.taichiflow.org, 2003).

The children’s perceptions of their moving bodies were grounded in their physical experiences. Through movement, writing, sharing and modelling, they were able to reflect on the sensations of their bodies, and begin to conceptualise these perceptions. The non-judgemental and accepting ethos of the sensations encouraged the children to experience their moving bodies without judgement. This may allow them to form a more positive relationship with their body that is based on their experience of it, rather than becoming more dissociated from their own bodies and being informed by cultural or societal norms. By increasing

embodied self-awareness, and developing their proprioception, they were also beginning to learn and identify these sensations as feelings, such as ‘stretch’ or ‘pain’, as well as becoming open to the emotions and images that could be evoked by movement. The next section considers emotion and the body, and the children’s experiences of their emotions in and through their bodies.

4.6.2 EXPRESSING AND RECOGNISING EMOTION

Movement can have emotional content, and it is the expression of this content that may form a basis for somatic education and therapy (Johnson, 1995): “emotion...motivates memory, perception, thought and action” (Chodrow, 2009, p. 56). Body movement and gesture can be used to decode emotions (Montepare et al, 1999). Movements, however, do not always have to be large. Expressive movements can be tiny, subtle gestures of the body (Hartley, 2004), and of the face. Emotions, in turn, “are not states of being but dynamic phenomena that are experienced in the flesh” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 124). Experiences and expressions of emotions have been linked to health: “emotions have been implicated in the etiology of coronary and cardiovascular disease, shown to impact on the workings of the immune system and to modulate multiple pathways and dynamics relevant to disease and ill health” (Cromby, 2011, p. 89). However, it is possible to have emotions, and yet be unaware of them. Although, “it may seem odd to suggest that physical education is the appropriate arena within which to help people cultivate emotional and spiritual self-awareness...emotions and spiritual states are fundamentally physical events in the body, and a physical approach to self-awareness training offers a method of making this area of practice more tangible and concrete” (Linden, 1994, p. 4). The experience of emotions has been described as bodily changes, a feeling, a felt action tendency, facial expressions, the level of autonomic arousal,

evaluative cognition, cognitive appraisals of the situation or bodily changes juxtaposed to an image of what caused the emotion (Lambie & Marcel, 2002). Totton states that emotional memories are stored within the body, and that they “appear as feelings, not as memories of feelings” (2003, p. 38). Emotions are not simple phenomena, when experienced or expressed: “emotions...implicate narrative, intentionality, appraisal, morality, and identity, but all typically include a marked somatic or corporeal component and this is what is meant by emotional feelings: the clenched gut of fear, the heavy body of sadness, the burning face of shame and so on” (Cromby, 2011, pp. 88 - 9).

The use of the body and facial expressions to show emotion was something that was noted by the children in Phase 3 of this study “I've learnt how different people use their different emotions by showing it with their body and their face” (E. Year 5), although not all found it easy to show their emotions that way: “it was harder to pull a (sic) expression of your feeling” (D. Year 5); “it feels hard to show some body (sic) how you feel when you stretch” (A. Year 6).

If experience of emotions is a combination of appraisal dimensions, felt action urges and bodily sensations (Lambie & Marcel, 2002), then one aspect to how an individual perceives their and other's emotions is how aware they are of all these components. For example, bodily feelings might include an awareness of changes in, and the quality of, the breath, the heartbeat, muscle tension or holding, sweating, sensations in the stomach or another part of the body, and temperature. An individual needs to have an awareness of herself in order to experience her own physical state, and to bring it into consciousness before she can be fully receptive to others: “feelings of all kinds are experienced and expressed in accord with

acquired norms of using, holding and relating to the body” (Cromby, 2011, p. 86).

Similarities in movement, or perhaps recognising another’s movements as a pattern of expression could result in a sense of common humanity, or increased empathy (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 112). As self-awareness increases and norms change, the ability to empathise with others also changes: “because I wouldn’t have known what would have made them really excited but I would now” (MI. Year 6).

Empathy is not always understood to be connected to movement. In fact “the common understanding of empathy...is grounded in static images” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 115). Empathy is developed as a child grows and plays games of pretence with others, which is a key developmental stage necessary for learning to recognise the mental states of others, develops a theory of mind and learns to be able to engage in the social interactions that form part of society (Keys & Bailey, 2006). Absence of pretend play, and later absence of empathy, are markers for developmental disorders including autism spectrum disorder (Bailey, 2002b). The ability to recognise what others are feeling, and then to be able to empathise, can be ascribed to the theory of mirror neurons (Christodoulou & Gabb, 2009; Gallese & Goldman, 1998). Mirror neurons are posited to be responsible for ‘mind-reading’ or empathic feelings, as they “respond both when a particular action is performed...and when the same action performed by another individual is observed” (ibid p 495). This theory concerns recognising and empathising with movement, and not static images. Although Gallese and Goldman conducted their initial research on monkeys, their theories do appear to have significance for humans, and have implications for education (Goswami, 2008). Totton states that “Merleau-Ponty would no doubt have seized eagerly upon the concept...to underpin the notion of inherent bodily knowledge of the world” (2009, p. 195). Gallese and

Goldman propose that “one possible function [of mirror neurons] could be to promote learning by imitation” (ibid p 495), and I suggest that the same mechanism is used when a Witness tracks movement in Movers in the form of Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002). Within that form, it is recognised that practise and experience at tracking your own movement increases your ability to track that of others. A way to practice tracking movement and kinaesthetic sensation is to increase embodied self-awareness. This would imply, then, that by increasing embodied self-awareness, it is possible to learn to activate mirror neuron function. Some of the children in the study found it naturally easy to ‘read’ others’ emotions from their movements and faces, like K. “you can tell if someone is scheching and it herts by there fason expreshons (sic)”, and L. “very easy if you look carefully at other people”, whereas others seemed to need to practice and learn.

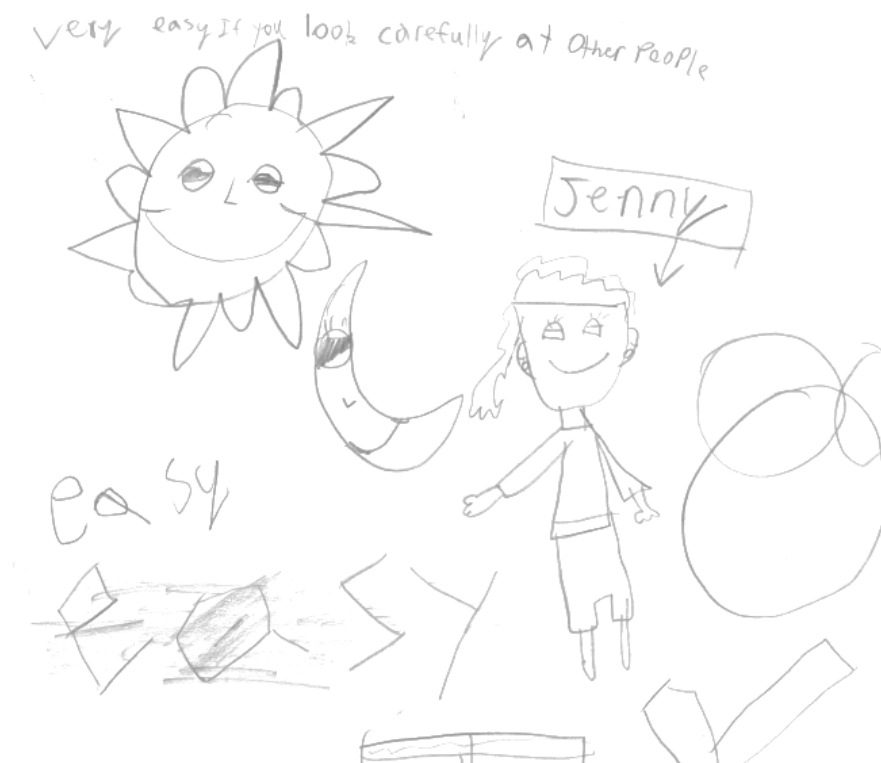


FIGURE 18 L. "VERY EASY IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY..."

M. recognised the effort that her partner put into showing his emotions. “It was really (sic) easy to tell D.’s emotions, he put a lot of effort into it”. M. was also clear about which emotions she enjoyed seeing “I like seeing peoples (sic) emotions if they are happy”. M. implied that she did not enjoy seeing other people’s emotions if they were not positive, which, if related to the idea of mirror neurons, could be because she did not enjoy the feelings that were evoked in her own body as a result.



FIGURE 19 M "I LIKE SEEING PEOPLES EMOTIONS..."

Her partner, D., did not find it as easy to show his emotions, nor to see his partner's: “it was more easier to take a photo than pulling a espression... It was harder to pull a espression of your feeling... It was very hard to see what someone else was (sic)”

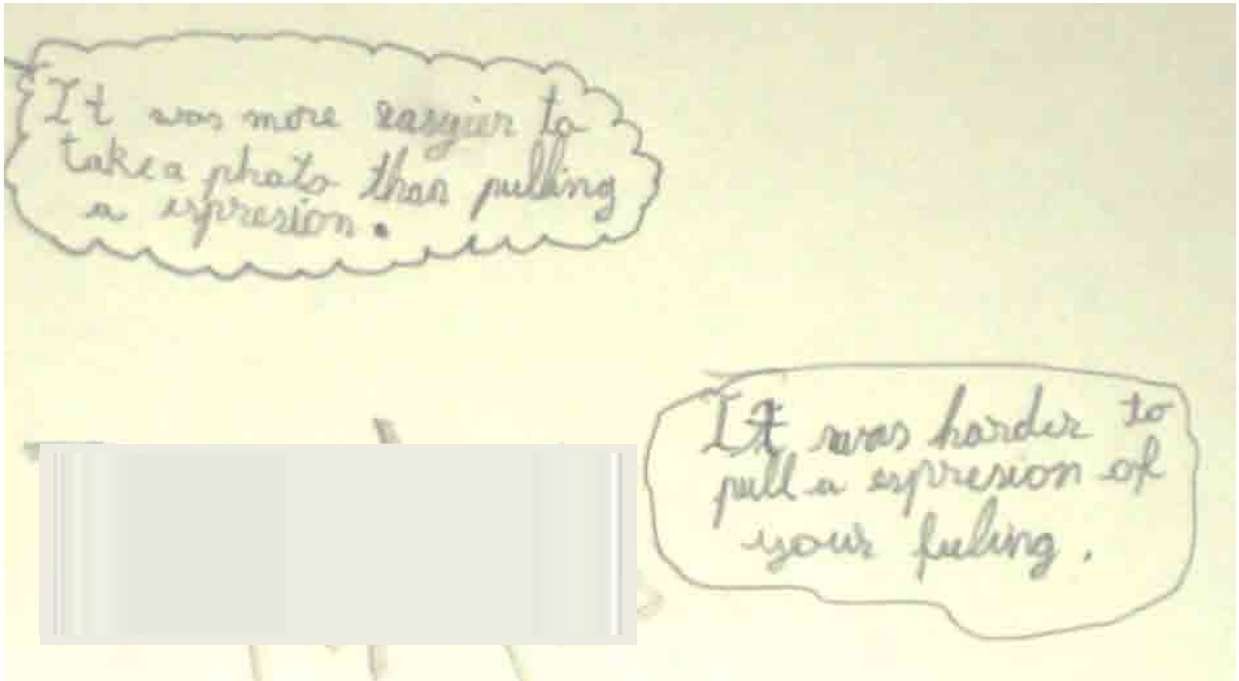


FIGURE 20 D. "IT WAS MORE EASYIER TO TAKE A PHOTO..."

When referring to emotions, it is possible to be detached from them, and talk or write about them as separate bodily functions, or as experiences of the whole somatic body (Lambie & Marcel, 2002). Lambie and Marcel report that non-Westerners have a more somatic experience of feelings like depression than Westerners. For example, Chinese people are more likely to describe their experiences of fear, anxiety and sadness in terms of bodily sensations than North Americans who would be more likely to use terms relating to thoughts or mental feelings (ibid). Many westerners are aware of their bodily sensations that are part of an emotion, although they do not perceive them to be part of that emotion (ibid). The language that is used to express emotions is important to the conceptualising of emotional experiences.

Within the sessions I encouraged the children to relate their emotional experiences and awareness to the physical and moving sensations of the body. This was in order to 'ground'

the emotions. By ‘ground’ I mean that the emotions are, when possible, associated with a particular movement or sensation within the body, and so remain tangible and ‘real’, and as such it may be easier to express them through language: “emotion and feeling are being treated neither as wholly biological nor as simple manifestations of language” (Cromby, 2011, p. 82). This method is working within the framework of Authentic Movement, where the moving experience (of emotions, sensations or images) is expressed through language both verbally and written (Adler, 2002). The idea of how they felt when they moved particular parts of their bodies, and where they felt it was also explored. Some of the children chose to draw where they felt their bodies as they moved.

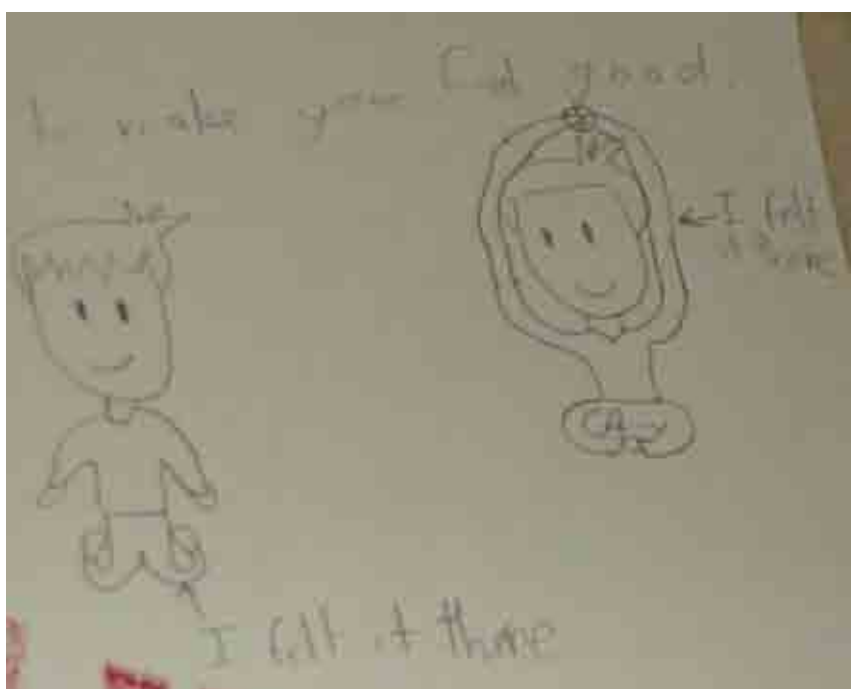


FIGURE 21 "I FELT IT THERE"

One girl chose to write instead about what she *did* when she felt sad, rather than how she moved or where she felt it: “when I’m sad I go to my bedroom and cry lots, and lots. If I’m at school I usely (sic) keep my sadness inside me, not many things cheer me up just my animals”

(ML. Year 6). This extract came from the session on self-regulation, where we looked at what things made us feel happy in a way that could be seen physically (e.g. eyes shining, shift in facial expressions and posture). Although the instructions for the task had been to think about things that we do that make us happy; excluding people and animals (as ideally happiness should not be dependent on others), this particular child said that nothing in her life made her happy except for her cats. As I talked to her, and she described how they also walked away from her when she was sad, she became more upset. This is one reason why the task was to find actions that we do to regulate our emotions, so we become more self-reliant and are not basing our happiness on others' actions. Within a therapeutic setting this is something I would have liked to explore with this girl, so that she could begin to find and recognise emotional states other than sadness. However, in the classroom setting there was only room to reassure her as best I could, and to regularly check on her in this, and future sessions, and talk to her teacher.

Another exercise explored was the recognising of the range of emotions that we feel. The children were given time to come up with a list of emotions and feelings that they had. This exercise was explored with the younger and the older children, as this piece from a child in Year 3 demonstrates (see Figure 22).

To illustrate this, an extract from my field notes describes how one child, E. (Year 1), experienced moving through emotions.

“I asked them to move softly– and to think about if it was different to slowly. Many were now up on their mats (staying on their mats) but now some chose to remain

seated. E. said that softly was different because it was calmer. She had been lying down, stretching, rolling and twisting her body.

I asked them how they were feeling (happy) and asked if they could move happily—very bouncy—lots of jumps (still on the mat). Then sad, E.'s whole body slumped and withdrew into the centre, head forward, slouch down, face passive.” (Field Notes, class 1)

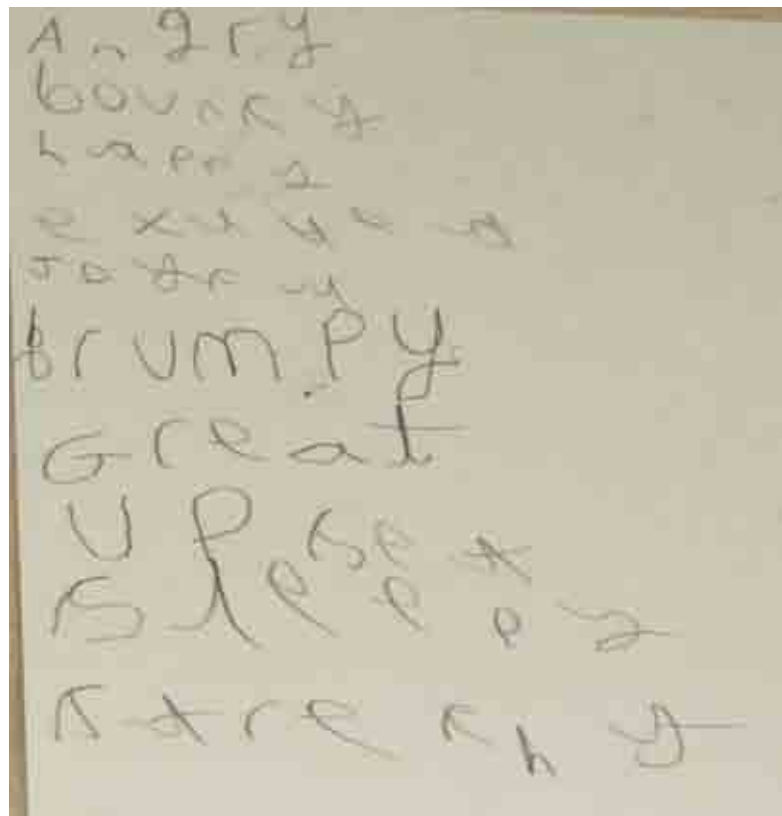


FIGURE 22 J.'S RANGE OF EMOTIONS

After moving, the children were invited to draw. E., the child described above chose to express her emotion and movement through drawing ‘angry’.



FIGURE 23 E. DRAWING 'ANGRY'

The older children wrote about how they might move when feeling certain emotions, before exploring this with their bodies:

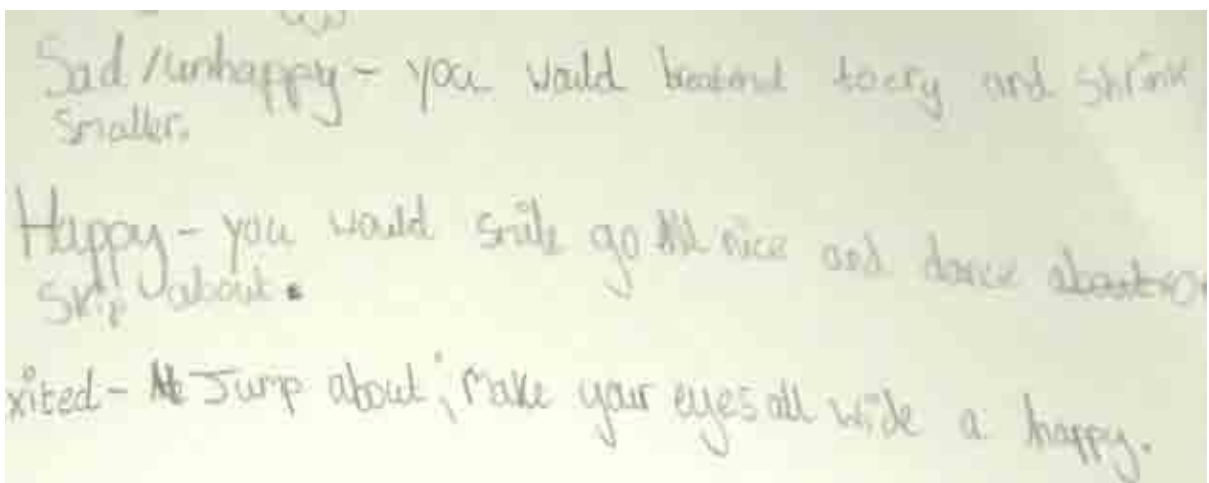


FIGURE 24 HOW E. MIGHT MOVE WHEN FEELING EMOTIONS

Here, EL. (Year 5) chose to separate her emotions into two columns she perceived to be positive and negative. She also chose to identify how she felt when she stretched with the positive emotions.

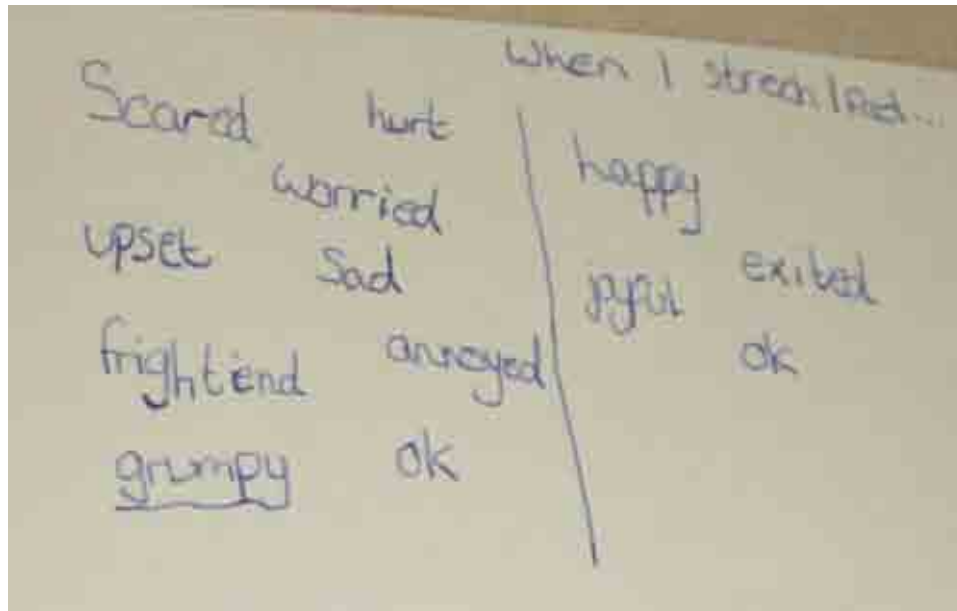


FIGURE 25 EMOTIONS AND HOW EL. FELT

P. (Year 6), chose to draw how he might express various emotional states. Some he has felt are expressed through facial expressions only, and others such as lost, sleepy and thinking used the whole body (see Figure 26).

Several of the groups chose to write and draw about emotions in the posters they created for display: how they showed them, and how they shared and perceived them. As they were allowed to choose any aspect of the work they had explored over the past two years, this could have indicated the value that they placed on exploring and identifying emotions in themselves and in others, and the importance they placed on sharing this with their peers “emotions and feelings can be treated as elements of embodied process that feed into and through social interaction” (Cromby, 2011, p. 87). It may have been because this was one of

the more recent areas that had been explored, however, the sessions also covered movement and yoga *asanas* each week.



FIGURE 26 P.'S EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS

The children in the study showed a variety of emotions through movement and expression. They felt able to share their experiences both verbally and through reflective drawing and writing. Within the sessions, as well as becoming more familiar with the ways in which they and their peers demonstrated their emotions, they related the work to drama exercises, in that they were able to portray a character's emotion through their body. The children utilised awareness and sensitivity to pay attention to their own emotional state, and to pick up on others'. This was particularly important when we were working with the theme of 'stretch', and in pair and group work, when each child had to be responsible for their own safety, and that of their friends'.

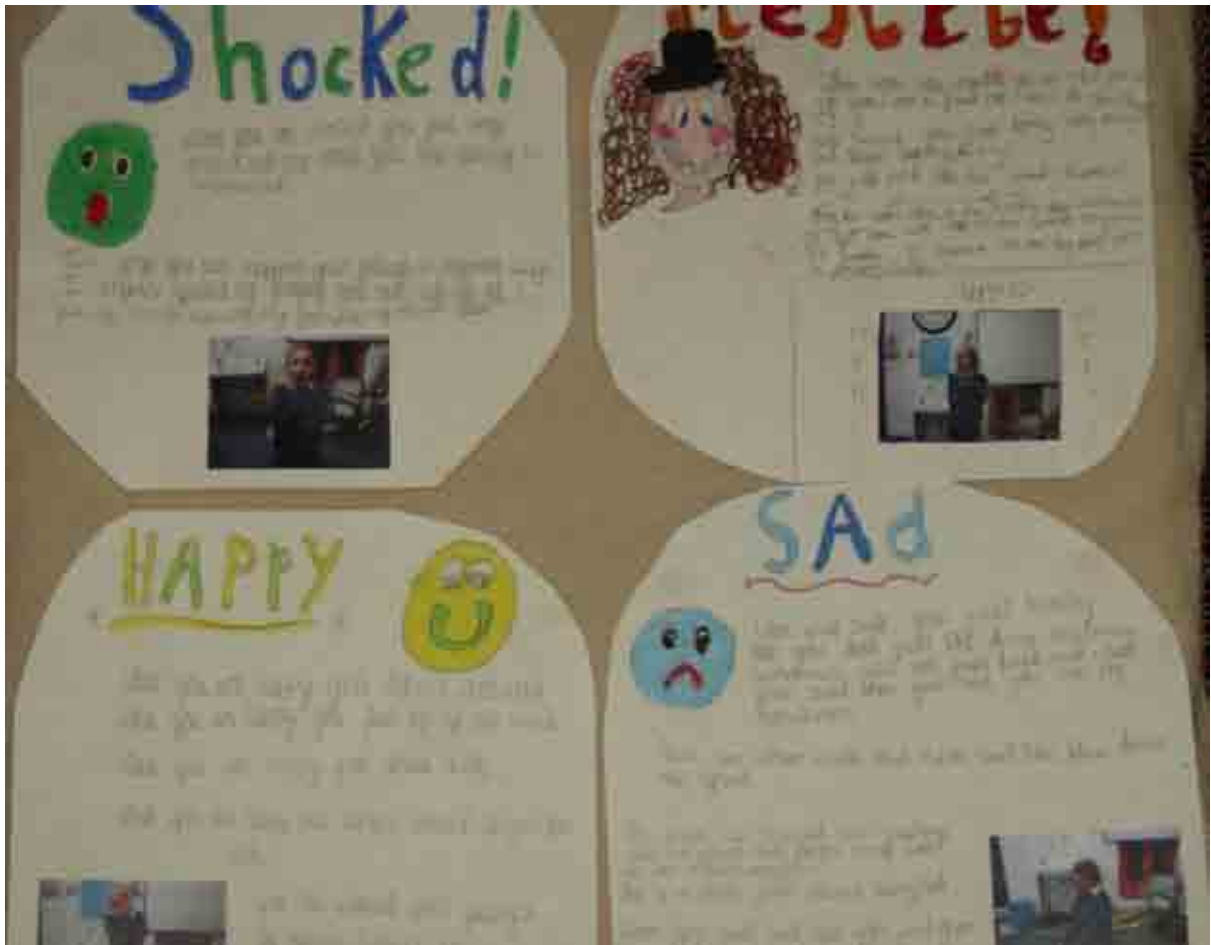


FIGURE 27 POSTER SHOWING EMOTIONS

4.6.3 EXPERIENCING ‘STRETCH’ AND ‘PAIN’

The idea of ‘stretch’ was explored with all the children, most deeply with the older ones in phase 3 of the study. Stretching, and what it feels like, was an accessible way to initiate awareness of the body sensations. Stretch, as something that we do with our bodies, how it feels, why we might do it, and how we do it along with discussions on how else we might feel stretched in our lives– financially, emotionally, or mentally. This was a concept that the children were happy to talk about on a one-to-one basis, or within a circle, but chose not to journal or write about. Instead, they recorded how they felt about stretch (as a concept), or where they felt stretched.

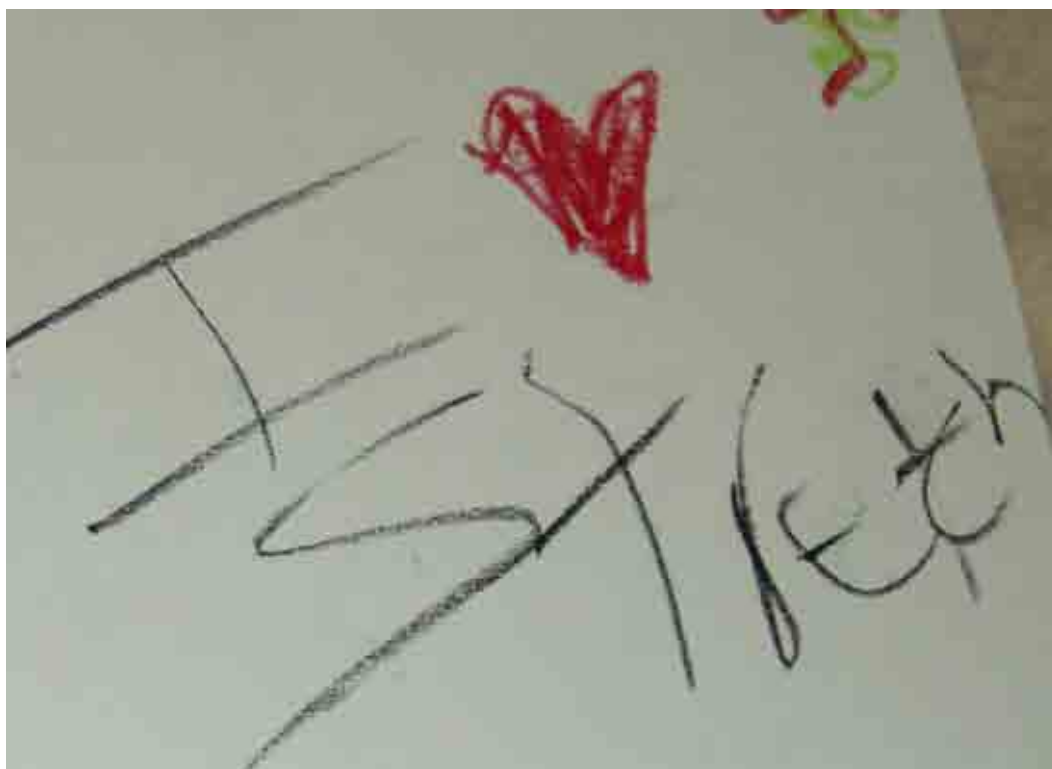


FIGURE 28 "I HEART STRETCH"



FIGURE 29 P. "I FELT IT STRETCH IN MY LEGS"

Recognising how someone else might feel when they are being stretched (in any sense of the word) was also something that was explored. The children worked on their own and with partners to investigate how they could be careful with themselves and each other.



FIGURE 30 "I KNOW WHEN SOMEONE IS STRECHING (SIC)..."

The different types of pain and sensations that we feel in our bodies, particularly when we stretch and move, was something that I encouraged awareness of throughout the study. Even with the very youngest children I would ask them to be aware of what they felt, where they felt it, and to be in control of how hard and how far they stretched. Stretching pain feels different to strain pain in that it is entirely in your control– the more you stretch the more you feel– and when you stop, the sensation stops (Devereux, 1998). Stretching pain can feel good, particularly after the stretch. Strain pain, in contrast, feels like tearing or ripping, and does not stop when you ease off. It is also possible to feel a sensation like pain that is more shocking, for example when scar tissue around an old injury tears and begins to break down. Although shocking, this sensation is not actually painful. Recognising these sensations and

becoming aware of them formed a large part of the work, as was recognising that pain is not always a 'bad' feeling, as it is a way for the body to bring to attention when something does not feel right.

We explored the importance of taking care of our bodies, being aware of how it feels to stretch so that individuals can take responsibility for their own stretching, and the children began to journal about how they felt as they stretched:

“When I stretch for a really long time it feels like my muscles are working and it is fun and I feel comfortable. This is me stretching I am bending forward and doing the dog [downward facing dog]... I love stretching I would be careful (sic).” (A. Year 5)

In her reflections, A. noted that she would be careful, that she could feel lots in her body and that certain poses might hurt. She writes that you can tell if someone else is stretching by their facial expressions, which implies, that when she worked with her partner she was aware of the importance of paying close attention to them to avoid hurting them, as well as to pay close attention to herself.

The concept of pain; physical, mental and emotional pain as well as other different types of pain was explored explicitly within phase 3. One session took place during the planning stage for the displays, whilst I was in a lot of physical pain due to a back injury. The previous day I had been in class to read stories as part of Book Week, and one child, K. had become very upset due to the death of her grandfather.

“I also had the idea of talking about pain, or other emotions which is very relevant to me! It is also a feeling that can be physical, emotional, in the body or mind that fits in

well with the exploratory theme of the work. I was less sure about this although it had been my original idea given K.'s recent bereavement." (Reflective Journal)

After discussing the idea with the class teacher, I chose to proceed with the session, albeit carefully and sensitively.

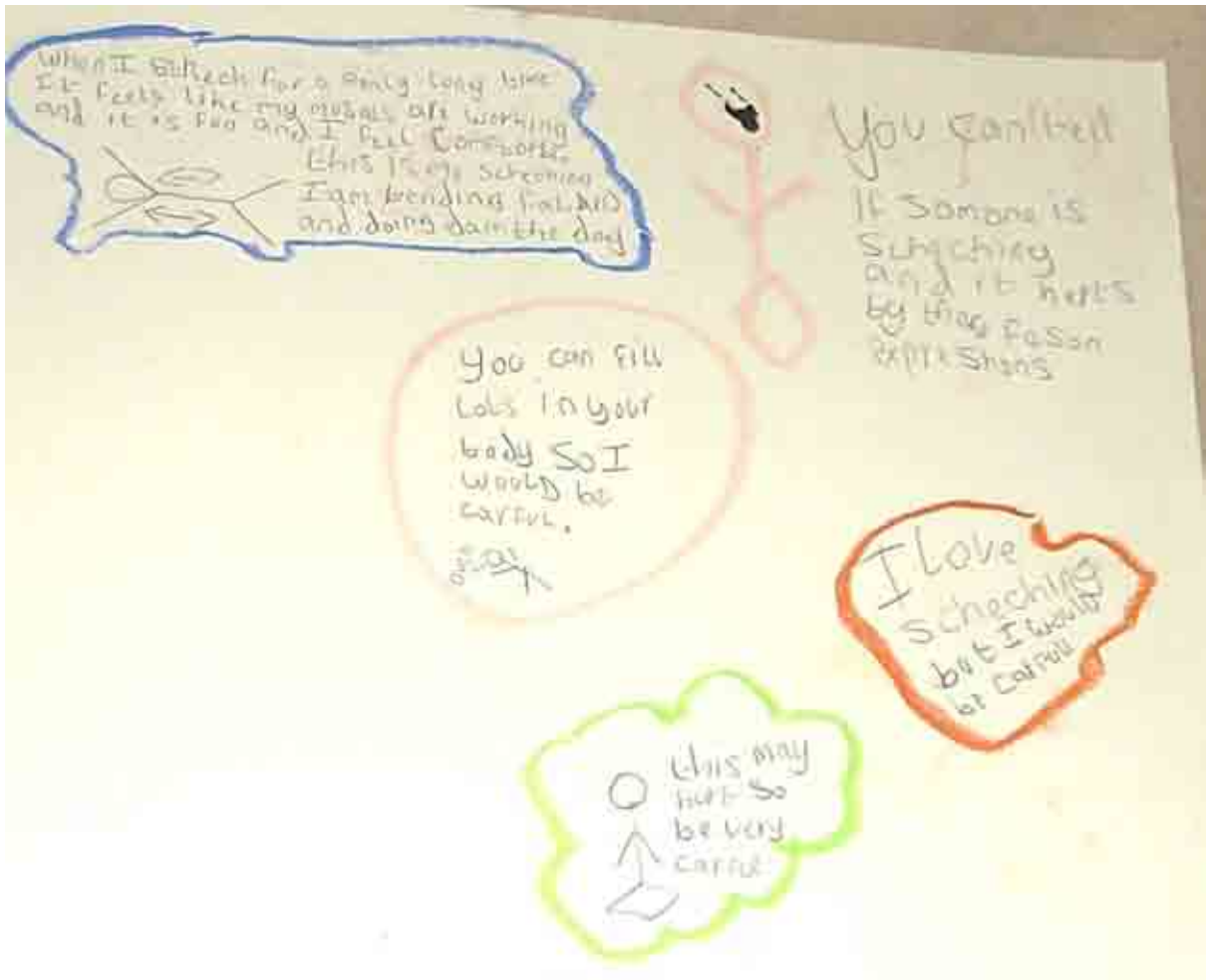


FIGURE 31 A. "WHEN I STRETCH..."

The sensation of pain, and how we feel and experience it in our bodies is fundamental to how we carry ourselves through life (Fogel, 2009). Asking the children to imagine how they would be aware of pain if they tensed up and held themselves rigid, and the differences

between that and breathing into and relaxing into a sensation was part of the yoga work (Farhi, 2000). Yoga can be understood as exercises in learning how to breathe when in uncomfortable situations and stretches, and to relax into them (Iyengar, 1966). The techniques that are practised with the physical body can then be utilised when facing uncomfortable or stretching situations in other areas of life.

The experiences of what it felt like to stretch– and how it felt– were memorable for some children. E. differentiated between those that hurt and those that felt nice.

“Me: What do you remember most about all the stuff we did?”

E: All the stretch, the different kind of stretches we did.

Me: Okay. Why do you remember those?

E: Because we did a lot of them and I just remember how kind of sometimes it hurted and sometimes it didn't.

Me: Okay. Did you like doing them?

E: Yes.

Me: Why?

E: Some of them felt nice when you did them, so it's nice to feel nice.

AA: Okay. Even though they hurt, they still felt nice?

E: Some of them hurt and some didn't.” (E. Year 5)

The experience E. describes here is that of pain, or stretch, not necessarily being a negative thing, similar, perhaps, to the young dancers that in Pickard's study (2007). It may be that by tuning into the sensation of 'stretch', 'hurt' or 'pain' E. was able to identify to a greater degree with her embodied self, and differentiate what felt good and what didn't and to remain

in control of her body (i.e. by not pushing herself so much that she would injure herself). Instead, she was able to tune into the enjoyable aspects of using her body, whilst remaining sensitive to its needs.

The conflation of pain and pleasure was something that was experienced by children within this study. One young boy talked about the two sensations when describing how he remembered feeling in a stretch:

“Me: What do you remember about that?

J: Very hard with my legs, very hard.

Me: What was very hard about it?

J: Just bend over like that, it really hurts my legs and all.

Me: Did it? Did you like it or was it just too painful?

J: Bit painful and a bit good.” (J Year 2)

The pain that he experienced was not a negative thing for him, in fact when asked what he wished we'd done more of, he answered “the things that get painful for me”.

4.6.4 MOVEMENT AS FUN

The relationship between fun and physical education and activity has been a popular association (Alerby, 2003; Bailey et al, 2010; Dismore & Bailey, 2010; Phillips & Stewart, 1992). One idea of pleasure and embodiment, and how this can be part of a programme for children has been discussed by Wellard (2010). By drawing on the concept of body-reflexive practices and body-reflexive pleasures that involve an individual and social context, fun and enjoyment in sport are used to understand participation and reflection. Fun, or physical

pleasure, is often overlooked as a reason for participation in sport in favour of motivations for health, or other specific and outcome orientated outcomes. However, pleasure, and in some cases the blurring of pleasure and pain (Pickard, 2007), are often cited by young participants as their reason for taking part in an activity. Certainly, many of the children in this study used the word “fun” to describe their experiences. The negotiating of the body through a physical activity incorporating individual experiences of that activity with regard to the social and personal context (which could include gender, age and ability) may also need to include the social construct within which the individual finds herself. In addition to the social construct, bodily-reflexive pleasures may also include the psychological and physiological experiences and feelings, and it is the combination of these factors that would result in a positive experience of an activity, or not. Exercise should be enjoyable to encourage participants to continue, because how an individual feels about herself affects how she moves (Linden, 1998).

The distinctions between fun and enjoyment have been the subject of some debate. Fun can mean different things to people of different ages. Generally, children use the word ‘fun’ to describe their enjoyment of an activity, but it could also be “best explained as a positive mood state associated with personal accomplishment and the ability to meet a challenge” (Dismore & Bailey, 2010, p. 5), or as “a long-term intrinsic affect linked to movement participation that is critical to physical education” (ibid), or be attributed to “skill improvement, participation, taking control in lessons, playing games, interacting with peers and team affiliation” (ibid). Understanding how attitudes are informed towards movement and physical education, and how exactly children perceive it as ‘fun’ regardless of the precise definition of the term, is key to encouraging participation over the long-term. Attitudes towards physical education are

likely to be motivated by enjoyable experiences as well as variables such as gender and achievement. The appreciation of the need to be physically active in the moment and throughout life should be allied to personal satisfaction, enjoyment of participation and mastery of skills and not just through “making children aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies” (ibid p. 4). However, if by ‘aware’, it is meant that children are given the opportunity and experiences to become more self-aware and attentive to how their bodies feel as and when they move, then it might be that they begin to experience ‘flow’. ‘Flow’ has been used as a concept to describe an inner experience that incorporates joy, creativity, total involvement and an “exhilarating feeling of transcendence” (Dismore & Bailey, 2010, p. 4).

Reflections on an embodied, pleasant experience are used by Wellard (2010) as an example of an individual decision to continue to participate within a sport. By creating a lived experience ‘bank’ of pleasurable moments, and being given the opportunity to reflect on them, a child may choose to continue participation with physical activity; an outcome that is desired by the physical educational curriculum, and for a lifelong interest in activity and sport. Physical education then, could concentrate not on outcomes such as tackling obesity or talent identification, but instead to provide opportunities for young people to experience activities and find out when, where, and how they are pleasurable. In order for this to be successful children (and adults) have to learn how to enjoy their bodies (Wellard, 2010). In this, as well as the learning of what it is to reflect on experiences, somatic education or a somatic approach towards physical activity can be useful.

The idea of fun came up a lot both in the children's work, and in their reflections. The non-judgemental aspect and approach of the sessions, along with the experimental nature of the material was appreciated by some of the children.

"It was fun because like you could experiment, like what your body could do." (C. Year 6)

"It was fun just to see...just to make what poses you can make." (T. Year 4)

R. in Year 1, drew a picture with a figure saying "have fun...see you later". He explained in the session that he was saying that because he wanted to come back again soon to do more.



FIGURE 32 R. "HAVE FUN SEE YOU LATER"

C. (Year 4) wrote “It’s pretty fun because you do whatever you want, no-one can tell you what to do and that, you can do whatever you want to do, really.” She did not display through her behaviour in the sessions that she was talking about a hedonistic sense of being allowed to do whatever she wanted the entire time, but more that she was enjoying that no answers were right or wrong, and an atmosphere of respect and exploration was encouraged.

Some of the children liked particular aspects or activities of the work, such as the playful nature of it:

“It’s like different and then when you balance you can fall over. It’s fun.” (E. Year 5)

“Well, the activities we were doing to like show the heart and stuff like that was really great.” (M. Year 6)

“Because when we do movement and activities, it made me happy because it was just really fun that we were doing loads of stuff, poses, everything, and it made me a bit calmer.” (T. Year 5)

Some of the children enjoyed the fact that they were participating in a movement session rather than other working on other subjects “it was fun– got us out of maths and other work. It was fun” (B. Year 6).

The co-operative element to the work was also described as fun.

“It’s a bit fun sharing my ideas.” (C. Year 4)

“The fun part was seeing everybody else.” (J. Year 3)

“It was fun when we did that, because it was really just some certain people who were just chosen and we worked in a group.” (T. Year 5, talking about Science Week)

“Doing it with someone else, also made it fun because like sometimes when I do things on my own even if I’m making it up or something, I prefer it if I’m doing it with someone else because then I have someone else to help me think about it as well.” (S. Year 3)

For many of the children, the ‘fun’ aspect was the answer to the question about whether there was anything else they wanted to say about the work at the end of the interview.

“It was really fun, all fun, there wasn’t any boring bits, I really enjoyed it.” (C. Year 6)

“It was really really fun doing...” (M. Year 6)

“Me: Why did you like it?”

M: Because it was fun.” (M. Year 3)

“Me: Is there anything else you want to say about the stuff that we did?”

M.: I found it very, very fun.

Me: What was fun? What do you mean by fun?

M: Everything.” (M. Year 6)

One girl was able to expand a little on what she meant by ‘fun’, and relate it to how she was caught up in both the work, and how it felt to be engaged by it– similar to the idea of ‘flow’

described above perhaps.

“S.: It was fun. And exciting.

Me: Fun and exciting. What was fun about it?

S.: Well, I think it was fun because we did lots of things, lots of games and things and our teacher made it very fun.

Me: What was exciting about it?

S.: Well, exciting-ness was really because, well, anyway, well we had like things to do and sometimes- and making things up was exciting because you’re like, hmm, what shall we do? Hmm, what shall we do? Hmm, what shall we do?”

(S. Year 3)

The children expressed their sense of fun and excitement for the work in the sessions, outside of the sessions when they saw me in the school or playground, through their drawing, mark-making and writing and in the interviews. Some of the children enjoyed certain aspects more than others, for example, handstands and balances were nearly almost always considered ‘fun’. Being still could be quite challenging at times, however, no child expressed to me or to a teacher that they did not enjoy the sessions and did not want to join in. The playfulness of the work may have contributed to this. The next sections look in more depth at certain aspects of the sessions (being still and balancing) that many of the children found in turn challenging and fun.

4.6.5 BEING STILL

Numerous traditions examine the importance of being still (Selby, 2003). Learning to observe the breath, the body and the mind, to pay attention to oneself, and to become more

aware of the self, are often the first steps in cellular breathing (Hartley, 1989), *pranayama* (yoga breathing), *shavasana* (corpse pose) (Rosen, 2002), meditation (Ralston & Ralston, 2006) and mindfulness (Langer, 1989). The practice of being still in yoga is one aspect that separates it from physical education and other physical activities (Phillips, 2001), although many martial arts, such as budo, also incorporate stillness or meditation in their practice (Stevens, 2001). Learning to take time to be still was an integral part of the sessions with the children. Being still, often in mouse or child's pose, was practised often in the sessions. We usually began by being still for a minute, and finished in the same way, perhaps for a little longer. It was one of the aspects that was remembered by the children in interviews.

“Me: What do you think you learnt?”

A: That if times are hard and that just to actually do a mouse pose or something to help relax.” (A Year 5)

One girl, C. said ““It was very peaceful, it sort of felt like the minute was just going to keep going.” However, it was more challenging for some:

“Me: Did you find it easy to be still?”

E.: No, not really.

Me: Are you glad that you tried?

E: Yeah.

Me: Why?

E.: Because I don't normally try and be still. It's just you move around...” (E. Year 5)

E. went on to describe how she used mouse pose to gain autonomy over her emotions.

“Me: Is there anything else that you want to say about the stuff that we did?”

E.: And how to get calmer.

Me: How to get calmer.

E.: By doing mouse pose.

Me: Is that something you'll remember?

E. Yeah, yeah. Because if you're angry you can always do mouse pose to calm you down.

Me: It's all right to feel angry as well but it's good to be able to change how you feel if you want to.” (E. Year 5)

E. can be seen here to be using her self-awareness to regulate her emotions. Self-awareness has been shown to have a flexible relation to emotional intensity (Silvia, 2002).

Mouse pose, *balasana* (child's pose), was often used for being still. Because the body is orientated inwards, it can be easier to calm down and focus than in a supine position. The image of being a mouse, hiding, quiet and still, also added to the playfulness of the activity, allowing the children to engage with what they were doing. The children had different experiences of mouse pose and of being still:

B. chose to draw his mouse pose, combining the ears and tail of a mouse, with the body shape that he adopts when he is in the position. Other children talked about mouse pose in the interviews:

“Me: Did you like mouse pose?”

Ev.: Yes.

Me: Why did you like mouse pose?

Ev.: So you could be quiet.” (Ev Year 5)

“T.: I remember the mouse pose most.

Me: Did you like the mouse pose?

T.: Yes.

Me: Why did you like the mouse pose?

T.: Because it was easy and simple.

Me: Do you like things that are easy and simple?

T.: Yes.” (T. Year 4)

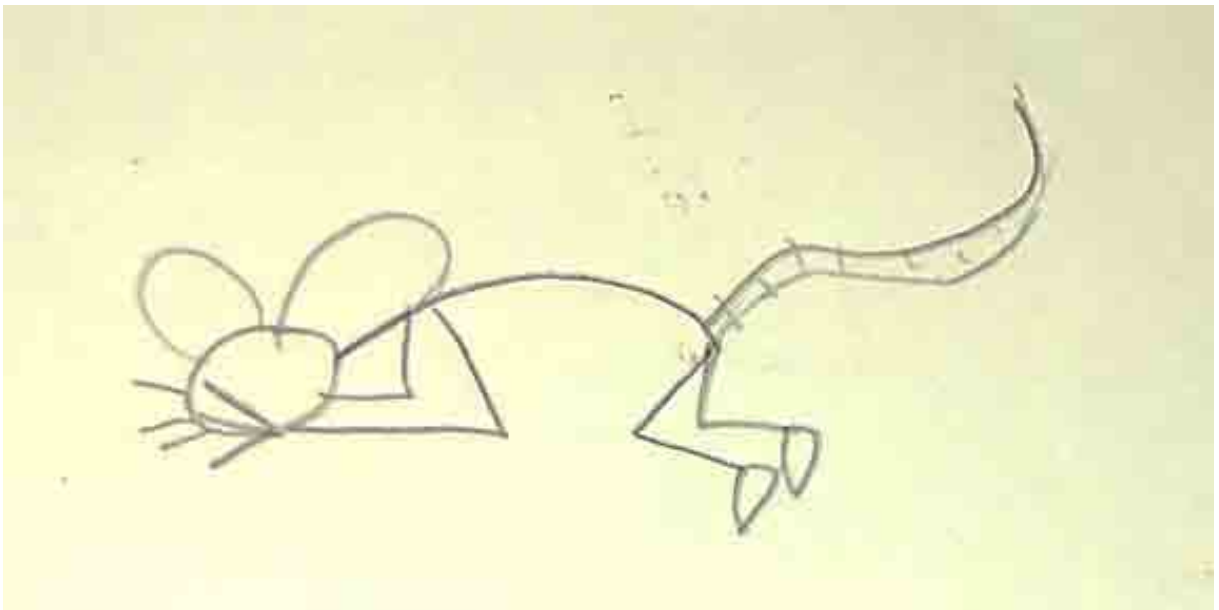


FIGURE 33 B.'S MOUSE POSE

“Me: What do you remember doing?

R: The curling up in a ball and all that.

Me: Yes? Did you like curling up in a ball?

R.: No.

Me: No, okay. Why didn't you like it?

R: Because it's...dunno." (R. Year 3)

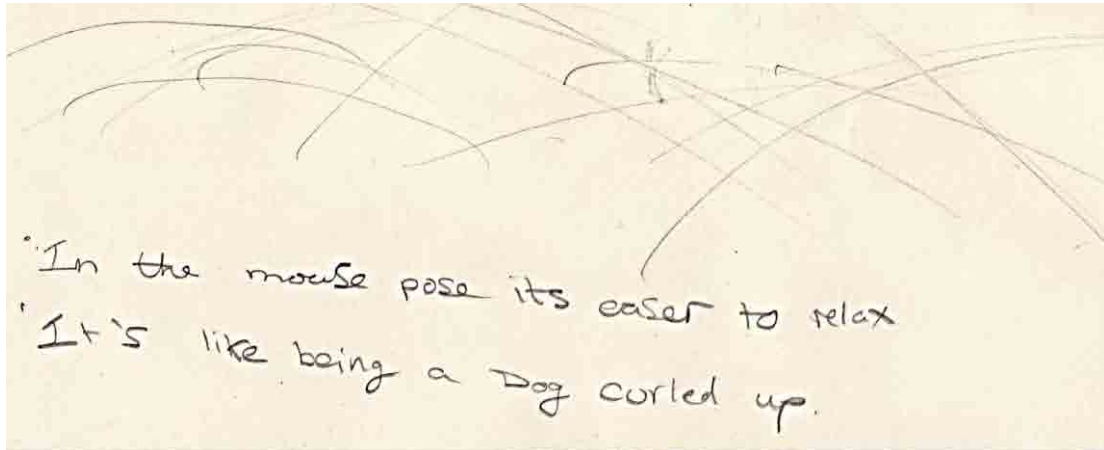


FIGURE 34 IN THE MOUSE POSE IT'S EASIER TO RELAX

Taking time to be still can be challenging for adults (Devereux, 1998) as well as children. It may be that it is not something that we take time for day-to-day. J. expressed his wish to do more of it, and this sentiment was one that I had heard from the children throughout the sessions. R. said that he did not like mouse pose, but did not explain why. The curled in nature of the pose encourages an inner focus and concentration, however, it can also become a little overwhelming if you are feeling unhappy or down, as it encourages quiet and contemplation (Desikachar, 1995). R. had lost his mother when he was little, and it may be that this pose was not the most appropriate for him. One week we explored different ways in which we could be still; by standing, sitting, lying, on our own, with partners or in a group. The children were asked to think about how they thought it would feel, try something, and then share how it had been and if it had been the same or different from their initial expectations. Within the sessions I asked the children how they thought it would be easiest to be still, and they showed me with their bodies after being still for the minute. The majority of

the class thought that sitting would be the easiest position in which to be still. After I timed them for one minute being still whilst standing, in which I observed a lot more movement, with their eyes remaining open and lots of fidgeting, the consensus was that it was “harder than sitting” (Field Notes). The group then explored how it was to be still with a partner:

“Before, all the children except R. thought that it would be easier with a partner.

Room observed to be still. Afterwards all the children except for M. found it harder.

“if you wobble and your partner wobbles.” All pairs chose to sit down.

Children chose to play favourite shapes game. Some showed shapes to be still in, most still ‘pictures’, 1 child (M.) moving shape.

Shapes included – lying on belly, circle, triangle, on back holding feet in air, triangle shape, knot, a line (on the back) a rectangle, a star.” (Field Notes)

As he reflected about the sessions, and looked through his work, MI. (Year 6) commented:

“Me: This is all about finding shapes to be still. And you've written “when I'm moving I can't see things. What I can see when I'm still. My brain I see is a big grey colour”. And you've drawn a box and you've written “I feel stuck”. And “I think the wood is like a maze. My brain is thinking a bug could be there”. So you've written thoughts and drawn pictures about the thoughts that you were having when you were still. That's what it looks like. Is that what it was?

MI.: Yeah, I think so.

Me: And you've drawn a line and put "standing still I feel like somebody's touching my leg. Another partner, it was relaxing to lean on the other person". Do you remember doing all of that?

MI: I remember some parts.

AA: You remember some parts. Did you find it easy to be still?

MI: It depends what I was in the middle of doing. If I was in the middle of drawing or writing a story, staying still, I couldn't stay still. But if I was doing something quite boring what I didn't really want to do, sitting still would be like quite relaxing to like just stop doing the tricky or boring thing." (MI. Year

6)



FIGURE 35 SHAPES TO BE STILL

When I am moving I cant see things what I can see when Im still.
My brain I can see

FIGURE 36 M. "WHEN I AM MOVING I CAN'T SEE..."

How perception of senses changed when being still was something that another child also commented on, although for him, it was hearing that was different. As well as stating that when he was still he could hear, this child also commented that “it fellet wurd (sic)”.



FIGURE 37 WHEN I AM STILL I CAN HERE (SIC)

Part of the work that MI. looked through and reflected on included another piece of writing and drawing about being still whilst balancing, in which he wrote, “it is comfortable and not comfortable.”

The children were only asked to stay still for a minute initially, although with some groups, this was built up to five minutes. Being still was a challenge for some children though. JA., in Year 3, remembered this:

“Me: Was that easy, staying still for one minute?”

JA.: No.

Me: No? Why not? Do you spend much time being still? No? Did it get easier being still or harder?

JA.: Harder.

Me: Harder? We did some of that every week, didn't we? Did you like being still?

JA.: Yes.

Me: Yes? So even though it was hard, you liked it? Why? You're not sure? No?”

(JA. Year 2)

Another slightly older boy, in Year 3, spoke about being still when looking through his work.

“Me: And this was finding places to be still.

J.: I remember that as well actually.

Me: Yeah? What do you remember about it?

J.: We had to stay still and stuff and then we had to try and stay still for a long time and then we would stop and then do some more yoga I think.

Me: And was it easy to be still, or was it hard to be still?

J.: It's quite hard really.

Me: Is it something you do a lot, being still?

J.: No.

Me: Is it something you would like to do more of?

J.: Yeah.” (J. Year 3)

Other children reflected on their experiences of being still:

“I feel happy and relaxed because I enjoyed it, not nervous. I felt happy” (A. Year 6).

“Very quiet– hard because I’m used to some noise, felt like I was going to be asleep. Got easier over the weeks– nice to relax. Everyone’s normally shouting in class” (W. Year 6).

The youngest children, aged 4-5, shared the following thoughts on the idea of being still:

“Is blinking still?” (J. Reception)

“You’re still if you are dead.” (F. Reception)

“But your heart is always beating.” (A. Reception)

The idea that your body is always moving internally resonates strongly with the idea of cellular breathing, and experiential anatomy, that is, our body as living, moving organs. I asked whether you could still your mind, and they gave mixed responses.

Being still is an integral part of yoga and other somatic movement practices (Farhi, 2000) (Johnson, 1995). As such, the children were given time to be still in every session, and were allowed to explore the ways in which they preferred to do this, and to share how it made them

feel. This practice led onto an exploration of balancing poses and the like, which are also expressions of stillness.

4.6.6 FINDING BALANCE

Balancing was an element of the sessions that was used throughout all the phases. In yoga there are many standing postures, which are balances of a sort, and as such work the muscles of the body isometrically (Coulter, 2001), for example *trikonasana* or triangle pose (Iyengar, 1966). Muscles can work either dynamically or statically, and yoga can be used for both, and to bring structural balance to a body (Stiles, 2000). In a balancing pose, the muscles are working to contract without any movements taking place in the joint (Wirhead, 1982). In addition to the standing poses, there are *asanas* where you stand on one leg, or balance on your hands, such as *garudasana* (eagle pose) and *bakasana* (crow pose). Many yoga poses are named after animals, or take inspiration from their movements, and this can be used to encourage children to practice (Gibbs, 2003; Mainland, 1998). In developmental movements, balances form part of the processes and routes of locomotion.

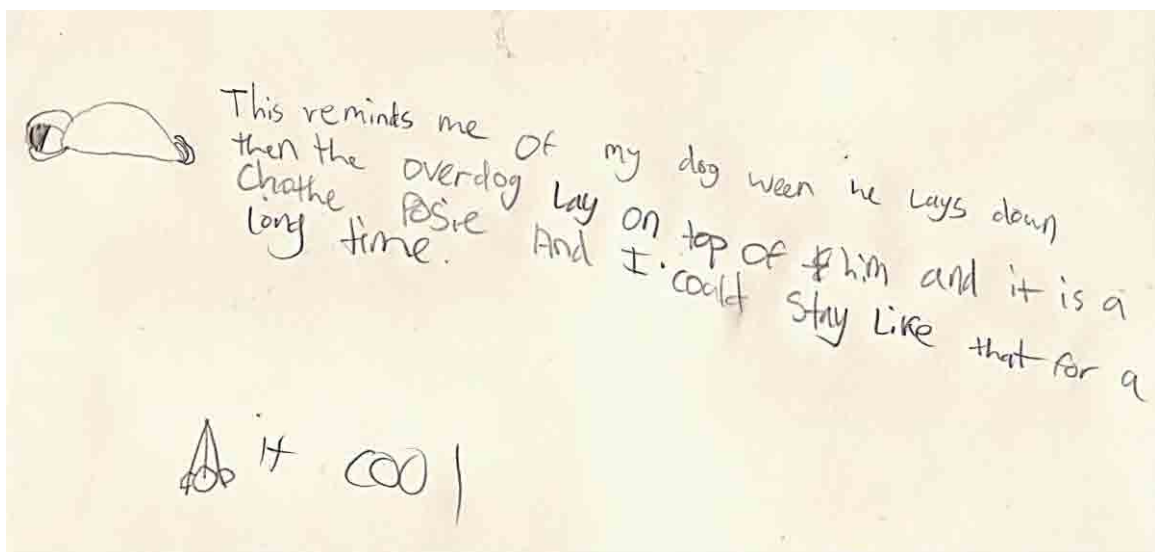


FIGURE 38 THIS REMINDS ME OF MY DOG

The following extracts are the observations, notes and data from a session on balance with the youngest children in the school (Reception and Year 1 children).

“Balanced on one body part, then 2, 3, 4, and 5...one child on belly, children making up positions some copying me.

Balanced on one leg, tried all holding hands in a circle– sitting down, standing up– one got pulled over– makes it a bit harder sometimes with other people, on one leg, in the circle, behind the circle, falling over children, tried the other side, same happened.

We made a mind map of what it was like to balance or what you need.” (Field Notes phase 1)

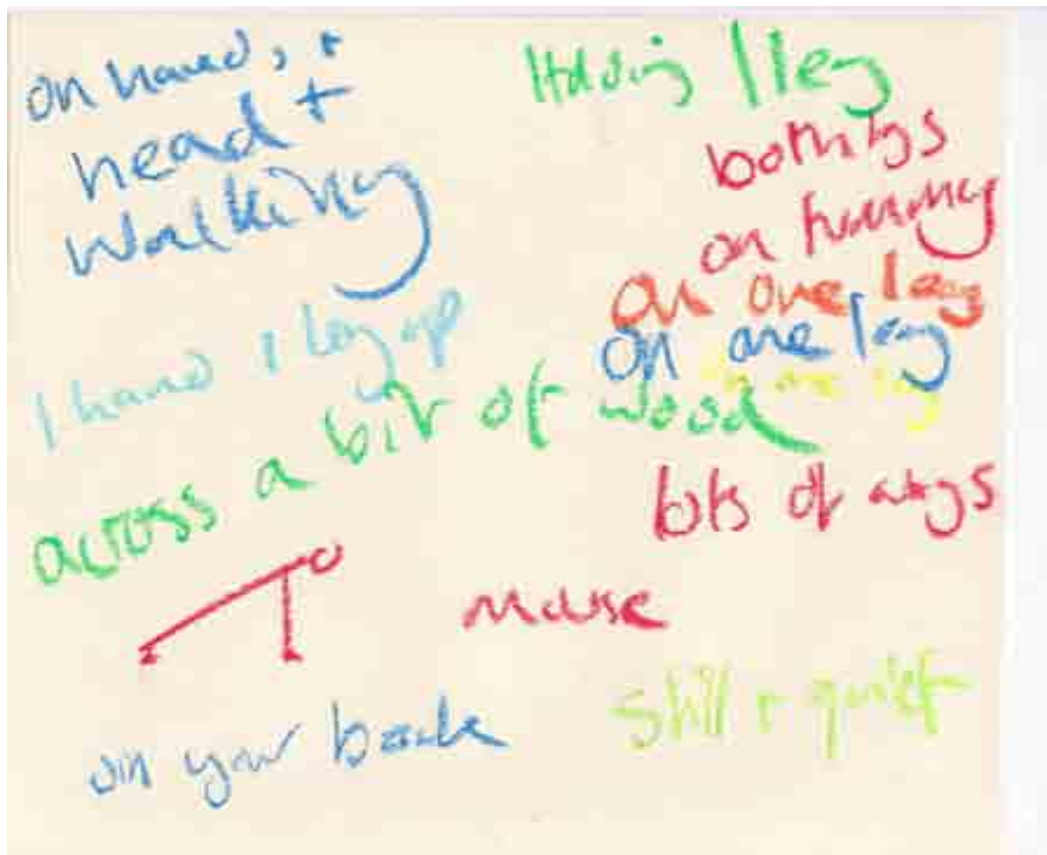


FIGURE 39 RECEPTION AND YEAR 1's WAYS TO BALANCE

The brainstorming was a result of the children's suggestions. The words were as they spoke them, and they chose the colour I wrote in. The stick figure represents one child's response to the question of what it was like, or what you need to balance, he demonstrated this position, and I drew a picture of him. I scribed for them, and chose on this occasion that it was not appropriate to gather data from each child individually, as they needed to work cohesively as a group to reinforce the positive behaviour they had shown both in class and with me. I had to balance their needs as participants and as children against my roles as educator and therapeutic practitioner with my needs as a researcher.

Working with slightly older children, we explored what it was like to balance, and they compared how they found it to balance in different positions, and with their eyes open or shut.

“Started finding how we can balance— on bottoms, squats, standing with eyes closed and arms up “harder with eyes closed” some children found it easier too.” (Field Notes).

“Whole class engaged K. fab at balancing— smiling whole class clapped when she balanced on one leg throughout the exercise.” (Field Notes)

The child mentioned here, K., was initially shy and reluctant to be seen by the whole class and be applauded in the circle game. When I observed her in class I noticed a similar pattern of behaviour, in that she would hold herself back, not offer an answer and yet when questioned quietly in private would be confident and knowledgeable in her response. She seemed to become more confident over the time I observed her in sessions. Because the sessions were spread over two academic years, all the children grew older, and this may have been the

reason for this. Developmentally, this could have changed their ability to balance and to be still. One child, RO., commented on this:

“Me.: This one here you said “I find it hard to stand still”. Do you think that's true?

RO.: Not now.

Me: Not now. So you think you've changed? Do you think doing this helped change or was it just because you got older?

RO: Because I've got older.” (RO. Year 4)

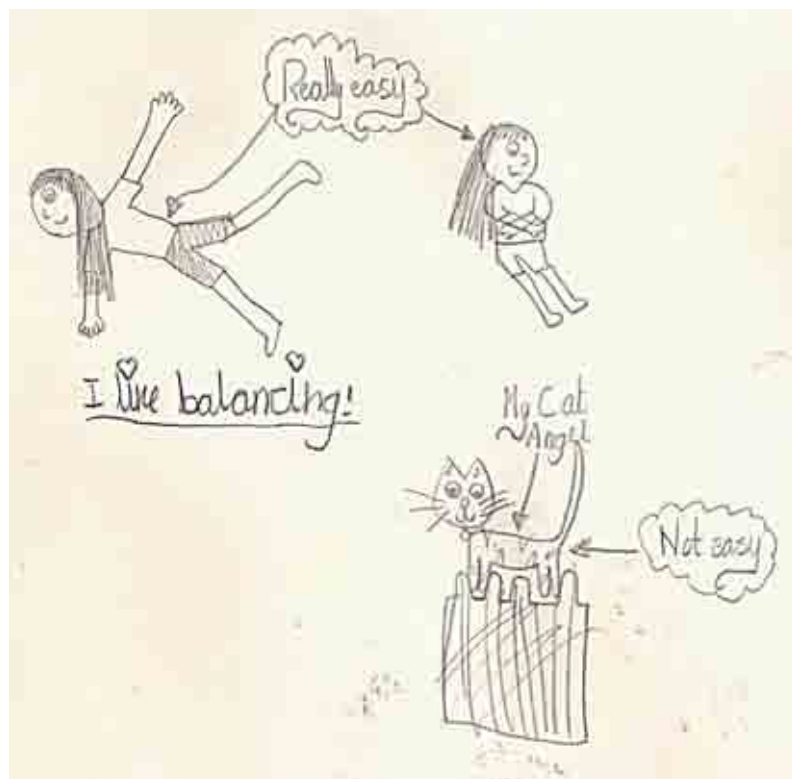


FIGURE 40 BALANCING

Leading a session on balance tends to help focus a class, as in order to balance successfully a degree of focus and concentration is needed. In yoga, *drushti*, or focus points are used to direct the gaze and to aid the development of focus (Devereux, 1998). With the children, I advised them to concentrate on a point in front of them, and avoid looking at each other, as this may make them more likely to lose their balance. In addition to focusing, the group need

to be responsive, as more complicated balances have a higher degree of risk associated with them. Children tend to enjoy doing more exciting positions, and are often able to listen, to be safe and to focus in order to get the opportunity to practise them. Balances can help children to practice concentration, as there are immediate consequences for losing focus.

“Me: What did you think about lots of ways to be balanced?”

D: I think it was quite hard in summer because you had to concentrate quite a lot.

Me: Why did you have to concentrate?”

D: Because otherwise you would just fall over.” (D. Year 4)

Falling over was also something that we practiced. Finding a balance point, and exploring righting and equilibrium reactions is again a playful way to embody developmental movement patterns (Hartley, 1989). In addition, playing with balances is less scary if you know how to fall and catch yourself.

“Me: What do you think you would have liked to have done more of?”

E: Probably balances and different kinds.

Me: Okay. Why?”

E: Because sometimes it’s fun to balance.

Me: Why is it fun to balance?”

E: Because it’s like different and then when you balance you can fall over. It’s fun.” (E. Year 5)

Other children expressed the wish for more balances, like A. (Year 5) who said, “probably balancing” in response to the same question. Although over two school terms had elapsed

between regular work with me in sessions and the interview, K. in Year 2, remembered the balances most out of all the work we had explored.

“Me: What do you remember most about doing it?”

K: Doing balancing.

Me: Why do you remember balancing?”

K: Cos you do balancing to stretch yourself.

Me: You do. Did you like doing the balancing to stretch yourself?”

K: Yeah.” (K. Year 2)

A girl from Year 6, C., was able to elaborate on why she remembered balances and balancing most.

“Me: What things do you remember most about all the stuff that we done...did?”

C: The stretching and the balancing.

Me: Okay. Why do you remember those?”

C: Because like you were keeping your head and then when you don't do all the different things like your sport and like football and all that you've got to do stretching, so you keep that in mind, and like the balancing, you've always got to do balancing, because like if like you're standing still you've got to balance properly and it feels like you don't want to be falling over all the time. So that's what I remember about the balancing....Mmm...When we was doing like the balancing, when we done like the handstands and all of that, I thought that was really fun, and then balancing on the...like in pairs and like maybe the balancing because I thought the balancing was really fun and it got people like more used to doing it, like this sort of thing for balancing.” (C. Year 6)

The idea of balance was explored individually, as well as in pairs, small groups and as a circle. The children were asked to notice whether they found it easier on their own, or with someone else.

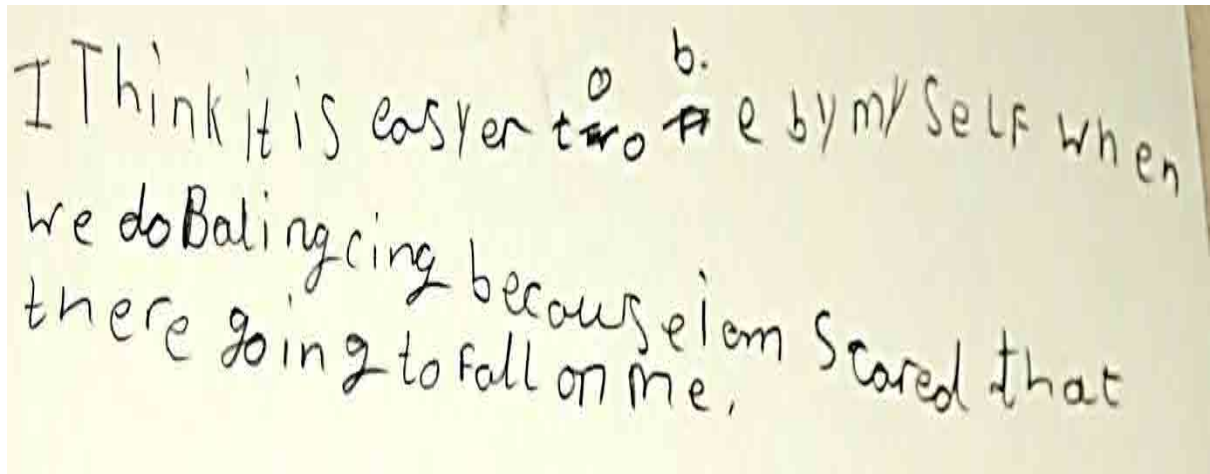


FIGURE 41 J. "I THINK IT IS EASIER TO BE BY MYSELF WHEN WE DO BALINGCING (SIC)"

Some of the children preferred to work on their own, either because like J. (above) "I think it is easier to be by myself when we do Balingcing because I am scared that there going to fall on me (sic)", they were scared that the others would fall on them, or because they found it harder to keep their balance. Even when this was the case though, group or pair balance exercises were a favourite activity. MI. reflected on balancing on his own and with others.

"MI.: You have to stay still in one place like on one leg in a tricky position. It is comfortable and not comfortable. I would like to do it in a group..." (MI. Year 6)

Although the sessions were not designed to highlight developmental issues, nor was this study attempting to link developmental patterns to academic attainment, it was commented on by teachers during the sessions that they were amazed at how it was that the children who were challenged most by balances and associated movements (for example hopping) also struggled

with their class-work, particularly literacy. Informal feedback from staff was also that the groups were able to focus more, and concentrate easier after the sessions, and that they were amazed at how the children were able to improve their balance throughout a session by focusing, and concentrating. The need for focus in order to balance was obvious to many children too, they said you had to “stay focused”, and if “distracted you wobble” (R. Year 6). B. noted the variable and challenging nature of balance, “quite hard to do sometimes you can feel like you can do it and you can’t” (B. Year 6). One child in Year 2 reflected that he felt “quite wobbly” (J.) when he was asked what it felt like to balance. A girl in year 6, L., said on reflection that “I had to clear my mind, try to focus. It helped a lot.” She had a lot going on in her life at this time— her mother was in hospital, and she had spoken in the circle about how worried she was. At the time in the session she had written “I find it really easy— my mum comes out of hospital and it made me think of her because she taught me balance and exercise stuff.”

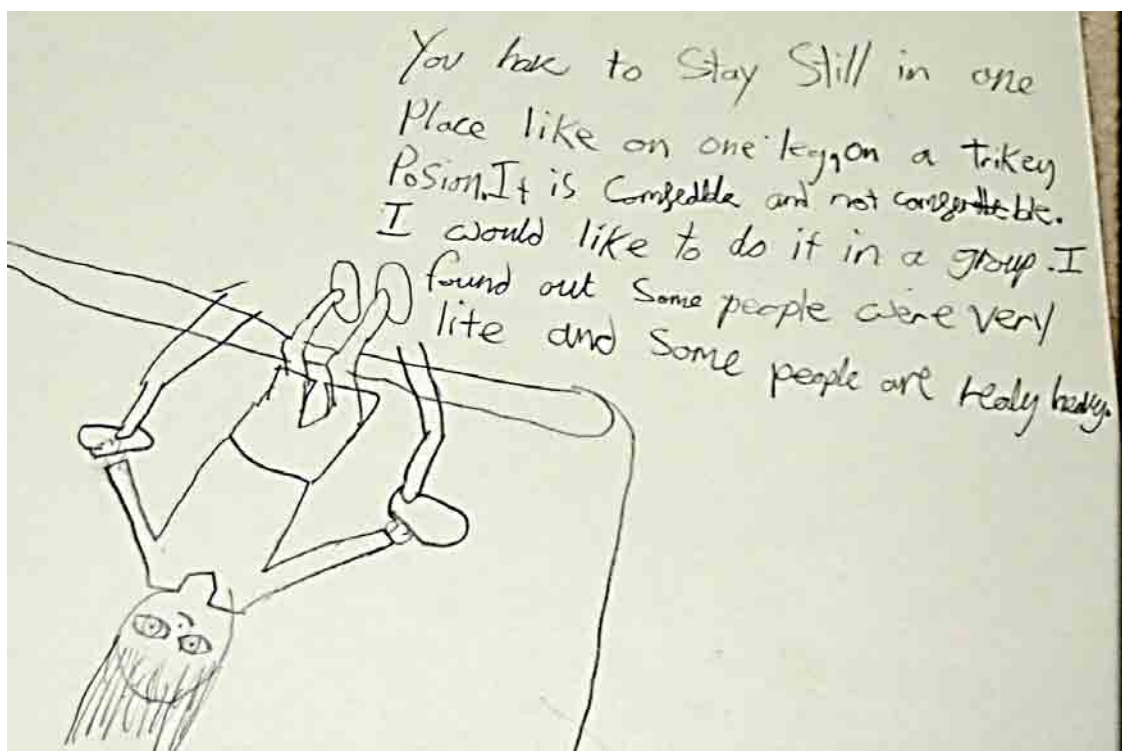


FIGURE 42 MI. "YOU HAVE TO STAY STILL..."

The link between balance with the body and other aspects of life was made by others, too. Whilst at the start of the session M. said about balance, “people do it in circuses,” and one child drew a tightrope.



FIGURE 43 BALANCE ON A TIGHT ROPE

R. (Year 6), said that balance was like a journey. He reflected the following about a picture he drew in a session on balancing, “you start confident then lose it and lose it and lose it a bit more... You balance and then you wobble and wobble and wobble and then you balance and wobble and then you may fall over” (see Fig. 44).

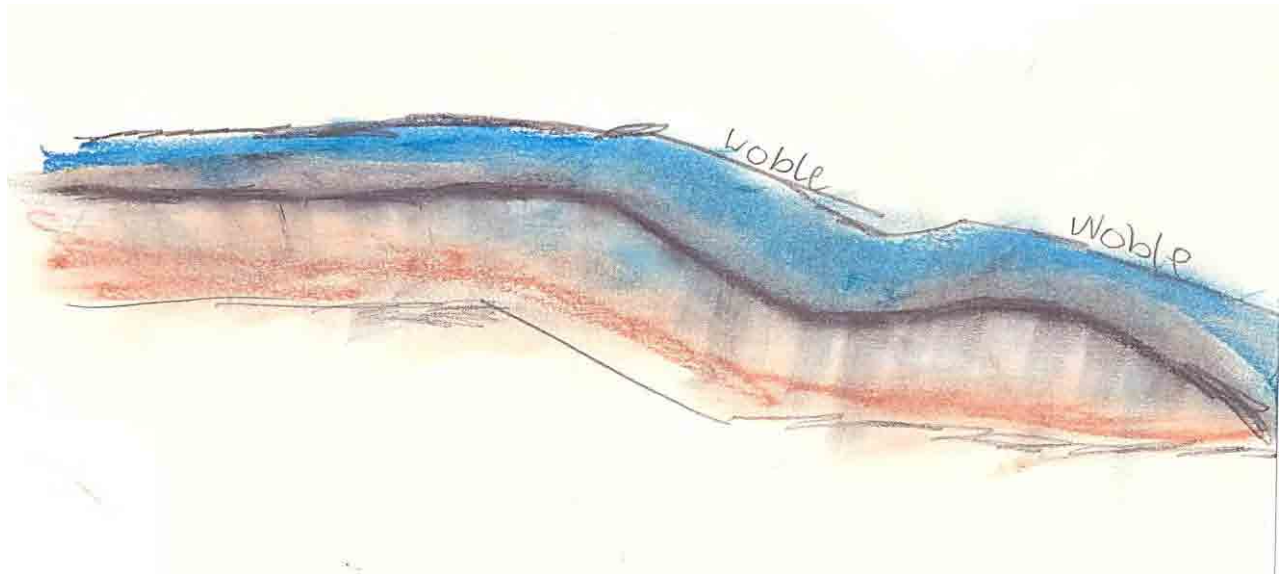


FIGURE 44 BALANCE IS LIKE A JOURNEY

The balances in the sessions were mostly based around yoga poses and positions that the children themselves created. I led pair or group work, which involved holding hands, or assisting each other to balance in a more challenging posture. Handstands were only explored in the first phase, as after that time the wall space became limited. In phase 3, when the Year 5 and 6 children were allowed to work in groups of their own choosing, they wanted to explore and create complex balances. Both the class teacher and I watched this very carefully, as obviously there was an increased element of risk in this work. I had to balance my role as researcher and practitioner here, as I wanted to allow the class the freedom to choose and explore what they wanted to, however I needed them to work safely.

“The boys MI., J., P. and JO. looked like they were being rowdy, as they were trying group balances but were in actual fact paying very good attention to each other, being careful with each other and working well as a team. I suggested that they use a camera from different angles or points in the poses, and be sure that they could repeat the same balance again and again. They began to take notes as well as practise.

B., T. and R. were messing about a bit– drawing guns and things to make them happy, then they also started to include things that made them feel other emotions. They saw the balancing groups and also started to do that but were not paying attention to each other and T. managed to head butt R. After that they began to work a little more carefully, and by the end were collaborating well.” (Field Notes)

I ensured that the class as a whole were paying attention to me and to each other by calling them regularly back to the circle to share and report back what they were doing. I decided to use these two groups as a teaching example, and asked J. to share with the class how it had felt when he was in the position that he was in (balancing between three other boys), as his group had been particularly active and loud. He was able to say that he felt safe, because he knew that they were listening to him and to each other, and he trusted that if he were to ask them to stop or to come out of the position that they would listen. I also asked the other group how they felt when they were balancing and they said that they did not feel safe at all, because they were not listening to each other. In order to address this issue, I reiterated the need for safety. I also increased the warm-up time for these sessions, to focus on shoulders, legs, backs and arms. Additionally, I regularly reminded them to feed back to each other as a group how they were feeling in any given position, and also to be aware of their own safety and comfort as an individual, of their friends, and as a group as a whole.

On their display poster, B., T. and R. wrote the following about their group balances.

“I felt a little unstable because when R. kept on leaning backwards when I told him to lean forwards”

“On this pose we felt rather safe because we were all communicating well and we trusted each other a lot”

“R. felt quite safe because I kept speaking to him to say if he’s ok”

“R. felt a bit cousios (sic) because me and A. were wobbling”

“On this pose B. felt a little un safe but mostly safe”

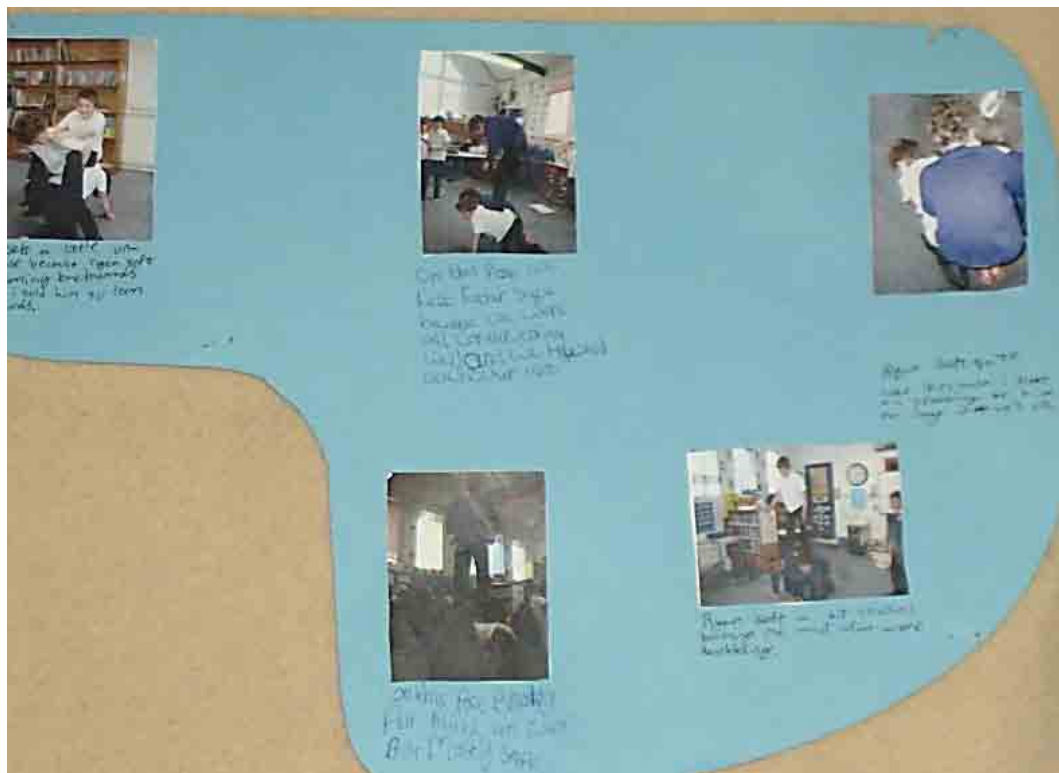


FIGURE 45 B., T., AND R.'S POSTER

Finding balance and places of stillness is a tool that can be practiced in movement forms such as yoga (Devereux, 1998), and then be used in everyday life. The children were able to use

their focus and concentration to enable them to balance in positions of their own choosing. In part this was achieved through their developing awareness of those around them, and their own embodied self-awareness. This, in turn, was facilitated by an exploration of the body in different still positions, in movement, and its internal structure or anatomy.

4.6.7 PERCEPTIONS OF INNER STRUCTURE

There is an assumption that that highly specialised training is needed to bring awareness to the inner body, and Leder (1990) makes a direct reference to yoga training:

“The awareness of and control over the inner body exhibited by trained yogis has far surpassed what used to be thought possible in the West. Yet even such achievements take place only within an overall context of experiential disappearance. The very need for highly specialized training is evidence of the perceptual reticence of our viscera as compared to the body surface.” (Leder, 1990, p. 43)

To the contrary, such awareness is a fundamental aspect of not only yoga, but also other somatic movement forms (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993; Hartley, 1989; Olsen, 1998), and types of modern dance and movement awareness (Da'Oud, 1995). Hartley (2006) uses awareness of the physiological body and the relationship of embodied experience to the outer world as a metaphor for outer world issues such as boundaries and war. In a discussion of phenomenology and yoga, Sarukkai states “it is possible to have phenomenological experiences of the inner body” (2002 p. 462). To that end it was something I explored with the children in this project. I was also interested to find out how the children perceived the insides of their bodies beyond the anatomical structures and organs, and how they perceived the relationships between the physiological functions of their bodies and their emotional

experience (Stauffer, 2010). According to Craig, a neuroscientist, interoception, or how we feel, is the “sense of the physiological condition of the entire body, not just the viscera” (Craig, 2002). In order to capture the experiences of the children with regard to their internal structure, we explored how images, models, language, pictures and photographs portrayed the inside of the body, and how these images related to the children’s own perceptions.

The following came from a group of the youngest children at the very beginning of a session:

“I asked the group to be in mouse pose and to think about what was inside them.

After a couple of minutes, during which I continued to use my voice to encourage them to be still and to be quiet and to think about the question, they stretched and I asked some of the children what they had thought of:

L.– X-ray

A.– heart

R.– Brain

J.– blood

R.– guts

A.– skeleton

E.– power

N.– heart” (Field Notes)

At the end of the session “a lot of the boys drew power, however their drawings and marks were all different– their own expressions of power inside them” (Field Notes).



FIGURE 46 E.'S POWER IN MY BODY



FIGURE 47 J.'S POWER IN MY BODY

The children were encouraged to move as different body parts and organs (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993). Here my notes show how the children moved in response to my questions. I was sitting whilst talking them through the session at this point, neither modelling nor demonstrating for them at all. I noted down the movements they made in response to my suggestions.

“‘Can we move like our bones’– jumps, runs, handstands

‘Can we move like our brains’– on the floor head on the floor as well as sparky quick hand movements from L.

‘Can we move like our hearts’– running modelling of hearts

Last choice came from J.– blood– again running, and use of arms,

L. showed different qualities of movement for each organ, as did J.” (Field Notes)

The work on the internal organs was again something that was remembered by some children after the sessions had finished.

“I liked...I think it was the last year, it might have been the year before, when we learnt about different parts of our body and we did these things when we made different...the things we thought were important in our body out of the plasticine, and I remember I made the heart. And I made it like a drum because it’s a beat.” (M. Year 6)

I introduced the organs of the body to the very youngest children using a number of props. These included photographs, books, a poem, a skeleton display board with removable bones and an organ dolly that had small removable organs within its chest cavity and head. I had

previously used this toy with mothers and babies as part of peri-natal classes, and some of the organs had gone missing.

“The class came in very quietly and came to sit quite near me. I showed the organ doll– took out his brain, then opened his chest, his ribs and took out the organs. I said that some were missing– did they know what. They said the tummy– so I said yes, the stomach was missing. I said that there should be more than one kidney– one said there should be two, and two lungs as well. I said that the focus of the session was the heart, did they want to see some pictures?” (Field Notes)

The second group had slightly different ideas about what should be inside of the organ doll.

“I showed the large and small intestine, one kidney, S. knew we should have two, one lung J. and S. knew we should have two, although there were guesses of three and four...the liver; one thought we should have two of those...” (Field Notes)

After the organ doll, I continued the class using pictures from a children’s anatomy book (Daynes & King, 2006), a book showing Leonardo DaVinci’s drawings (Cianchi, 2002), a yoga book (Scaravelli, 1991), a book that had electron microscope and imaging pictures of the living body (Photographic Atlas of the Body, 2004), and a book showing photographs of a developing foetus (Nilsson, 2003).

“I showed the diagram– and said that we don’t really have little men inside us, and our lungs are bigger than the picture shows. I showed the picture of the heart from the Scaravelli book, and the foetus heart too. I asked them about words and phrases we use about our heart– warm hearted, brave heart, cold hearted, heart broken– they said heart attack. I asked them if they wanted to hear a poem and Miss T said that they had

been listening to some poems in class, so I read *'My Heart Leaps Up'* by William Wordsworth. (Albery, 1997, p. 95) (See Appendix 9).

I then asked them all to kneel, put their hands on their heart and try to feel it beat and to hear it inside themselves. Like the other classes, as soon as they felt their heart beat they wanted to talk about it. I said that we would do some yoga movements to open out our chest and give our hearts a bit more room.

We sat wide-legged and raised arms up and out, twisted, and went forward with the out-breath. We then went onto tummies and looked over each shoulder. I asked the children to find a space, kneel with their hands on their heart and try to feel it beating. I told them if they were very quiet and felt deep inside they might feel it move with their breath— up as they breathed out and down as they breathed in.” (Field Notes)

With these sessions I was able to keep the content for the two groups in each class uniform, as the delivery and the props used were the same. However there were differences in how the material was integrated and expressed, both by the individuals and between the different groups and ages of the children. For example, in class 2, “whereas the first group mostly drew anatomical hearts, [the other] drew mostly romantic hearts.” (Field Notes)

The similarity in the drawings could have been explained by proximity of the children working at tables had this been the case. However, in the sessions the children would separate and work in their own space on the floor, and remain working until they finished. This means that the observed general themes within these two groups are not easily explained

by the children copying each other. The older children seemed to find the work in this session more challenging than the younger ones, particularly when modelling their heart out of modelling clay:

“More children struggled with this– the class 2s [Year 3 and 4] were all enthusiastic- but these older children were on the whole a little more reluctant, or made something then squished it as they were frustrated with the medium or what they were doing. Those that finished earlier were given the option to draw or write. The models were varied- some romantic hearts, some anatomical, a man in the heart, drums to represent the beat...” (Field Notes).

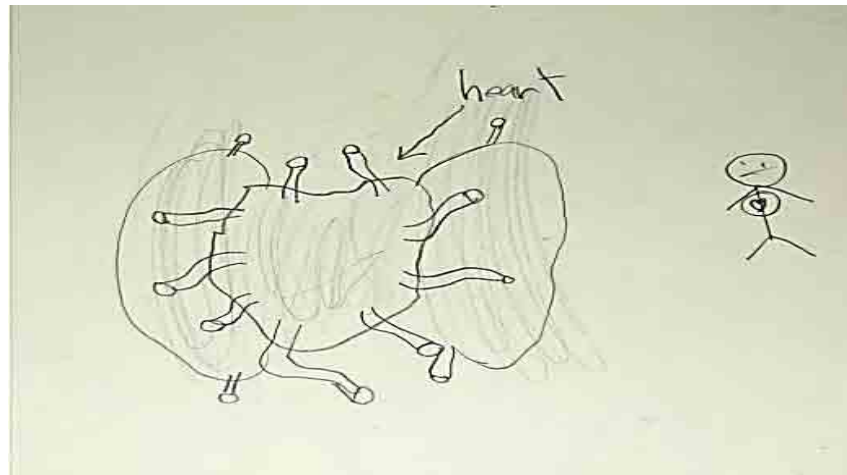


FIGURE 48 GROUP 1 HEART



FIGURE 49 GROUP 1 HEART

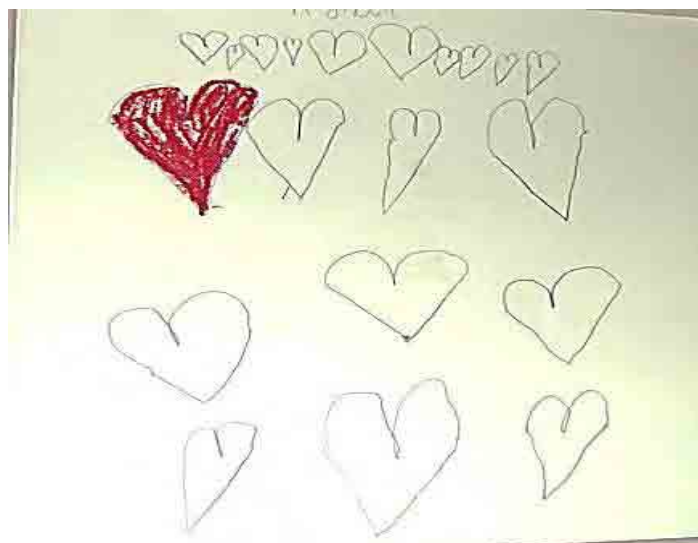


FIGURE 50 GROUP 2 HEART



FIGURE 51 GROUP 2 HEART

The heart, and the idea of the heart was again something that children remembered over a year after the sessions.

“Me: And this is about organs and the heart...”

MI: Yeah.

- Me: And you've written "it's been a great time." Can you remember why you wrote that?
- MI: Well, the activities we were doing to like show the heart and stuff like that was really great.
- Me: Okay.
- MI: I remember pretending like we were a bloodstream and then I could like stop.
- Me: Yeah and you died, didn't you?
- MI: Yeah.
- AA: I remember that too." (MI. Year 6)

MI. said that he enjoyed the variety of the activities, and remembered how small groups of three or four children made moving pictures of their hearts to share within the session. A younger child, in Year 3, reflected on her picture in her interview:

- "S: It's my picture one. It's a big, big, big, big, big, big heart, a big, big heart. It does have a big heart.
- Me: It does have a really big heart.
- S: And it's in the shape of a heart.
- Me: Is it important to be a big heart, to have a big heart?
- S: If it's grateful.
- Me: If it's grateful? Why does your heart need to be grateful?
- M: Well, if you're kind, I like kind people." (S. Year 3)

The experiential approach to the body appealed to the children: "my mum's a nurse, and it made me think of the body and how it works and understand it more– my body– it's not just

learning” (L. Year 6); “it was fun because we had to make the shapes of the body parts. It helped understand my body better because you like forget where your body is” (R. Year 6). R.s response here is reminiscent of Leder’s (1990) concept of the absent body, in that unless it is brought into conscious awareness, it disappears. Leder goes on to say that the body is often most prominent in consciousness when it is dis-eased, or in pain. This type of experiential exercise or activity brings the body into awareness without it having to be at a point of discomfort.



FIGURE 52 S.'S BIG BIG HEART

Somatic education or movement might allow an alternative viewpoint to the traditional Western belief in body and mind dissociation. This belief,

“leads to an increase in disassociative practices; we are encouraged to abandon sensorimotor awareness for abstracted mathematical or linguistic forms. This in turn

intensifies the day-to-day experience of mind as disembodied, confirming the initial cultural premise.” (Leder, 1990, pp. 152 - 3)

‘Positive practices’ including yoga, martial arts, and some forms of dance or meditation are deemed to be optional by Leder, only being sought out by those actively seeking them. He continues on to give the opinion that although there are Western equivalents to these forms that increase relaxation, coordination, ecstasy and concentration, that in general the philosophical and religious traditions take a negative view toward the body and do not place an emphasis on cultivating it. If positive body affirming and awareness practices are not habitually part of life, then awareness of the body is remembered mostly when it is in pain, tired, lustful, diseased or dying. If we do not experience our body positively, then it is more likely that we subject it to abuse and neglect that leads to illness and physical decline, thus further perpetuating the cycle (Fogel, 2009; Leder, 1990). The Cartesian duality and power relation of mind over body can also be linked to the domination of men over women as:

“women have consistently been associated with the bodily sphere. They have been linked with nature, sexuality and the passions, whereas men have been identified with the rational mind. This equation implicitly legitimizes structures of domination.”
(Leder, 1990, p. 154)

This comparison with hierarchies of oppression could also be applied to the oppressions of class, race, nature and the like. One aspect is identified with the body, the other (the oppressor) with the mind, and the Cartesian view of seeing an inferior, external ‘Other’ that is mindless and in need of control justifies subjugation. Phenomenology can be used as a tool to logically refute or criticise a dualist approach. However, this argument, made without

experiential knowledge and understanding, can become yet another discourse that once again panders to the rational mind, and ignores not only the body, but the reality of an embodied self. Perceiving and understanding the body-mind as a whole and unified thing, rather than a dualist split body and mind is a different ontological standpoint, and one that is more closely associated with somatic practices.

4.7 MOVEMENT WITHIN EDUCATION

The educational value that physical education can play for children and young people has been a topic of perennial interest among physical education theorists. Views vary, from those who emphasise the scientific literature (Cale & Duncombe, 2008; Fairclough & Stratton, 2006; Harris, 2005), to those who write from more philosophical or phenomenological traditions (Arnold, 1979; Bailey, 2006; McNamee M, 2005; Whitehead, 1990,2005). In fact, McNamee and Bailey (2010) state that the majority of scholarship in the field of the philosophy of education has been concerned with the 'educational' value of physical activity, and its place within the curriculum. Early-learning experiences have been seen as crucial to an individual developing a continuing involvement with physical activity (Kirk, 2005). A lack of motor ability has been shown to affect the frequency of social play and social reticence in young children (Bar-Haim & Bart, 2006), which in turn negatively influences social and psychological well-being (Bailey et al, 2009). Given this, it could be expected that developing an awareness of the body, an embodied self-awareness, would be an intrinsic part of education. However, the body is often seen as an adjunct to education, unless it is within the realms of body cultivation in physical education (Barrow, 2008), or body maintenance (Bailey, 2009). Although Barrow states that a healthy body is desirable for an individual, he also asks whether it is a priority within the schooling system, given that education is about the

development of the mind, and not the body. This could be seen as the ‘traditional view’ of the body in education.

Barrow does distinguish between movement, sport, fitness and health, as he believes that they each have different importance, educationally and otherwise. Sport has been claimed to build ‘character’ and ‘team spirit’. Health is a topic that can be seen to be more theoretical than practical. Fitness may contribute to mental capacity and functioning, and/or the lack of physical fitness can impair mental, emotional and spiritual living. Barrow conflates sport and movement, and likens dance to playing cricket, with the learning of how a human body responds to movement equated to learning to appreciate music, with a music student able, perhaps, to appreciate music more. Movement is not the same as sport, and some forms of movement are not easily categorised in conventional definitions of physical activity, such as; play, game and sport (Morgan, 2006). Kentel and Dobson (2007) saw movement that develops a mind-body connection, particularly free play and dance as vital “not only as a means to an educational end, but as an end in itself” (p. 145). Lastly, Barrow considers the relationship between the body, movement, the mind and understanding; the idea that movement embodies meaning. He uses this relationship, and the view that movement has the capacity to enhance understanding, to substantiate the importance of the body in education.

Affective and cognitive benefits of physical education and school sport were discussed by Bailey et al. (2009) in a literary review of the educational benefits claimed and the historical perspectives of the subject, physical benefits, and social benefits. The affective benefits are stated as including psychological and emotional well-being and skills and assets including mental health, positive self-regard, conflict resolution, coping strategies, mastery motivation,

a sense of autonomy, moral character and confidence. Empathy is not included within this list, although it could be argued that it should be included as it is of use in increasing positive relationships with others, which are clearly emphasised here. Dimensions such as emotion, preference, choice, aspirations, attitude and appreciations are included, and empathy would arguably be a component of these, as it can be important in reflective processes (Joireman et al, 2002). Evidence was found that physical education and school sport enhances children's self-esteem, mainly thought to be due to their perception of achievement and mastery. However, the effects of competition on children are not always positive, and many children identify with the idea that 'doing well' is what equates to enjoyment and feeling good (Wessinger, 1994), rather than 'taking part'. This has the possibility of disenfranchising those that are not as able. As the review looked at physical activity and physical education and school sport, any relationships between particular movement patterns and mood and emotion were not drawn out.

Transfer effects have been claimed from physical education to other areas of the curriculum, under a longstanding and general idea of 'healthy body healthy mind' as well as the stimulation of generic cognitive or learning skills (Bailey, et al, 2009). However, physical education and school sport is not the same as the movement and physical activity that the participants experienced within this study, as physical education and sport do not generally come from an intention to enhance and educate the individual about her somatic awareness, and give her opportunity to reflect on it (Macdonald et al., 2002).

The idea that physical education could be used to hybridise Western and Eastern views of the body to enhance a body-mind unity is suggested by Lu et al. (Lu et al, 2009) although they do

not say how this could work in practice. Although ‘alternative thinkers’ have called for more holistic approaches to physical education that incorporate new or different ways to think about the body and health (Linden, 1994), “most if not all of these alternative thinkers will not appear on the reading list...or in university courses...their ideas have little voice” (Tinning, 2001, p. 201). This may be due to a perceived lack of evidence due to a comparative lack of academic research. Health related benefits have been linked to physical education such as back health (Tinning, 2001). It may be that these benefits could also be associated with movement forms such as yoga, but this cannot be assumed. Although such studies are relevant, they cannot be used as a basis for broad and general claims. Both Barrow and Bailey considered the justification for and importance of physical education and sport within the educational curriculum, which “is largely a product of how we think about the body...the objectified, scientized body” (Tinning, 2001, p. 191). Yoga and SME could be used as an opportunity to gain an alternate view of the body, one that is embodied rather than objectified, reductive, or ignores the social and emotional aspects of movement (Markula & Pringle, 2006). This might tie in with a phenomenological approach to physical education as put forward by Thorburn (2008), in which “the meaning of embodied action including kinaesthetic awareness of one’s movements and the importance of sensations as they are experienced by the body” (ibid p. 265) are seen as both rationale and pedagogical approach.

Markula and Pringle (2006) describe yoga as one of the “so-called mindful fitness practices” (ibid. p. 155), that are becoming increasingly popular. The focus on observing movement patterns through proprioceptive awareness, breathing, proper bodily alignment and the use of intrinsic energy delineate these practices from other fitness regimes (ibid). Yoga has been described as the phenomenology of the ‘inner’ body (Sarukkai, 2002). SME, by its very

nature, is process rather than goal orientated. This can be seen as a major difference between SME and other physical activities such as dance, where the acquisition and learning of skill is determined by the achievement of a goal (Bailey & Pickard, 2010). This difference can also be noted in the language that is used around physical education, as experience is “referenced through movement *and* language (Thorburn, 2008, p. 266, my italics). For example, Armour (1999) explicitly states the need for the education of pupils’ embodiment. However, the terms ‘performance’ and ‘body management’ were utilised to describe the emphasis that should be placed on the practical sessions. The form of Authentic Movement (Adler, 2002) places importance in the use of the language that is used to describe movement, and, in that ethos, it may be that ‘experience’, or ‘awareness’ would be less objectifying and goal orientated terms.

Attitudes to and perceptions of physical education “are mediated by a host of factors, including age, gender and curriculum content” (Dismore et al, 2006, p. 74), yet to date “studies of younger students’ perceptions are particularly rare” (ibid). School sport in particular, often works to a model of participant development, talent identification and development that is very different to the ethos of non-judgemental person-centred work ascribed to by somatic movement education (Toms, et al., 2010; Ford, et al., 2010; Bailey & Toms, 2010). Specific programmes are in place to support those particularly talented at sport (Bailey et al, 2011). Interestingly, Bain (1995) argues that students “in physical education classes need not only to experience movement but also to think and to talk and write about those movement experiences” (p. 246), in a similar process, I imagine, to those that the children experienced in this study. This kind of reflection may elicit feelings and perceptions from the children about how they feel about physical education, similar to those expressed in these sessions.

The movement sessions in this study were not designed to be part of the physical education curriculum within the school. They fit into Bailey and Dismore's (2004) functional definition of physical education that included all supervised and structured activities that take place within school and during the school day. The work was not instigated for specific outcomes for the participants, nor as an intervention strategy, but, as has been discussed, was intended to educate the children about different ways in which they could use their body, and to collect data on how they perceived themselves, reflected on and expressed their sense of embodiment. The school perceived my work with the children in part as fitting in with physical education, dance and sport "these sessions help to meet the curriculum demands for dance and physical education" (Reflective Journal). I was also asked to lead the timetabled physical education sessions for some classes for a half-term. As I prepared for these I wondered "how to bring the therapeutic, affirming side into the movement...qualities of movement" (Reflective journal).

The therapeutic side of movement was considered by the philosopher Sheets-Johnstone (2010). She stated that language is 'post-kinetic' that is, language acquisition occurs after movement, rather than movement being pre-verbal. In addition, she cites Darwin's observations of animal's movements and reactions to emotional stimuli (such as alarm) to testify to the "intimate connection between movement and emotion" (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 4). Movement is the form in which we can express and validate our sense of self within a kinaesthetic reality. It is, therefore, the bridge between how we affect and sense the world around us. The ability of movement to bring awareness and attention to parts of ourselves that may have been invisible or unconscious previously, and bringing that awareness into expression resonates strongly with the work in this study. This is the aspect of using

movement that “introduces us to the possibility of languaging experience in more nuanced and intricate ways” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, p. 9). Movement is therapeutic, because it gives access to expression. With young children, this includes verbal expression, mark-making and drawing in addition to the written expression that has been documented in the journaling and reflective writings from the older participants. By expressing ourselves, we are better able to make sense of the world that we live in, to share how we perceive it and to make ourselves intelligible to others. Our rich language is associated with feelings that originate from movement: “words, phrases and metaphors that attempt to portray the somatic components of emotion” (Cromby, 2011, p. 89). Movement can also be a quick way, or a short cut to access process orientated psychology (Mindell, 1995).

The reduction of the living body to a machine deplored by phenomenologists (Merleau-Ponty, 2002), is precisely the type of reduction that is criticised in much of the physical education literature, where the body is simply assumed to be a machine (McNamee & Bailey, 2010). Instead, Sheets-Johnstone postulates that perceptions are plaited into movement and there is no ‘mind-doing’ that is separate from a ‘body-doing’. To think in movement is to experience a mindful body, and is tied to an evolving, changing situation. It is a way of being in the world, of wondering or exploring the world, taking it up moment by moment and living it directly in movement. It is the work of an existentially resonant body (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010).

The concept of ‘Physical Literacy’, developed by Whitehead (Killingbeck et al, 2007; Whitehead, 2004; 2005; 2007) is philosophically rooted in the view that a person is embodied, and that there is no Cartesian separation of mind and body. Whitehead believes that the intent

of physical education should be the nurturing of physical literacy, that is “the ability to use our motility to the greatest effect” (Whitehead, 2007, p. 6). This is to be achieved by developing poise and confidence through balance, co-ordination, agility, and spatial awareness amongst other attributes, and with a teacher approach that is “sensitive to the needs of the embodied pupils with whom they are working” (ibid p 9). Used as a basis for physical education, physical literacy could be used to “prepare the basic building blocks, to foster the positive attitudes, to encourage independence, variety in learning and participation” (Haydn-Davies, 2005). Physical literacy has been interpreted by others in terms of skill acquisition and a goal rather than process orientated process with respect to physical education (Killingbeck et al, 2007). This may in part be due to the language, in that ‘literacy’ is an achievable goal, and ‘physical’ denotes that it is motor function that is of importance along with the tradition of skill-based physical education. Whitehead’s description of physical literacy matches well with the outcomes and results of SME. She states “this form of Literacy opens the door to so much e.g. understanding, knowledge and aesthetic appreciation...[it]...makes a huge difference to the quality of our lives...has the potential to make beneficial and significant difference to a person’s ability to take advantage of the many opportunities life offers” (Whitehead, 2007, p. 6). It could be suggested that SME is a means of achieving physical literacy for individuals.

According to work by Côté and Hay (2002) young people’s socialisation into sport and activity follows a general pattern of ‘sampling years’ (aged 7–12) followed by a specialising phase at around age 13-15, then moves towards either recreational engagement with sport and activity, investment in a particular form at a high level, or drop-out. Key features of the early sampling phase are that it should be motivated by fun and enjoyment, include a range of

activities and have characteristics of ‘deliberate play’ that centres around the development of techniques and understanding. Deliberate play is contrasted with the free and spontaneous play of infants and very young children, and is designed to maximise enjoyment (Kirk, 2005). The work the children at the school had previously experienced with me would fit easily into the category of deliberate play.

I was asked by the school to lead physical education sessions for the Infants (Reception–Year 2) in addition to the study sessions, for one school term (six weeks). At first I was a little unsure of how these ‘PE’ sessions needed to be different from my own work with the classes, beyond obvious lack of data collection. I linked in the work to the class topics (see Appendix 10 for sample notes from a class). The work was exploratory, and the children were encouraged to express themselves in response to language, images and ideas. I wrote the following notes after a session on the theme of ‘fireworks’:

“How a firework explodes...different types of fireworks; rockets, wizzles, Catherine wheels (with arms, then whole body)

Came back to a circle and thought about the colours of fireworks. They put their hands on their eyes and thought of a firework, any types, but in a certain colour. We came back to the circle between each colour– the children chose: green, red, orange, yellow, blue, purple and gold.

The class teacher was struck by the different qualities of movement she observed.”

(Notes from PE sessions)

I noted at the time that this was “more like the work I used to do with them...” (Reflective Journal).

Within the study itself, the children mostly made their own links between the work and physical education: “I liked it because it’s linked into sports and all that and I like doing it, I like sports” (D. Year 4). One boy, R. struggled with the sessions at times, and bringing the work into a physical education context was something that I tried to encourage him:

“R. wanted to do maths– more of a context needed for some children? Verbally linked into physical education which he likes, talked about my boss and this work being in physical education. Tried hard needed a lot of verbal encouragement– he is the youngest in this group– Y3 where the others are Y4.” (Reflective Journal)

In some respects this worked, as R. did engage more throughout the time I was in school, and we developed a positive relationship to the point where he forgot his earlier concerns.

However in the interview, he was able to look over his work:

“And you said “I’m rubbish at yoga; I’m good at every style of PE except yoga.” Do you remember that? Do you remember saying it while I wrote it? No? I remember writing it down because I didn’t agree with you at all.” (R. Year 5)

Here, R. implicitly thought of yoga as a kind of physical education. In contrast, both E. (Year 6) and J. (Year 4) spoke of the differences they saw between yoga and other sports and physical education, whilst still identifying it as a form of physical education.

“Me: And looking back on it, is it something that you’re pleased you’ve done?”

E.: Yeah.

Me: Why?

E.: Because it's like not like normal PE is.

Me: What makes it different?

E.: Because we normally go outside and have to play basketball.

Me: Don't you like playing basketball?

E.: It's okay. I find yoga more fun.

Me: What, because it's inside?

E.: I don't know. It's just...It's because of you get to do like different stuff in one lesson.” (E. Year 6)

Although E. found it hard to articulate the differences that she felt between physical education and yoga, although, she too implied that although ‘not like normal PE’, it was still physical education, J. began by speaking about how she liked the content of the sessions, and gave that as a reason for liking the work. Although the yoga contained many stretches, it is possible that we approached them differently from how she had experienced them in gymnastics.

“Me: What was exciting about it?

J.: Well, I never did such things like it before.

Me: Okay, why were they different?

J.: Because I used to...I do gymnastics but yoga's exactly like that, but it's really funner.

Me: What makes it funner or different from gymnastics?

J.: Well, in gymnastics they've got equipment but in yoga they don't.

Me: Okay. What makes it more funner?

J.: Well, we've...in gymnastics we've done lots of stretches and lots of things and what I don't like, but in yoga we do things that I like." (J. Year 4)

Later in the interview, when I asked about the reflective side of the work, J. again referred back to her experiences of gymnastics.

"Me: Do you remember I used to ask you to do some movements and then we'd talk about it and think about it and write or draw about what it felt like? What was that like?

J.: Yes, it was fun because we don't do that in gymnastics.

Me: Okay. So that was the difference between that and gymnastics? Was it easy or hard for you to do?

J: It was easy." (J. Year 4)

The stretches, that J. found more prevalent in gymnastics, were one of the things that C. (Year 6) remembered most, "when you don't do all the different things like your sport and like football and all that you've got to do stretching, so you keep that in mind." Here, C. also began to reflect on how the work in the sessions related to the rest of her life. This aspect of how the work feeds into everyday life makes it, as one child in Year 1 put it "it's a bit like PE but it's not PE".

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the results of the study with respect to the themes of mind, bodymind, embodiment and perceptions of the body, and in addition, the role of movement and somatic movement within physical education, and how the children perceived the

movement in the study in relation to ‘normal’ physical education. Mindfulness, and the skills of embodiment “may be important in disengaging individuals from automatic thoughts, habits, and unhealthy behaviour patterns and thus could play a key role in fostering informed and self-endorsed behavioural regulation” (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 823). Young children can begin to learn these skills, and ideally continue to develop them as they grow, however, the fact that they are in school and a large proportion of their life is controlled and arranged by adults does impact on their ability to self-regulate.

The children’s experiences of their minds and bodies included their perceptions, recognition and expression of emotion. They drew and wrote about being still, finding balance, and their own experience of the inner structure of their bodies. The children shared their experiences of being and feeling stretched, pain and why they liked to move. Movement was seen as fun by the majority of the children, and they expressed what they saw as the similarities and differences between the movement in the sessions and school physical education.

There is an on-going debate about the position, value, purpose and definition of physical education and movement within education. Physical education may be seen as useful for health and fitness reasons rather than education (Barrow, 2008), or vital to integrate students’ lived-body experiences and acquisition of subject knowledge (Thorburn, 2008). By integrating expression through movement and language into physical education it may be possible to also facilitate young people’s developing self-awareness as well as their motor skills (Bresler, 2004). Somatic movement education (SME) may be one way in which movement, and according to the functional definition (Bailey & Dismore, 2004), physical

education could achieve this. The next chapter looks in more detail at SME, and the boundary between that and somatic movement therapy.

CHAPTER 5 EMBODIMENT AND LEARNING: SOMATIC MOVEMENT THERAPY AND EDUCATION

This chapter explores the boundaries between somatic movement education and somatic movement therapy. Somatic work can have therapeutic effects even when used educationally. This chapter first considers how somatic movement can be used therapeutically to develop embodied self-awareness. Secondly, the importance of relationships in somatic movement education and therapy are considered, both in general, and with reference to the sessions in this study. Finally, as I remained aware of my role as therapeutic practitioner as well as educator and researcher throughout, I include case studies of two children who participated in the sessions for whom I considered the work to be more therapeutic than educational.

5.1 THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT TO INCREASE EMBODIED SELF-AWARENESS

Somatic movement can be used both educationally and therapeutically (ISMETA; Hartley, 1989; Hartley, 2004). Similarly, yoga can be practiced, taught or used as a therapy (Desikachar, 1995). Trainings and requirements of educators and therapists may share elements “there must be similarities between implicit tensions and potential emotional pitfalls” (Cox, 1988, p. 83). In order to deal with the inherent stresses, and avoid burnout, a therapeutic training would include a conceptual framework in which she can work (ibid.). In addition, a therapist would undergo a prolonged process in which she becomes cognisant of her own edges and limitations. This may be through personal analysis, however, regardless of the process “there is no doubt whatever that he needs prolonged personal supervision and monitored introspection of his own responses” (ibid, p. 92). These processes are put in place to safeguard both the therapist and the client, as well as to ensure that when necessary, correct

procedures are followed for referral and termination (Leigh, 1998). The ‘introspection’ necessary may be part of a reflective practice, which the therapist would employ for her profession, as well as her own personal development: “therapists need an equally deep connection with their own embodied life” (Totten, 2003, p. 79).

Depth of practice in a therapist will benefit a client (Sills, 2000). This quality may allow a practitioner to tune-in to her students, and be sensitive to them (Fogel, 2009). This intersubjectivity allows the practitioner to be more open to her students’ experiences, and require her to remain self-aware whilst working with other people: “the teacher or practitioner must herself embody a certain quality of openness and curiosity toward her own embodied self-awareness and to the discoveries made by her students...we have all been in situations where intersubjectivity is not possible” (ibid, p. 224). Within an educational context, it is within this intersubjective praxis that the educator and child form between them, both acting as competent partners within the relationship, that results in education (Biesta, 1994). However, there may be times when intersubjectivity is not possible, or when it is possible, but extracts a price from the practitioner. This may be one reason that the ethical codes for psychotherapists include regular, contracted supervision (BACP).

In a discussion of principles for the therapeutic treatment of lost embodied self-awareness, Fogel defines eight stages; resources, slowing down, co-regulation, verbalisation, links and boundaries, self-regulation, re-engagement, and letting go, details of which can be found in Appendix 11. Somatic movement therapy may be used in a similar way to Fogel’s approach in order to increase a clients’ embodied self-awareness, and to address the issues or reasons that lie beneath its loss (Hartley, 2004). Somatic movement education, in contrast, would not

seek explicitly to explore why an individual wished to increase their embodied sense of self-awareness, although a practitioner might choose to follow up any insights gained through sessions in personal therapy (Hartley, 1989). This demonstrates a difference between educational and therapeutic approaches within somatic movement. There is a differentiation between educational material that may have therapeutic content (of which the practitioner needs to be aware), and a therapeutic intention. Either way, in order to choose between the two approaches the practitioner would have undergone a therapeutic training, as the differentiation occurs at a point of accreditation and not at training. If a purely educational course had been taken, then the practitioner would have to be very aware of their limits and their ability to work therapeutically. This differentiation between education and therapy does not seem to be present in Ecclestone and Hayes' (2004) discussion of therapeutic education, where they suggest that "almost everyone in education now has some counselling or therapeutic aspect to their work" (ibid, p. 128), who speak of 'therapist/teachers' and imply that therapeutic elements in teacher training are detrimental to education.

5.2 FORMING RELATIONSHIPS IN SOMATIC MOVEMENT

EDUCATION/THERAPY

In a therapeutic one-to-one session the practitioner/therapist can focus entirely on the needs of her client. In a group it is necessary to hold the 'energy', or focus, of the group together, and accommodate individuals as much as possible. Because of the compromises inherent in this, the practitioner must be careful not to introduce material that may be too much to be held appropriately, and maintain a relationship with all present as much as possible. These research sessions were intended to be educational, and yet the boundary between the therapeutic and educational contexts of somatic movement may overlap at times, as the

individuals process information about themselves, their bodies, and their sense of embodiment. This was most evident with the sessions with the older children; however, each session was designed to incorporate time that was practitioner led as well as time for individual exploration and reflection, so as to allow time for any issues to be contained and ‘held’ (Rogers, 1967), in recognition of the fact that some children may need more therapeutic holding. The trust that had been built over time between the children and myself meant that some children seemed to feel safe enough to express deep feelings and emotions.

There were some children whom I identified as being good candidates for more therapeutic work “Education/therapy boundary...potential to follow up the group sessions with one-to-one work with A.– more therapeutic than educational” (Reflective Journal phase 1). This element of therapeutic intention was in part due to the relationships that I had formed with the children, and the staff in the school.

“The importance of relationships in this kind of work are key. I have reflected about the line between education and therapy however underlying any learning that is of this kind there has to be a level of trust. Trust that whoever has responsibility for the work can hold the space of the class. It was a big thing that the class looked to me for that holding at the end. They knew me, I knew them. They do play up at times (or more accurately they play off each other in the low level disturbance) however they do have enough respect that when I ask them to be quiet, or do something, they do it.”

(Reflective Journal)

In phases 1 and 2 I worked with a teaching assistant, or occasionally the class teacher in the sessions. Due to staff changes, these were not always the same women I had previously

worked with, and some appeared to ‘get’ the work more than others. One took up yoga as a result. I noted at the time: “the importance of the relationship with the practitioner/teacher and if other staff present with them too” as a comment on the different ways in which the sessions went, and how they were willing or not to engage fully and openly. Whenever possible I would explain to and inform the teaching assistant or teacher, so that they understood the purpose of the work and the exercises that I asked the children to do, and what I needed from them.

“I need the children to be willing to share their feelings, thoughts and experiences and need support from the teaching assistant and teacher, but also need to support them and to have the class behave in a way that is not dangerous and enables us to do the more interesting things...” (Reflective Journal)

I also discussed the differences between this work and teaching lessons.

“This is different to ‘education’. There is a need for more creativity and freedom but has the edge of being less in control...They need for this research to have the freedom to express what they want and not what they think I want.” (Field Notes phase 3)

It was not necessary for the teaching assistant or teacher to know about the work, or to have movement or yoga experience, but a child-centred approach was vital.

“With the older children, the trust is evident in the care and the thought and the openness with which they are approaching the work and the writing about it. Children like B. are now joining in, contributing and being positive. M. is also contributing positively and from the comments from his teacher is behaving differently in the sessions. He is enjoyable to have in the class.

Some of the children (particularly the older ones) are very willing to participate in the ‘journaling’ aspect of exploring themes, their feelings, thoughts and movement through writing and art.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

The importance of trust was particularly evident in a session where the usual class teacher for the youngest children was absent. A supply teacher came with the group to the space. Previously, the school had a policy of engaging the same one or two supply teachers for periods of illness or long term leave, and these people knew the school, and the children. The teacher who came to this session was new to the class, and to me. This particular class had a few children who were relatively disruptive. They egged on the behaviour of a boy, A., who was on the special needs register for children with special educational needs (SEN). I was told this informally by staff at the school, however, I was not allowed to see his records, nor was I told his official diagnosis if one had been given. I recognised from my experience that this boy had elements of the autistic spectrum in his behaviour. Autistic spectrum disorder is a condition that can affect perceptions of the self, and embodied self-awareness: a high functioning woman on the autistic spectrum described it: “I found it very hard to hold onto the concept that my body was part of me” (Williams, 2003, p. 23). A. is a child on whom I reflected on a lot, in part because his actions and manner reminded me of my godson, who had at the time a diagnosis of PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder– Not Otherwise Specified) with autistic spectrum disorder; since changed to atypical autism. Together with the class teacher, I had been working on integrating A. into the group activities whilst ensuring that his behaviour was not disruptive to others, and that behaviour in general was not an issue.

“Class 1 was different this week with the supply teacher who did not know the children. She seemed to have an entirely different style of relating to them– more old school– which I did not see them respond to well.

She was less able to support me and the class in terms of an exploratory context– i.e. allowing them the freedom to explore the material. However she also did not seem to have the authority to enforce behaviour when that was required. In contrast the children looked to me at the end of the class for discipline and maintaining the line and comfort and sorting out when someone was hurt.” (Reflective Journal phase 1)

This relationship, and the trust that is implicit, is key to a Person-Centred approach. Mearns and Thorne explore the idea of ‘relational depth’, and describe the therapeutic relationship as one which “is unique in respect of the fact that it offers the person a context where they are not being judged, where they are not expected to be in any particular way” (Mearns & Thorne, 1998, p. 63).

Within the sessions, it was important to me to build an atmosphere of trust, encouragement and support, so that each child was able to gain confidence. The relationships that we built with each other in this context were key: “relationship is the mirror in which you discover yourself. Without relationship you are not; to be is to be related; to be related is existence” (Krishnamurti, 2002, p. 280). Within a therapeutic context, the relational field is defined as that generated by the therapist and the client. In this case, the relational field encompassed all the children, and any participating staff. Regardless of the numbers of people participating, it was my role as facilitator to be present with my full awareness, and to hold the space so that

all could be heard, could listen, and communicate (Sills, 2010). Creating such a space was completed in stages, through the rituals of making contact with those present, checking in with everyone there, and more importantly allowing them time to check in with their own inner state, and establishing a field of listening so that everyone knew that they could have room to show and to share their feelings, thoughts and experiences. The circle game was one way I did this, and it was a favourite with many children.

“Me: What do you wish we’d done more of?

R.: Circle game.

Me: Why did you like that one?

R.: Because it was fun and you got to take turns and that.” (R. Year 3)

Some children did not appear to want to be the centre of attention in this way. To ensure that everyone was applauded and seen, the rules of the circle game were that everyone had to show something, either from the session, copying something that someone else had done, or that they made up. If a child did not know what to do, then I would go into the circle with them, and we would do a pose together. Every child (or adult, as some teaching assistants enjoyed joining in) got a big round of applause. The recognition of each other was something that was also encouraged at other times: “K. fab at balancing– smiling, whole class clapped when she balanced on one leg throughout the exercise” (Field Notes phase 1). Not all of the children found this aspect easy though. One girl said how she felt about other people seeing what she’d written or drawn.

“C.: That was pretty embarrassing to me, because you have to draw and then like show everyone.

Me: Okay, why was it embarrassing?

C.: Because I don't really like...well, it's okay with me but I don't...showing people my work, it's not really my thing, you know, I don't want them knowing what...

Me: What you've done?

C.: Yes.

Me: But you were all right with them watching you when you were moving, yes?

C.: Yes.” (C. Year 4)

I was interested by her response about sharing her drawings, as this was not something that we did at all in the sessions. We spoke a bit more about what she meant.

“Me: Do you remember we used to do the circle game, you have to get up and show, was that all right or was that embarrassing?

C.: That was fun.

Me: Was it okay doing the writing and the drawing and the thinking about what it felt like to move? Was that bit all right? Was it just the sharing bit you didn't really enjoy?

C.: Well, I kind of enjoyed the sharing bit because I like expressing my ideas but like just constantly sharing with others, we do show and tell with brain stuff and share them like that, we do that every week, so it's like people and sharing, but it's...I don't get like angry with it, it's a bit fun sharing my ideas.

Me: Okay. Is it kind of like an edge, like do you like it but you don't like it?

C.: Well, it's 50:50

...

Me: What do you wish we'd done more of?

- C.: Probably more of the circle game. I liked that.
- Me: Yes? Even though it's the sharing bit that you're kind of unsure about?
- C: Sharing quite perks me up but too much sharing, then kind of perks me a bit down." (C. Year 4)

Even though sharing with others was something with which C. struggled with at times, one of the favourite things we did was a sharing activity. Another child, S. in Year 3, remembered an aspect of working with someone else.

- “Me: What do you remember most about doing the work with me? What do you remember most?
- S.: Doing the poses joint poses.
- Me: Doing the ones, you working with somebody else?
- S.: Yes.
- Me: Okay. Were they your favourite things?
- S.: Well, I'm not sure.
- Me: Why do you remember doing the work with someone else?
- S.: Because it was fun.
- Me: What was fun about it?
- S.: Making up the pose and also I think making- doing it with someone else, also made it fun because like sometimes when I do things on my own even if I'm making it up or something, I prefer it if I'm doing it with someone else because then I have someone else to help me think about it as well.
- ...
- Me: How easy was it sharing with someone else?

S.: Well, sometimes I find it easier to work on my own but other times I find it easier to work with other people, like when there's still a lot of thinking involved and that had a lot of thinking, so it was fun. And quite easy to do.”
(S. Year 3)

The relationships that S. had formed with her peers seemed to be important to her.

Collaborating with someone else added to her sense of enjoyment, although she maintained that at times she preferred to work alone. Another child, C. Year 6, spoke about working with a partner.

“Me: This is about balancing. And you've written, “I think it's easier to balance, to be by myself when we do balancing because I'm scared that they're going to fall on me.”

C.: Yes.

M: [laughs] Are you just agreeing with that? Is there anything else to add to that?

C.: I think it's like easier because...by yourself, because then you don't have the other...if they're like holding onto you, you don't have the other people pulling you over, which...is annoying.” (C. Year 6)

Working with others in poses generated mixed responses, particularly from the older children.

MI., in Year 6, spoke about his experiences making up poses and balances in a small group.

“MI.: I would like to do it in a group. I found out some people were very light and some people were very heavy. Yeah, so what I was sort of saying like in some balancing parts like I would find it quite relaxing but in some balancing parts it's not that relaxing. And yeah, I found out that some people are like really

heavy and I find it difficult to work with them because they're quite heavy.
But like with the people who are light it's a lot easier to do positions and
balancing with them.

Me: And is the light and heavy to do with how big they are or is it something
different?

MI.: I'm not sure.” (MI. Year 6)

The idea of ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ could have been a comment about physical weight. Equally it may have been a reference to whom in his group was pulling their weight, who was contributing. The older children did quite a lot of work with partners, as they explored ideas of recognising their own emotions and others’ as well as working through movements. They chose to write and reflect on their experiences.

“Working with a partner is different than without in a good way.” (M. Year 6)

“It was harder working with a partner because they might not watch out for other people.” (A. Year 6)

“Working with a partner is harder than I thought they might be at different levels to you.” (A. Year 5)

“Very easy if you look carefully at other people.” (L. Year 6)

That last quote came from a reflective drawing by L. from a session where we explored relationships with peers. L. recognised, that in order to perceive another’s emotional state,

she needed to look carefully. She needed to be aware of that person, and attentive to her.

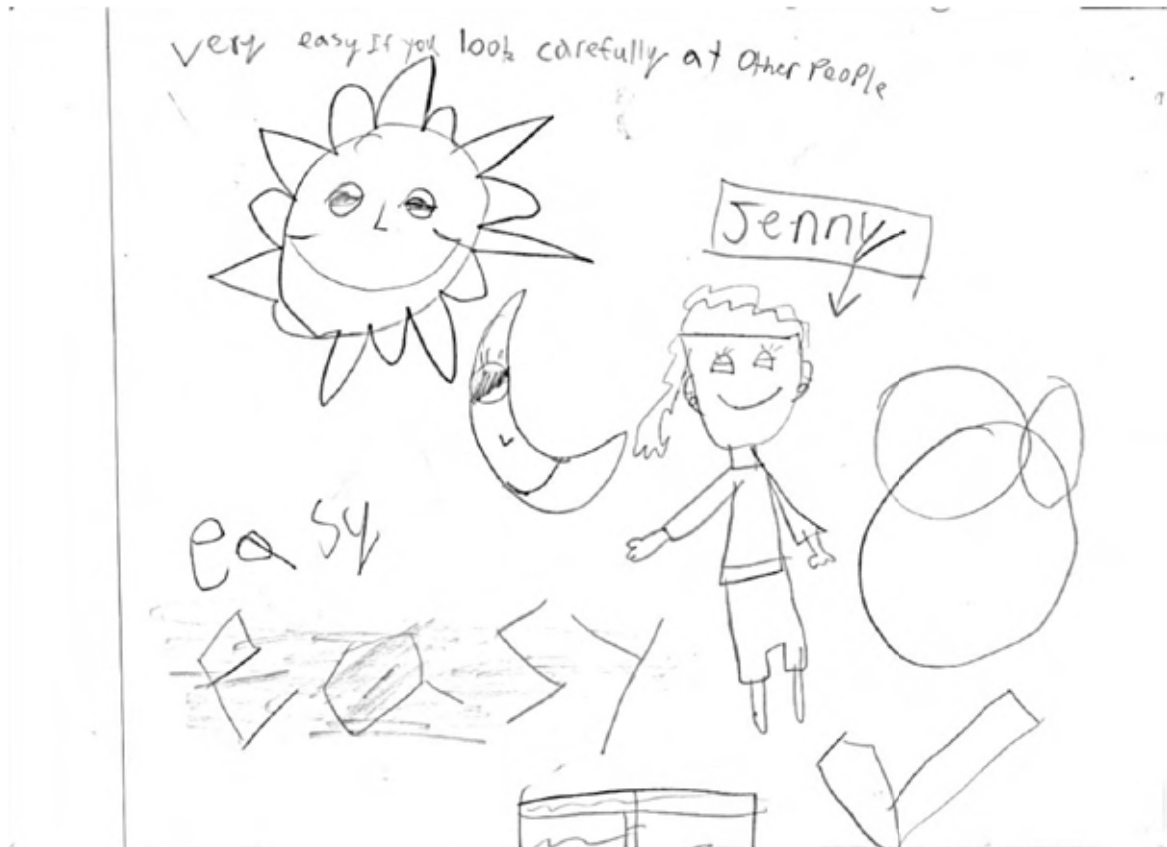


FIGURE 53 L'S "IT IS EASY IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY AT OTHER PEOPLE"

As well as active movements and perception of emotions, the groups explored being still and quiet both on their own and in relationship with others: "it was very peaceful, it sort of felt like the minute was just going to keep going, it's much easier with a partner" (C. Year 6). In some groups children found it easier with a partner or in a small group, and in others on their own.

“What about with a partner? Before, all the children except R. thought that it would be easier with a partner. Room observed to be still.

Afterwards all the children except for M. found it harder: “if you wobble and your partner wobbles.” All pairs chose to sit down. Pairs given a piece of paper to share to draw being still on.” (Field Notes phase 1)

Animals were a theme that was explored in Science Week, as well as in sessions. MI. (Year 6) said that he remembered the group work from Science Week most out of all his experiences.

“Me: Why do you remember that the most?

MI.: I just found it really fun.

Me: Yeah. Okay. What was fun about it?

MI.: Actually acting out and pretending to be different animals and being able to eat other people in the class.

Me: I should note we didn't actually eat anyone, did we?

MI.: No.” (MI. Year 6)

Co-operation between the children was important when they were working together. With the youngest ones I actively encouraged this, and saw the results when they decided to work together without direction.

“Again lots of verbal encouragement as the children found shapes, looked at each other, tried different ones...For the snake three children made a long snake then others joined in (all initiated by them, I was just holding the book and sitting). Choosing

parts was done as before, if a child (or two children) wanted a part then they got it, if not they discussed it themselves and sorted it out.” (Field Notes phase 1)

The oldest groups had different dynamics. They were able to choose both who they worked with, and how they worked as they produced material for display in the classroom. The notes below came from the first of three sessions in one week.

“The boys MI., J., P. and JO. looked like they were being rowdy, as they were trying group balances but were in actual fact paying very good attention to each other, being careful with each other and working well as a team.

The girls A., EL., E. and K. chose to each work on a different feeling, draw and write and take pictures of each one. They also worked well, quietly and industriously throughout the session and got cows.

B., T. and R. were messing about a bit...They saw the balancing groups and also started to do that but were not paying attention to each other and T. managed to headbutt R.. After that they began to work a little more carefully, and by the end were collaborating well.” (Field Notes phase 3)

Obviously it was not ideal that any group was working in a way that was not safe. The three boys, B. R. and T., were all Year 6 and had a tendency to be boisterous both with me and in the class generally. T. had only recently joined the school and so had not worked with me at all before. At the beginning of the next day I reinforced the need to pay attention to each other as well as to themselves through playing a ‘clap game’ I first saw in a dance workshop

aimed at young men at risk of mental health problems. The leader called it ‘pass the clap,’ however I chose to change the name when working with primary age children.

“We played the clap game– a way of ensuring that we are aware of each other– explained the rules to the new ones (T. and C.). Enforcing again the need to be aware of each other particularly when balancing or climbing on each other.” (Field Notes phase 3)

This awareness of each other was demonstrated by one group, as they chose to write how they felt as they worked with each other in the positions they had made up.

“MI.: “I feel quite safe because I can hold onto JO. If JO. wasn’t there I would feel scared.”

JO.: “I feel safe but worried because I might fall off, but MI is there to hold me, so I’m also safe. I feel like I’m in the tardis.”

J.: “When JO. is standing on my back, I feel jolly. It doesn’t hurt at all.”

P.: “I feel quite worried because when MI. stands on my back he keeps on wobbling & I think he might fall off.”” (Display, class 4)

Looking back over all his work, one child, M. (Year 6), said that the sessions working on the display were the aspect he had liked best. He had chosen to work on his own, and yet it was the cooperation between the children that he commented on.

“M: My favourite thing was when we all did the different parts of the display.

Me: Okay, why did you like that?

M.: I liked it because everybody got to put in their own thing and everybody got to say like what their favourite thing was.

Me: 'kay. And was it nice that everyone got their own bit to do?

M.: Yes.” (M. Year 6)

The relationship building did not only happen in the sessions, but was reinforced by my presence in the school outside of the sessions.

“Pipe-cleaner people did not always match shapes with body, but all joined in (including L. who did not last week– this week she sat next to me and has talked to me every day in the playground).” (Field Notes phase 1)

The fact that L. chose to sit next to me in the circle after talking to me in the playground may have been important to her in her choice to participate actively in the session. Where I sat in the circle was important for both relationships and encouraging behaviour. I would often position myself next to those likely to need more attention to ensure that they did not get distracted.

“More behavioural issues in this group– I sat near A., which helped- he worked hard.” (Field Notes phase 1)

“P. on one side, A. on the other, J. wanted to sit next to me, I asked him to sit opposite me.” (Field Notes phase 1)

Sometimes the quieter children wanted to be at my side: “R. sat next to me” (Field Notes). I noted this because he was always seemed reserved, quiet and shy. His mother had died two years prior to the time of the study, and, according to his teacher, this had had an effect on his confidence as well as his schoolwork. In one session at the end of the year, R. drew me this

picture in addition to the work from the session. I had told him a story about reindeer in class that week.

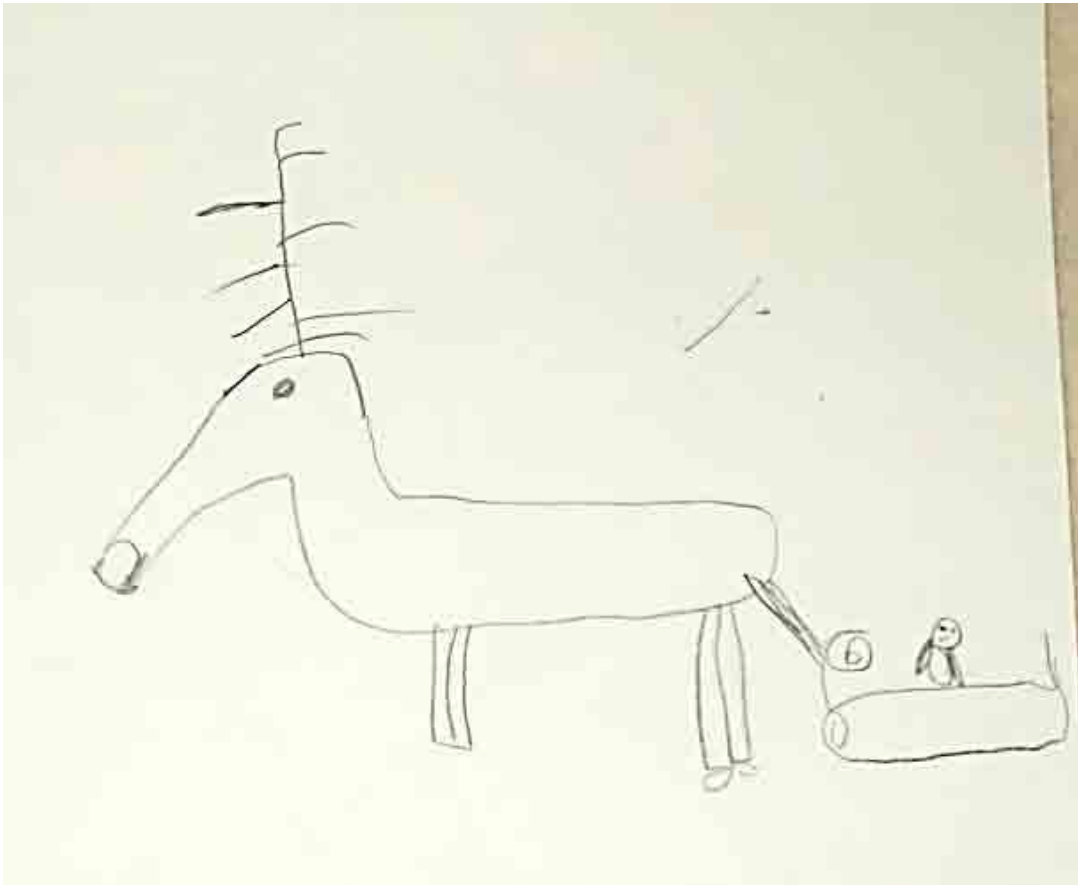


FIGURE 54 R.'S REINDEER

The interactions of the children as groups were also important. The very youngest group were new to the school, and none of the children had met me before. During the first sessions they were unsure what to expect, but quickly settled in to the work.

“They would choose the story to be the animals in. They were all still in mouse pose— I also wrote down all the names I just about know this group know (3rd visit). All the children joined in. All the children were engaged, listening doing and smiley.” (Field Notes phase 1)

As well as settling into, or back into the work, the children were developing relationships with each other. This did not only happen in these sessions, of course, but the sessions allowed me to witness it.

“The same procedure was used to choose parts and there was a lot of co-operation. If two children wanted a part, they decided between themselves, and whoever did not get it got first choice the next time. A lot of kindness between the children.” (Field Notes phase 1)

Although at times they did need reminding of the need to be aware of each other.

“At the end of the session I told the class that it was not okay that they made so much noise as if they were talking they were not able to pay attention to themselves, and they might overstretch and hurt themselves, or lose their balance and hurt someone else. I need them to be safe and to listen. Next time I wanted us to explore how they know when they are stretching– and how they know when someone else is stretching and work in pairs so it will be very important that they pay attention.” (Field Notes phase 3)

They were also kind, and polite to me: “they then got 5 minutes to draw/write and 5 minutes to rest, which they did very well. They rolled the mats, I thanked them for the work, they thanked me for the sessions” (Field Notes phase 1). I felt privileged to have had the opportunity to work with them over two and a half years. Although working at my children’s school meant that there were boundary issues with my role as parent as well as researcher, the trust that developed because they saw me there every day, they knew that I would not ask them to share their thoughts, dreams and feelings then disappear: “at times behaviour has been

an issue but I am pleased that the relationships with the kids and the building on each session and those from last year have enabled them to be very open and accepting of the approach” (Reflective Journal).

In general, interest in the work was good, and the children were willing to learn, to listen and to explore the material: “bit of bouncing about but waiting to listen to what to do...A lot of care and effort” (Field Notes). Feedback from staff was also positive, one comment made by a teaching assistant who had not worked with me before and saw the children in the sessions for the first time: “teaching assistant surprised at how into it they all were.” The other class teachers all gave positive comments too:

“I have talked with most teachers- feedback has been very positive. Class 2 have enjoyed the sessions, Mrs C. has been happy to have me have half the class. Miss W. was pleased that class 3 were so well behaved and did so much exercise. She said that they all looked forward to Wednesday afternoons. Miss T said that the class were just starting to be back at the level they were at the end of last year. She was happy with how A. was integrating and how their behaviour was improving.” (Reflective Journal)

Throughout the study I found it was the relationships that I had built up with the staff and the children through my roles at the school that were key to positive interactions that allowed the groups to explore the material. The time spent building these relationships and gaining their trust, meant that the children were likely to be less fearful of a reaction to what they might do or say, and allowed themselves to be creative and honest (Punch, 2002).

Somatic movement education (SME) is about more than just movement education, as it focuses on self-awareness, and awareness of others, and the relationship an individual has with the world around her (Fogel, 2009; Hartley, 1989; Hartley, 2006). The relationship building aspect of SME is fostered through a non-judgemental acceptance of the individual, and a person-centered approach (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990).

A somatic and Person-Centred approach may help integration and inclusion of those with special educational needs into mainstream classes if “inclusive education for children with SEN [Special Educational Needs] in PE is concerned with minimizing the number of pupils who, because of the nature of the curriculum, have negative experiences” (Vickerman, 2007, p. 389). This is an area that is thought of as challenging, particularly for children that have emotional and behavioural difficulties, as there is a concern from teachers that including such pupils could have a detrimental effect on the rest of the class (Morley et al, 2005). Inclusion of children within a mainstream session is a concept that teachers can understand as “a normative concept, to which it would always be possible to make further progress” (ibid, p. 91). Morley et al found that teachers believed that statemented pupils who were given assistance in other lessons, were often left to cope in physical education.

Even within a SME context integration was not always easy, and I reflected on a struggle that I had with behaviour-management with the oldest children, as some members of the class went through a particularly difficult phase not only with me, but also with the class teacher. I became very aware of the differences between managing challenging behaviour as an authoritative teacher figure, as a practitioner, and also as a researcher.

“I am aware that by not allowing them to participate this exacerbates the feelings of exclusion, of not being wanted, of messing things up, but as a teacher needing to retain control of the class I want to send them out, I need to show them I am in control and that disruptive, dangerous and unacceptable behaviour cannot be tolerated.

Where is my role as a researcher in this? To be honest, it would be to work only with a small group of “good” children who would be able to listen, to work, to express themselves...or as a therapist with the “difficult” ones to work individually or one-to-one. M. is a child who, along with his brother, has been identified by me as a possibility for this type of work.” (Reflective Journal)

Integrating pupils with special educational needs (SEN), whether those needs are physical, emotional or behavioural, into mainstream lessons can represent challenge for teachers in all subjects, and can be a “daunting task” (Bailey & Robertson, 2000 p. 5) in physical education. It is important to note also, that children with SEN do not all fit into neat categories. Those with physical disabilities or motor difficulties need a different level and kind of support from those with emotional behavioural difficulties, learning difficulties and sensory impairment. Children who exhibited behavioural difficulties were reported as being the most challenging to work with and plan for (Morley et al, 2005).

5.3 CASE STUDIES ILLUSTRATING THERAPEUTIC ASPECTS

There were two children that stood out for me at the school as in need of a more intentional therapeutic approach. One child, M., was in Year 4 when I first met him, and I was told informally that he had a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). He

was very talkative, and could be disruptive in class. In the first sessions at the school, before this research project started, I found that he responded well to vigorous exercise and the space to be quiet and still. Again I was told informally that after the sessions his behaviour was improved in class. At some point I was told that he had been put onto Ritalin, however the class teacher and the teaching assistant felt that it was impacting negatively on his behaviour. The second child, A., mentioned previously, was in reception when I first met him. He was displaying behaviour that I associated with autism spectrum disorder from my personal and professional experience. Initially he isolated himself from the class, but as he grew older he began to be more and more disruptive. Throughout the project he was not supported by an additional staff member, and I was not, as a visiting researcher, given access to his diagnosis or the special educational needs records for either of the boys. After the study, M. moved onto a selective secondary school, and A. left in Y3. These two boys are brothers.

5.3.1 CHILD A.

Before starting this research project I had considered the possibility of including therapeutic work alongside the educational group sessions. I wondered about the possibility of offering one-to-one sessions with A. I reflected at the time:

“Need to be aware of all the issues this has for me– emotional response as I sense/feel/project similarities to my godson, not aware of parental involvement, do not see them in the playground, do not know where they are on acceptance/denial line of problems.” (Reflexive Journal phase 1)

From my training (Sumar, 2007) and experience working with children with special needs, I was aware that parental acceptance of a child’s disability can be key to allowing them room to

develop. If a parent expects and perceives their child to be 'normal' then offering a therapeutic intervention may be counter-productive. This view was not shared by another parent, an SEN teacher, who was working with A. voluntarily.

“Had a quick conversation with NH– in her opinion not ASD [autism spectrum disorder], I related story of J.– also had imaginative play, humour but as older more and more obvious ASD. She questioned the place of environmental factors on behaviour but did not know the parental situation either. I did not see her to be aware of the need to be careful about parent attitude– but accepted it when I mentioned it.”

(Reflective Journal phase 1)

Meanwhile, the more I worked with A. within the group sessions, the more his behaviour was seen to be out of the range of normal.

“A. ?asd? more evident this year that ?something? is not quite right. Last year he was also different but very happy and engaging and eager to be part of what was going on, just not always so able. This year he is less willing to make eye contact. In out of school contexts if he hears an answer he doesn't like he breaks eye contact and the interaction (e.g. I walked the dogs to school with my daughter for a few days– when I saw him one afternoon he asked me with eye contact where the dogs were and I said that they were at home he looked down walked away very abruptly, not interested) feedback from Miss T is that peer relations are less good this year he is starting to get angry and it is hard with new children in the class. He needs more attention.”

(Reflective Journal)

Within the group sessions A. was included by me and the staff there with me “Miss T sat next to A.– who is in need of more support” (Field Notes, phase 1). We ensured that he was not left out, as the differences between his behaviour and that of the others in the class was becoming more and more pronounced.

“Played game with ball and names to take list but this time asked the children to balance the ball, say their name then throw and sit. Most did very well, no one threw to A.– I did- he was placed at the other end of the room so I walked nearer as I wanted to ensure that he would have a good chance of catching from a soft easy throw and I can’t throw that far accurately...I did the same for R. who was last as I didn’t want to make it different for A.” (Reflective Journal)

Sometimes he would join in, but often he would not.

“Stand sit, clap balance on bottoms- some children really watching and listening, others not. Lots of playing with mats. A. was circling the class throughout this.” (Field Notes phase 1)

“A. had laid down and wrapped himself in his mat and stayed still– occasionally making noises.” (Field Notes phase 1)

“Asked class to get into pairs– there was an even number, and J. was to work with A., but A. did not join in.” (Field Notes phase 1)

At times although he said he wished to join in, he still did not.

“The pairs showed their poses, all clapped. R. did a strong balance, P. didn’t, however at the end P. wanted to show being an animal instead. J. showed a balance on his own. A. chose not to however he had asked earlier if we could play the game where we show and tell.” (Field Notes phase 1)

I did my best to balance A.’s needs with those of the group.

“As the group came in I asked them to take off their shoes and socks, and I saw that A. had gone straight to sit on the beanbag and was looking over at my things. I went up to him and said that he had been doing such a good job of guarding my pipe-cleaners last week that I had wanted him to look after my things again and thanked him. Miss T had said that being in a circle was hard for A., so I had placed the beanbag behind me so that I was a protection/shield. I wasn’t sure how much support there would be from the teacher with me. I was very glad that I had done this.” (Reflective Journal)

This happened the week that the supply teacher came down with the group. This session was commented on earlier, as she did not respond to A. or the other children well. Rather than allowing him to join in where he could, and take time out if needed, she expected him to behave like a ‘normal’ or neuro-typical child.

“We then came to a circle with A. behind me, and I asked them to vote on a story. The children chose on a bear hunt (Rosen & Illus. Oxenbury, 1989). They all knew the story so I asked them to find a space so we could go through the animals/ways of walking. Most of the children were joining in and enjoying themselves. A. picked up the beanbag in his teeth to be a bear– as I was asking him not to R. tried to bite it too.

I was with A. and enjoyed seeing him join in and move with the children. Mrs F came along and spoke very harshly to him (A.) and told him to behave or come and sit down next to her. I didn't particularly like the way she spoke to him. Some of the children sat down near me, others were moving about being the characters, Mrs F tried to get the children to sit in a circle, but I said that they needed space to move if they wanted to. A. was sitting in front of me in a group of children which I perceived to be good progress." (Field Notes)

This progress continued during the remaining sessions, with A. choosing to join in with the activities more and more, although often this was at my prompting or encouragement.

"A. was being talkative and fidgety and the TA [teaching assistant] got up and took him from his mat. I asked A. if he wanted to share my mat and he came to mine." (Field Notes)

"I started to show them the organ doll. I showed the brain, then opened the shirt to show the ribs. I asked if they could feel their ribs and they did. A. said that he couldn't feel his so I showed him." (Field Notes).

"J. and A. chose to continue modelling. L. and K. took a while to model, so only had a short time to draw. I asked A. if he wanted to play show and tell and he did and I asked if he wanted to go first— on his own or with somebody else. He wanted to go on his own first. When we gathered back A. went first, then most of the children went in pairs, some on their own." (Field Notes)

I made sure that I fed back from the sessions to the teachers. After school Miss T said that they were all really enjoying it, and was pleased that A. was joining in more and more.

However, his contributions were not always positive. In the class on organs, W. answered 'skin' as an organ of the body. "A. said that that was not inside, I said it was a very good answer as skin is our biggest organ and is where we stop and the world begins" (Field Notes).

When a child, L. moved in the circle, "A. commented "that's not kidneys." I explicitly said that here anyone can do anything, and that was how L. was her kidneys. We all accept what each other does" (Field Notes). Towards the end of the sessions I reflected:

"A. is challenging in this group which is large anyway. In part this is because he commented on what the other children were doing or saying negatively. He may be better in a smaller group, or ideally one-to-one before reintegration into the larger group." (Reflective Journal)

This had been my original inclination with him. I was also aware that his presence in the group brought up other issues for me, as a parent.

"Witnessing him in this class has made me question how he influences and affects the other children's education and self-esteem and ease of expression, particularly those children who are less easy about voicing their opinion. My own daughter may be in a large class with him next year, and working with him now has made me question how happy I am with this." (Reflective Journal)

5.3.2 CHILD M.

At the start of the sessions in phase 1, I made the following comment about child M:

"apparently has a diagnosis of ADHD but TA [teaching assistant] very unhappy with how

medication has affected him– put him back a long way– worried about the effect it has had on his brother A.” (Reflective Journal). The teaching assistant took me aside at the start of the first session to inform me this, as although I had worked with M. in yoga sessions over the previous year, she felt that that he had changed. His behaviour tended to be worse in class, so that he would arrive to the sessions already in trouble for disrupting lessons.

“As this group came in Miss W. had words with M. to “make this a good session” bad day for him? I asked him to choose what to give out– he chose paper.” (Field Notes)

“The TA came in saying that the class may not last the whole afternoon due to their behaviour so far that day. I asked who she was worried about, and she said that M. had been getting on her nerves so I asked him to hand out pencils so he could make a good start in the afternoon.” (Field Notes)

During the sessions with me in phase 1 M. worked well. He joined in, and though talkative, was not particularly disruptive. The first session was on finding shapes to be still. The group was asked to find ways to be still by themselves, and with a partner.

“M. talked a lot, really enjoyed the being still. In pairs he and MI. chose to sit and hold hands and lean back.” (Field Notes)

In the session on balance, M. said of balance that “people do it in circuses” (Field Notes).

“We started with balancing on bottoms in boat pose, squats, on toes on heels, changing between lots of chatter a bit of falling over backwards, jumping feet together, standing up. Standing still with eyes closed hands up– mix of those who preferred to stand still with eyes closed and those who preferred eyes open. On one

leg– standing– falling to one side of foot then the other– righting reactions etc.–all except M. found it easier to balance toe side than big-toe-side.” (Field Notes)

Later in this session the children worked in small groups to find balances. In pairs or threes to show balances. I noted that “B. and P. and I.– made M.’s image” (Field Notes), which I commented at the time, pleasing M.

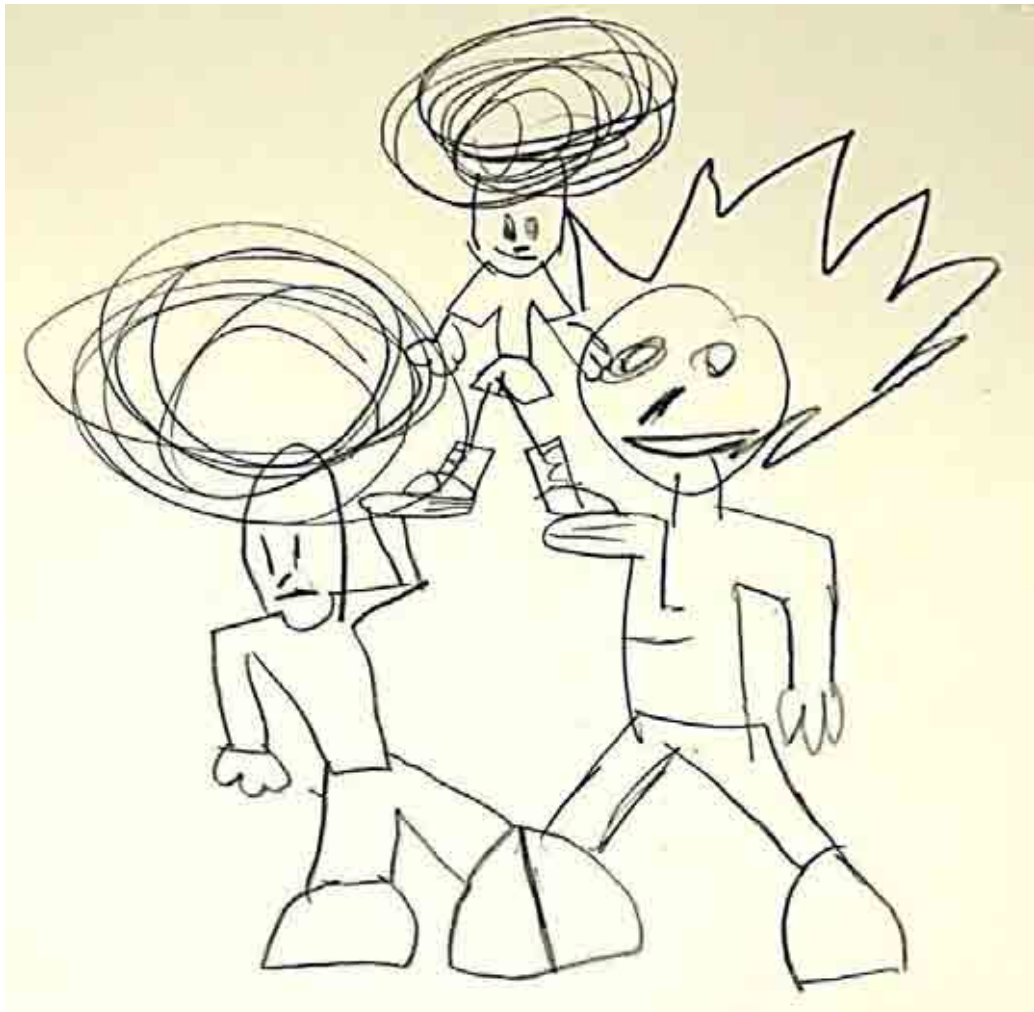


FIGURE 55 M.’S BALANCE PICTURE

The informal approach I use to working with righting reactions and equilibrium responses is based on work by Bainbridge-Cohen (1993). She developed this as a response to a frustration

with the traditional approach of viewing these as static, isolated reactions rather than as integrated and efficient movements. In the traditional rehabilitation approach the reactions are studied in their pathological states with children and adults with brain dysfunction as well as in normally developing infants. A more detailed study was able to be made by working with fully aware and able-bodied adults as well as skilled movers (dancers, athletes) and children. Bainbridge-Cohen believes that “underneath ALL successful, effortless movement are integrated reflexes, righting reactions and equilibrium responses” (1993, p. 122). The fact that M. found it difficult to balance and to fall in the ‘normal’ pattern is an indicator that his development has been, for whatever reason, also outside the ‘normal’ range. With bodywork of this kind, although there is an ‘ideal’ spiral of developmental patterns and movements that we all move through, it is never too late to go back to and integrate a ‘missing’ pattern (Brook, 2001). Those of us with developmental differences (for example with autism spectrum disorder, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) may need more support and encouragement to fully embody and integrate the missing patterns (ibid).

The primitive reflexes are those reflexes that appear at or before birth, and are usually integrated into movement patterns in the first few months. They are controlled by the brain stem and the spine, and are elicited through stimuli (Hartley, 1989). Reflexes are considered to be pathological if they usually or always occur when exposed to a specific stimulus. A developed and integrated reflex will become part of the automatic movement repertoire, and can occur with or without stimulus and in any plane in relation to gravity (ibid). If not developed, that movement pattern will not be part of the automatic movement repertoire. This can result in, for example, the absence of total flexion or extension of a limb, so that expression and movement is neither skilful nor graceful. Movements seem static, and tone is

not balanced or is inconsistent (Brook, 2001). Individuals with brain dysfunction of some kind would manifest these issues (Sumar, 2007). These reflexes underlie the righting reactions and equilibrium responses. Righting reactions are more advanced movement patterns than the primitive reflexes, and are controlled mostly in the mid-brain (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). They start to develop at birth, and although most dominant at about a year, remain active throughout life. Righting reactions include those that bring our heads into the vertical, and those that bring the head and torso into alignment. They underlie our ability to raise our heads and keep our bodies upright against gravity in all positions, and are necessary for locomotion in all forms (ibid). They precede the equilibrium responses, which are automatic responses to maintain balance when the centre of gravity is moved through space. These start to develop at about six months. These patterns, when integrated together with postural tone and physiological flexion and extension, allow us to develop the relationship with the world and space around us, and move in it and with those within it (Hartley, 1989).

The session with M.'s group on balance included playing and exploring ways to balance and to fall out of balance. We did not explore any of the movement patterns described in depth, but instead played at falling to the side, to the back and to the front and allowing ourselves to right and to find equilibrium. This kind of movement play allows a sense to be developed of what comes easily and feels 'natural' and what does not. If I were to move into therapeutic one-to-one work with M., these early reflexes and patterns would be a useful starting place, as they underlie both movement, and choice of whether to engage or not. "M. observed that it was hard to be still standing up because he felt like he was losing his balance" (Field Notes). Observing how an individual moves through this type of exploration, and verbalises it afterwards gives the practitioner a clue as to how and where they are most integrated and most

in need of support. One principle of integrative bodywork is to start from a place of support, so rather than initially tackling a difficult movement, instead we would work from the preceding place.

By phase 3, M. was in Year 6. Although very bright, he was getting into more and more trouble in class, and was presenting to me as a very unhappy child. One session included an exercise based around recognising and learning to regulate emotion. The first stage was to identify things that made us happy in a way that could be seen physiologically. This can be seen through postural changes, a relaxing of the muscles around the eyes, and a shining in the eyes.

“I thought it would be a good thing to know how you can tell when someone is talking about something that makes them happy– your face changes and your eyes shine. I used the example of walking. For me, going for a walk doesn’t, but walking by the sea does. I gave them 3 minutes to think of 5 or 6 things that made them feel happy (try not to have people or animals).

M. did not want to join in said the only thing that made him happy was dying. I said it was about being able to tell when someone else was happy.

After the first person, we stopped, and some people had found it easy, others hadn’t. I allowed pairs that had not got on so well to become threes with someone else.

I checked in with the class teacher and told her that M. wanted to die. This isn’t unusual for him.” (Field Notes and Reflections)

Obviously, it is not healthy for an 11 year old boy to speak of dying as the only thing that would make him happy, and this, along with his other behaviours, marked him out to me as a child that would benefit from one-to-one therapeutic intervention. The tension between my role as educator for all the class, and the need to be in a therapist role for some was exacerbated by my additional role as a researcher. As the practitioner, it is challenging to strike the balance as co-regulator for a group, and behaviour issues from M. among others also exacerbated this.

In addition to this incident, he could be quite disruptive in this phase of sessions, and talked about himself to excuse his actions, by stating that he had problems, that it wasn't his fault. In conversation with his teacher, we both agreed that it seemed as though he was parroting what he had been told, that he had problems, he wasn't normal. She questioned the influence of his mother in this. He was sometimes excluded by the other boys in the class, and his behaviour meant that he was excluded from some activities. However, at other times they did include him, for example in the session described above, "R. did a great job at including M. into a 3 with himself and B." (Field Notes phase 3)

He was not the only child to misbehave with me and with other teachers.

"M. and A. were asked to sit out before we'd even stood up. I said if they sat quietly and watched they could join in again. A. wanted to join in, not watch, and continued to say so, to talk, to kick, to disrupt. M. continually talked, and was disruptive also. B., R. and B. were very silly, chatty and kept winding up each other and A. and M.."
(Field Notes phase 3)

I worked with the class for their last lesson on Friday afternoon during phase 3, and at times found myself in the middle of an on-going situation that I had not been aware of initially.

“The class teacher said afterwards that this had been an on-going situation for the class. This week A. and M. had been winding each other up, and B., R. and B. had been winding them up all week. In fact golden time was cut short and the class sat in a circle as the behaviour as a class was not ok-towards M. in particular. It was said that although it was all right for someone to be upset, it was not all right for them to run out the room. My presence meant that the teacher could go out, but in some cases she can't. They also talked about the type of behaviour that made people want to be a friend, and the type of behaviour that was unkind. Interestingly M. said that he got wound up when he was sad and people thought he was stroppy- interesting considering the work in the class on showing and sharing feelings and emotions. The topic tied in to class politics although this had not been intentionally planned.” (Field Notes)

In addition to the class behaviour and rules, the disruptiveness had the potential to make the movement sessions, which were already in a crowded space, dangerous.

“A. fell into K. and hurt her shoulder, and then fell into her again. This happened whilst I was doing my best to get them to be quiet and was dealing with M. who I had asked to sit at the side.” (Field Notes)

I found the situation with M. quite hard to handle in the last phase of sessions. I was presented with a child who described himself as ‘mad’ and ‘lost’. As a therapist, I wanted to have the opportunity to work with him, to help, but it was not always possible within the

group sessions or as part of this research project. In addition, I was unsure whether I was willing to involve myself with him, his mother and the school in yet another role.



FIGURE 56 M. 'MAD' AND 'LOST'

One time, I talked to him after the session.

“After the class they have golden time, except M. who had lost that privilege earlier in the week. He sat on a chair. I wrote up notes and looked through the children’s work. M. had written how much he liked stretching and doing the moving and remembering how much he had got out of it last year, and focused so well and worked so hard I went to talk to him. I told him that I had read what he’d written and remembered how much he had liked it last year, particularly the fast bouncy stuff and asked him if he

knew what he could do so that he could do it lots again this year. He told me that he wished he was normal, that he had problems and was stupid and silly. I asked him if he knew what was normal– he replied that everything was not normal, he wished he would die, everyone hated him, he was a ‘prat’, he lost golden time every week and began to get upset repeating again and again “I’ve got problems,” (pointing at his head) “I’m not normal.” I had not intended to upset him– on the contrary, I was wanting to let him know that I remembered how well he had done and give him encouragement to do so again. He then got up and stormed out. Miss W asked him to come in. He said he wanted time out to think, which I told her, but she said for him to come in at once. He did, kicked the chair across the room, and she took him out. I stayed with the rest of the class. When she came back I asked if he was all right– she had told me straight after the session that he’d had a very bad day yesterday– screaming and kicking all day– she said she found it disturbing that he says he has problems and that he wants to put a knife in his heart, he wants to die, he’s not normal, and said that it is his mother who says all these things to him as she wants a label for him. I explained what he’d written, and what I had been saying to him before he kicked off, and she said that he is just a normal boy– being told he has problems and issues does nothing to help him on a day to day level.

After the session, reading through the work of the children I was touched that so many wrote that they enjoyed it– in fact the majority of the class worked well and carefully, but the behaviour of M. and A. meant that during the time a large part of my attention had to be focused on them– and when it wasn’t (or was only on one of them) an

accident happened. This is an issue for the class in general- not just for me!”

(Reflective Journal)

M. was able to use the drawing time to help process his emotions, and so I adjusted the sessions to allow him more time for this, taking a much more intentionally ‘teacher’ approach.

“More hands-up taking it turns– maybe also let the children make notes as they go– particularly M., so rather than saying out loud his thoughts he can write them down”

(Reflective Journal). In the final three sessions, which were focused on producing posters for a display board, “M. was on his own– was upset but I talked to him reminding him how well he had worked on his own before, drawing and writing” (Field Notes). M. chose to work on alone, as did one other girl. “The groups all worked differently. M. worked very well on his own- drawing poses, talking about it, I awarded him a flying cow at the end and made sure his effort was recognised” (Field Notes). As well as producing a poster by himself, M. verbalised and shared to the group his experiences of the things he liked best from the previous day: “I liked mouse pose. It’s hard in the beginning like for the first 20 seconds then I sort of settle and really like it” (Field Notes).

M. chose to talk to me at the end of the project, to share his feelings about the work over the previous years. In this extract (also used earlier in section 5.2) he seemed to appreciate the emphasis on every child’s view being valid.

“M.: My favourite thing was when we all did the different parts of the display.

Me: Okay, why did you like that?

M.: I liked it because everybody got to put in their own thing and everybody got to say like what their favourite thing was.

Me: 'kay. And was it nice that everyone got their own bit to do?

M.: Yes.” (M. Year 6)

The exercise in how to identify things that make them happy was designed to enable the class to begin learning how to regulate their emotional state and move towards self-regulation.

Because of the difficulties the class had been having as a group, they also were able to use this exercise to impact positively on their friendships. M. identified that listening to music made him happy. In his interview he spoke about this.

“Me: Was that a useful thing, so that if you're feeling sad you could do something that would make you feel...?”

M.: Yes.

Me: Do you still use that?

M.: Yes.” (M. Year 6)

He verbalised how he found the drawing and journaling aspect of the work.

“M.: I quite liked drawing about it because I liked doing drawings to explain my emotions and stuff.

Me: Okay. Do you find that helpful? Yes? Why is that helpful?

M.: Because I enjoy doing drawings and when I draw it sort of calms me down.”

(M. Year 6)



FIGURE 57 M.'S POSTER

He seemed to get a lot out of the work on feelings, although it had been hard work at times for me.

M.: I wish we had done more of the emotion stuff, because I quite liked that.

Me: Okay. Why did you like that?

M.: Because it made me understand about other people's feelings and stuff.

Me: Okay. That's quite a big thing to be understanding. How did it help you understand about other people's feelings?

M.: Because sometimes I just do stuff and don't realise I'm hurting other people's feelings. So that sort of helped. So I knew to try not to do something that would hurt someone's feelings.

Me: Did it help...we did a lot about recognising what other people were feeling as well, was that helpful?

M.: Yes.

Me: And I remember...

M.: Very helpful.” (M. Year 6)

The moment when the client takes responsibility for her own process rather than rely on direction is often the aim of the practitioner or therapist, and is called self-regulation. A client who is aware of what she needs and how to ask for it, is one who is developing their own sense of self and resources. M. illustrated his understanding of this concept whilst speaking at the end of the sessions. When asked what he felt he'd learnt with me, M. was again very eloquent.

“M.: I learnt how when we'd...whatever we do, how much we stretch, we always need to be careful of ourselves and everybody around us and if it's...if you're asking us to do something that's stretching us too far, we should always just do it as far as we can but not so much it hurts.

Me: That's really useful, you have to take control and be responsible for yourself, don't you?

M.: Yes.

Me: That's a good thing to learn. Is there anything else you want to say about the stuff that we did?

M.: I found it very, very fun.

Me: What was fun? What do you mean by fun?

M.: Everything.

Me: Everything, okay. Is there anything else you want to say?

M.: I liked...I think it was the last year, it might have been the year before, when we learnt about different parts of our body and we did these things when we made different...the things we thought were important in our body out of the plasticine, and I remember I made the heart. And I made it like a drum because it's a beat." (M. Year 6)

I was very touched by M.'s responses. Although I had perceived him to be getting something positive from the work with me, the extent to which he had internalised his body awareness, the responsibility for regulating his own feelings (by listening to music, quoted previously) and becoming aware of others maps well onto Fogel's (2009) principles of therapeutic bodywork. He was able to use his experiences within the group for his own therapeutic process. He used the sessions as a *resource*, allowed himself to *slow down* and become more aware of his body, to *verbalise* his experiences, make *links and boundaries* with those experiences and the rest of his life. As can be seen he was also starting to *self-regulate* and *re-engage*.

5.4 SUMMARY

It must be noted that the sessions with the children at the school were not intended to be therapeutic, but educational. These were not children deemed in need of an intervention, but an ordinary mix of individuals. As "every educator...has some implicit understanding of what education is or what it should be like" (Biesta, 1994, p. 299), it must be stated that my training and experience as a therapist had implications for my view of what education should be. My intention was educational, however when working with the children I held myself in the mode

of therapeutic practitioner, and as such, similarities with therapeutic process occur. This was the boundary of educator/therapist, of which I was aware of throughout my time in the school. I do not see this to be the same as the therapeutic education described by Ecclestone and Hayes (2004) who speak more of a 'therapeutic turn' that they see education to have taken.

Somatic movement can be used therapeutically as a tool to rediscover lost embodied self-awareness (Fogel, 2009). It can also be used educationally, however, as can be seen, somatic movement education may also have therapeutic benefits (Hartley, 2004). As a practitioner, I had to be aware of this, and 'hold' an educational space in a therapeutic manner (Rogers, 1967). In order for me to do this, I needed to have a developed personal practice, and resources in place to aid me, such as supervision and a reflective practice (Cox, 1988). If these resources are not present, then it is possible for the participants and the practitioner to become 'lost' in the process (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993). The boundary between educators and therapists in somatic movement may be fluid, however in education, teachers are not yet expected nor supported to behave therapeutically towards the children in their care. Instead they are advised to be reflective practitioners, and to promote reflective learning. The next chapter discusses reflection and embodied reflection within the context of education.

CHAPTER 6 EMBODIMENT AND REFLECTION

6.1 THE NEED FOR REFLEXIVITY AND A REFLECTIVE APPROACH

'Reflective practice' is a term that is used a great deal in contemporary educational discourse, so much so that it "has become a slogan" (Calderhead, 1989, p. 46). For example, Tabachnick and Zeichner state that "there is not a single teacher educator who would say that he or she is not concerned about preparing teachers who are reflective" (1991, p. 1). Weiss states that "mental reflection is a very dubious process, always prone to bend and distort towards social desirability, defence of our behaviour, and habitual thought patterns" (Weiss, 2009, p. 9). Whilst the importance of reflective practice is widely accepted in principle, what actually construes effective, critical reflection is often loosely defined (Hatton & Smith, 1995). Consider six discussions of the subject. First, Calderhead discusses reflective teaching within the context of teacher education. He defines reflection as "a process of becoming aware of one's context, of the influence of societal and ideological constraints" (1989, p. 44). Second, Cordingley associates reflection with research and evidence led practice (1999). Third, Imel talks of reflection as "thinking about and critically analysing one's actions" (Imel, 1992). Fourth, Merleau-Ponty considers different approaches to reflection, including critical, analytical, and phenomenological (Merleau-Ponty, 2002). He states "reflection is truly reflection only if it is not carried outside itself, only if it knows itself as reflection-on-an-unreflective-experience, and consequently as a change in structure of our existence" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 72). Fifth, a model of teaching reflection to trainee teachers emphasises first that reflection is an intellectual, cognitive activity that is analogous to looking in a mirror, that it is a "habit of mind" (O'Sullivan et al, 2008). Lastly, an alternative definition of reflective practice, which presents it as a process of awareness of

unconscious theories in order to change behaviour, is provided by Osterman and Kottkamp (1993):

“Reflective practice is viewed as a means by which practitioners can develop a greater level of self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance, an awareness that creates opportunities for professional growth and development.” (p. 19)

Reflective practice is now seen as a vital and underlying component of education (Bourner, 2003; Capel et al, 2005; Pollard, 2002), just as creative learning through mistakes, by reflection, is seen as a vital component in learning (Bailey, 2002a). Reflection is also part of professions more traditionally seen as ‘helping’, such as counselling, social work and nursing, and is considered to be a professional competency. However, many professions emphasise technical competencies and give little attention to critical or reflective expertise (Bain, 1995), or are just beginning to see the value in reflective practice and the importance of including it as part of training or professional development (Roberts, 2002; Driessen et al, 2008). Even in ethnographic research, in which the reflexive researcher is key (Pink, 2009), how researchers are to require this reflexivity is “hardly discussed” (ibid p. 50).

The vagueness of the term ‘reflective practice’ has been acknowledged (McArdle & Coutts, 2003; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Tremmel, 1993; Ixer, 1999). A rhetoric on how the discourses of reflective practice affect professionalism, professional development and professional practice states that “the notion of the reflective practitioner has become almost hegemonic in many professional development courses” (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006, p. 115).

Professional standards for teachers wishing to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in England in 2011 emphasise the reflective and not reflexive practitioner (Hoult, 2005). The teacher training Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course I chose to take whilst completing my doctoral research had a significant stated emphasis on learning to be a reflective practitioner. After my experience on the programme, however, I wonder whether the majority of trainees are not taught to reflect and be reflexive about their practice, but instead are pushed into a negative cycle of rumination.

These emphases on negative aspects of thought make sense of complaints like those from McArdle and Coutts regarding reflective practice, in that they can find “little agreement concerning what reflection actually is and how it might be encouraged” (2003, p. 225). The common criticism that “an expert may know about something, but cannot necessarily do it well. Thus teacher educators may tell students how to teach, but not necessarily be able to teach well themselves” (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006, p. 120), has more implications for reflective practice, given that it is something that is hard to stimulate in others. If a teacher educator does not understand what it is to reflect effectively, they will be pushed hard to teach their students how to do it for themselves, particularly given that the ability to reflect is seen as a required competence for many courses.

Rumination is in fact stated as a desired outcome by some teacher educators such as Calderhead, who states that a weakness of student teachers’ reflections is that they “are reluctant to be self-critical and dwell upon their weaknesses” (1989, p. 46). Jay and Johnson (2002) believe that reflection should entail recognition, examination and rumination. Not surprisingly then, in a list of descriptive questions designed to elicit reflection from student

teachers, only one-out-of-eight has any relation to the embodied or self-aware processes of the trainee. These eight-questions form part of the 'descriptive reflection' phase that Jay and Johnson postulate should be the first of a three-phase process of reflection that moves onto comparative and then critical reflection. Each of these phases moves towards a more intellectual analysis and justification of a given event. For example, questions may change from "what is happening" (descriptive), to "what are alternative views of what is happening?" and then "what are the implications of the matter when viewed from these alternative perspectives?" (Jay & Johnson, 2002, p. 77).

I investigated perceptions of embodiment and reflective practice during my teacher training course and a summary of the findings can be found in a case study in Appendix 12. These investigations had relevance to my understanding of perceptions of embodiment and reflective practice. Also, the teacher training I undertook had a real impact on my understanding of what it was to be an educator, a therapist, or a researcher. My teaching practices were not all comfortable places for me. I had on-going issues with the course director who had agreed part-time placements in two schools to fit around my research field work, then asked me to find a third and switch to full-time. I wrote in my journal "reflecting on how the words from this session, and the last 'power', 'nervous, anxious' reflect on the situation I find myself in whilst on teaching practice" (Reflective Journal), and wondering "how PGCE is 'influencing' research- again big difference between teaching, working, researching" (Reflective Journal). These were not feelings that I shared in my teaching practice reflective journal however. My approach to that assignment- in that it was an integral part of my training in which I had to prove my ability, my competence and evidence my journey as a trainee- was one recommended by Macfarlane and Gourlay (2009). They liken a reflective assignment to a

reality television show. Although this may be slightly tongue-in-cheek, it does fit with my experience of reflective assignments within a PGCE. The assessment of reflection “in a way that reinforces behavioural conformism” (Macfarlane & Gourlay, 2009, p. 457) does not encourage a critical engagement with the topic. Instead, reflective writing becomes “little short of a confidence trick, or perhaps more worryingly, an exercise in self-justification and conformism with the psychologised curriculum of learning and teaching” (Macfarlane & Gourlay, 2009, p. 457). This does not facilitate students to reflect effectively, and instead is more likely to result in superficial reflection (Calderhead, 1989) rather than “the practice of a lifetime that can only *begin* with what we call ‘pre-service’ education” (Tremmel, 1993).

The issue of assessing reflections is also considered by Ixer (1999) within the context of social work programmes. He starts with a stark question of whether reflection should be assessed at all as the assessor’s own conceptions of reflection may be poorly formed, may not match those of the students and so are likely to compound the imbalance of power between them, with particular oppression of vulnerable learners who do not fit assessor’s ideas of what reflective learning may be. Ixer equates reflection as not being “a competence...a measurable skill readily available to standard assessment criteria” (Ixer, 1999, p. 514). If this is true of social work, then how can it be assessed and measured as a competence in other professions? Such a concern does not seem relevant to many in discussions on reflective practice, including: Ferraro, 2000; Jay & Johnson, 2002; Cole, 2000; Cordingley, 1999; and Calderhead, 1989.

How reflective practice is perceived depends on personal beliefs as well as the context of the reflection. For me it is a part of a process that becomes reflexive. I use non-judgemental

supervision time to guide and assist me so that my work develops and moves forward. If reflections are to form part of assessment, then this implies to me that the reflections are less about thoughts, and feelings, and more an opportunity demonstrate a competence at reflecting, or being seen to reflect. At times the tension of my role as researcher and student within different genres had impact on my thoughts and work in all spheres. The reflections required of me as a trainee teacher had the tension between my need as a student to pass, and the need to learn from my reflections. Some teacher training programmes try to separate out the reflexive process from the professional practice of reflection by providing private learning journal spaces for the students that are not assessed (Whewell, 2005). These journals often provide most learning through follow-up dialogue (ibid). This can be contrasted with the therapeutic model of supervision where the supervisor's role can be seen as to "allow the emotional disturbance to be felt within the safer setting of the supervisory relationship, where it can be survived, reflected upon and learnt from"(Hawkins & Shohet, 1989, p. 3). I continued with my professional supervision throughout my teaching practice, as it was part of my private practice and research.

If the only experience teachers have of reflection is one that has been 'forced' upon them in training, how can they embody a reflective approach to pass on to the students in their care? In addition, the model of reflection would have to be taught as a skill, rather than a subject which could be passed or failed. As with critical thinking, in which something needs to be thought about critically, I see reflection as something that has to be done about one's experiences, through the corporeal body, of the world.

6.2 MINDFULNESS AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The majority of humans “may only be dimly aware of the actions of their minds...they *use* their minds, often very well, but they may have no more than intermittent awareness of the moment-to-moment activities of the mind” (Tremmel, 1993, p. 434). The stream of consciousness that many experience as random is that way because many humans “dip into it randomly and bring it into focus only when some special need arises or something unusual occurs” (ibid). By teaching a student how to become more aware of her thoughts and feelings, as in mindfulness practice, or through somatic movement education or another method, it can become possible for her to learn how to reflect.

Current definitions of reflection, although sometimes vague or confused (Hatton & Smith, 1995), tend towards the analytical, critical and problem solving approaches favoured by Western culture, rather than negotiation, contemplation and enlightenment. By paying more attention to both non-Western and Western approaches, it is possible to remove some of the limitations on the understanding of what it means to reflect. Tremmel believes that a misunderstanding of Schön’s (1987) concepts, and an unpreparedness to think in the ways demanded, may underlie why those in education often struggle with a lack of articulated structures for reflection and reflection-in-action. For example, rather than ascribing to the traditional power relations of ‘student’ and ‘teacher’, Schön instead postulates a dyad where the two work together in a dance like pattern. This is similar to the relationship between a somatic movement practitioner and her client– where even the term ‘client’ is misleading, as the relationship is seen to be one in which both parties have the opportunity to learn from the other (Hartley, 2004). That said, the practitioner has a duty of care towards the client, so the relationship cannot be said to be that between peers. Within the dance of interaction,

however, it is the role of the practitioner, the educator, to stay within the present moment so that she is able to observe and feel the action that is occurring, and to respond.

As well as using the metaphor of dance to describe the relationship between those working together within a learning situation, Schön (1987) uses the term ‘artistry’ to describe the process of reflection. This word implies that it is not the technical rationality that is important, but instead that insights should be brought to bear on the matter, as the technical and rational thoughts can only tell us what we already know (Tremmel, 1993). The reflective mind, is not the theoretical mind, but instead is:

“Flexible and pliable. It is a mind that can attend to what is happening in the moment and respond directly...it is, moreover, the mind that has the capacity to reach into the center of confusing situations, to see itself, and to shift the base of its operations or pull up stakes altogether to follow the flow of the action.” (Tremmel, 1993, p. 436)

Reflection in this sense is not a search for solutions, nor a linear process. That is often how components of teacher education programmes present it, with lists of questions, tasks or elements to be completed in order to achieve reflection. Although frameworks may be useful, they do not necessarily encourage reflection that is intuitive and emerges from the self, but instead promote a practice that is rule-bound.

In relating the paradoxical qualities of Zen, Tremmel quotes Alan Watts (1957):

“Zen Buddhism is a way and a view of life which does not belong to any of the formal categories of modern Western thought. It is not religion or philosophy; it is not a psychology or a type of science. It is an example of what is known in India and China

as a 'way of liberation,' and is similar in this respect to Taoism, Vedanta and Yoga...
A way of liberation can have no positive definition." (p. 3)

Zen, like somatic movement, is something that is accessible practically, but hard to define purely in terms of language and thought. It is experiential. Zen comes at the 'problem' of reflection from a completely different perspective than that commonly expressed in educational literature discourse (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006). Mindfulness, or the paying of attention to oneself and the world around is a pre-requisite and the "better part of reflective practice" (Tremmel, 1993, p. 442).

My work with the students is on one level all about what it is to reflect as an embodied being and using an embodied self-awareness to provide the material on which we reflect. Within the frame of reflexivity, reflection on our levels of self-awareness and about our work is what we want to do. The very things that appear to be 'unconnected' may be those that eventually give us the greatest insight. A teacher may reflect on how she feels when she has to teach and may then implement a routine that is more supportive and has a positive effect on her practice. Having a reflexive practice means that we take time to reflect on and analyse our actions and awareness of ourselves, and use these insights to improve our teaching. In turn, we are able to model what a reflective practice is to our students. A similar view is held by Tremmel, who teaches students "the art of 'paying attention' as a way of nurturing reflective practice" (1993, p. 435).

6.3 EMBODIMENT AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Embodiment, or embodied self-awareness can be an integral part of a reflective practice (Smears, 2009). Within the context of using embodied self-awareness as a basis for professional development, and “an opportunity to pause” (ibid, p. 99), Smears discusses how embodiment, and using the body as a grounding of knowledge, can be used as an example of good practice for educators to develop their own learning. There is a possibility of objectifying the body through reflection if the reflective process is purely an intellectual activity (Pink, 2009). Van Manen discusses the epistemology of reflection in action and after the event primarily in terms of thinking and thought processes rather than embodiment. Although he does state that in order to be tactful as an educator it is necessary to “be able to see what goes on” (Van Manen, 1995, p. 44), and he refers to that tact as a non-cognitive practical knowledge that belongs “phenomenologically more closely to the whole embodied being of the person” (ibid, p. 46).

An effective teacher, in Van Manen’s opinion, is one who reflects moment to moment, and is able to be aware of herself, or in his words, forget herself, and to have a sense of instant knowing that issues from the body and the world around the body rather than an organised critical and analytical process of reflection. Smears identifies the cycle of learning through reflection as proceeding through the stages of observation, recording experiential processes, analysing and theory making and then planning to move forward onto the next level of experience. The ability to perceive a situation through, and reflect with the subjective and sentient body is something she attributes to a range of somatic practices and education techniques including Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais and the work of Hartley. Somatic awareness allows us to experience and know a situation or context experientially, accessing

sensory information, perceptions and judgements, and developing empathy. Bain (1987) credits Nishida (1870–1945) with the idea that via bodily movement, any and every process of expression is possible (ibid, p. 45), so that not only does our body allow us to experience more of the world around us, but our body is the expression of what we feel on every level.

The process of reflection should allow a sense of order to be brought to the descriptions of the experiences, and for them to be brought into conscious awareness. It is not enough to simply have an experience and then think about it, “exposure to an experience cannot, on its own, bring about learning. Contemplating an experience or event is not always purposeful and does not necessarily lead to new ways of thinking or behaving in practice and thus is not considered to be reflection” (Miles, 2011, unpagged). Reflective practice has to begin with observational and analytical skills being turned toward the self, into a “self-evaluation and the analysis of one’s own actions...to identify and critique their own actions and behaviours” (ibid). Smears states that reflexivity is a way to regain control over our personal world, which can bring self-confidence (2009). Interestingly, Brown and Ryan consider that reflexive thought has little or no relation to mindfulness, which they believe concerns “the quality of consciousness itself” (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 823), that is, a purely intellectual activity and not one associated with the body at all. This view would be expected by Biesta, who states “a significant proportion of educational theory takes for granted presuppositions that are rooted in the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness” (Biesta, 1994, p. 302). By engaging with the body to achieve a greater embodied awareness, we can develop an effective, useful practice that does not degenerate into rumination, uncertainty, questions and a diminishing of self.

The thought processes that form part of reflexivity can be formed through an ability to be simultaneously aware of the self and one's embodied experiences. In contrast, self-conscious thoughts can occur that are only thinking of the self without relation to any awareness of bodily state. These type of thoughts typically involve "generalised judgements and evaluations of the self ("I'm too fat", "I'm not worthy of love") that are disconnected with the lived condition of the body (Fogel, 2009, p. 137). Rumination is described by Fogel as one form of suppressing underlying feelings and emotions that creates a highly distressing yet absorbing series of negative thoughts. He quotes Nolen-Hoeksema et al as defining it as "the tendency to repetitively focus on symptoms of distress and possible causes and consequences of those symptoms without engaging in active problem solving" (Nolen-Hoeksema et al, 2007, p. 198). This absorption into negative thoughts at first serves to guard against negative feelings, but long-term affects the immune, cardiovascular and neuroendocrine systems of the body in a way that maintains illnesses. In addition the prevalence of depressed thoughts and negative self-evaluation become linked in a self-sustaining cycle (Fogel, 2009). One way to combat this spiral is to focus on the underlying negative feelings, accessing those by awareness of an embodied self-awareness. Fogel uses clinical studies to support his claims that by paying attention to embodied self-awareness clients are assisted in changing thought patterns from ruminative negative ones, towards more positive and self-consistent patterns that lead to elevation of mood. He states that attention to feelings rather than thoughts leads to a decrease in rumination, and that non-ruminative self-awareness is linked to higher self-esteem and empathic concern for others (Fogel, 2009).

Empathy has been shown to have a connection to reflection (Joireman et al, 2002). Joireman et al (2002) define empathy as people's observed reactions to each other, and clarify this

definition with three important dimensions within interpersonal relationships: of perspective taking; empathic concern; and personal distress. They state that within this context, perspective taking is a cognitive form of empathy, empathic concern is an adaptive form, and personal distress is a cognitive and adaptive maladaptive form.

Self-rumination, a process associated with neuroticism, depression, anxiety, hostility and vulnerability, is not a process which enables a person to adopt another's perspective, nor elicit empathic concern. Rumination, along with absorption with the past or fantasies or anxieties about the future "can pull one away from what is taking place in the present" (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 823). Self-rumination can be defined as "self-focus motivated by perceived threats, losses, or injuries to the self. This neurotic form of private self-consciousness is characterised by recurrent, past-orientated, negative thinking about the self" (Lischetzke & Eid, 2003).

Self-reflection, in contrast, is associated with an openness to experience and can be seen to be positively related to adaptive and facilitative forms of empathy. Self-reflection is not linked to personal distress, showing that that some types of self-attentiveness may enhance an ability to empathise with others. Training individuals to engage in self-reflection, rather than self-rumination, can therefore be seen to have applications in increasing a person's ability to empathise. In addition, it was seen to have potential benefits towards reducing personal distress, and feelings of guilt, shame, or worthlessness, which would again affect interpersonal relationships positively (Joireman et al, 2002). Individuals who reported high clarity about their feelings were more likely to rebound from negative moods and were less likely to engage in self-rumination (Lischetzke & Eid, 2003). If the above is true, then somatic education is a process which could be used to educate an individual to become more

self-aware, and to self-reflect, rather than self-ruminate, as well as allowing expression of that process through movement and/or language. Reflection is a skill that has to be done *about* something, and cannot easily be taught in isolation. Somatic education, and increased self-awareness can be taught (Johnson, 1995), and as a result the individual would increase the amount of data that they can later process and reflect on.

Reflecting is useful, because by giving language to an experience, we can process what we have encountered: “because they are embodied, affective phenomena are always somewhat ineffable: they have a quite literally *unspeakable* aspect that renders them elusive to, and always slightly disjunctive with, language” (Cromby, 2011, p. 83). This equates to the work with the children within this study. Somatic education was used as a tool to enable the children to express themselves, to creatively reflect, and share and process their experiences. Smears continues to consider how embodied reflection can be important not only for oneself, but also for professionals, some of whom may have a sense of self-embodiment too habitual to be noticed, but others found their professionalism on their focus of embodied self-awareness.

“The more we reclaim body awareness, that is our capacity to observe and our willingness to feel, the more ways we can communicate. The development of skills to access embodied knowing is a critical resource for reflective practice and inter-professional communication. It can be argued that professionals, who develop an embodied awareness of self, have a further and useful resource to draw upon when communicating with others.” (Smears, 2009, p. 107)

Somatics has been used to teach dance, or as an adjunct to training (ibid.), and been seen to open possibilities to refine body perceptions, improve technique, aid the development of expression and prevent injuries. In an action research study a ten week, bi-weekly class in somatic education was given to students within a dance degree (Fortin et al, 2009). The classes included theory and practical sessions, and drew deeply on Feldenkrais (1981). The students reported leaving the theoretical sessions feeling shaken up, and as destabilising. Although the authors reported these comments as revealing the “ambivalence between, on the one hand, the desire to become aware of current situations in the dance milieu and, on the other hand, the discomfort this causes” (Fortin et al, 2009, p. 54), I questioned the level of therapeutic holding that was present in the classes, and the rigour of a ten week action research project rather than a longer term study. In my experience, there is a duty of care that should be present for the students in such a class so that they are not left in a state that left them not wanting to go to the next class “out of fear that I would leave too shaken up by all sorts of self-questioning” (ibid). However, not all would agree that therapy should be taken as a model for, or confused with education (Barrow, 2008; Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). When the material that is presented has such emotional content, or the capacity to affect the students deeply, which movement can do, I advocate adhering to a therapeutic approach. A study exploring the boundary between therapy and education in somatics was conducted by Nichols (2008). In this, three courses were offered to students with prior knowledge of somatics or movement on different levels along the continuum of education/therapy. The courses all offered an experiential and theoretical component. In contrast to student evaluations from Fortin et al, Nichols’ students reportedly found the work to be transformative as well as informative. It may be that those students with less positive experiences declined to self-report, or were excluded from the final report. However, a consciousness of the need to be

aware of the therapeutic element that is present in somatic education may indicate that these students represent the majority of experiences in these courses.

The somatic discourse can be discussed using the definition of discourses from Foucault (1963) as systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, beliefs, practices and courses of action, carrying power relations and constructing truths that enable or constrain what can be done or said. It promotes body awareness “to allow individuals to make choices for their own well-being, thus counteracting the fantasy of an ideal body, which is so often removed from the concreteness of the lived body” (Fortin et al, 2009, p. 48). In addition, it supports the development of an internal authority that helps to construct self-knowledge and creates states of more satisfying health and well-being. This can be compared with the dominant discourse of dance (Pickard, 2007) where an ideal body is valued on the aesthetic criteria of slimness, virtuosity, devotion and asceticism. This, in turn, is similar to the ideal body that permeates Western society, for which it is “no longer enough to eliminate excess fat, but fit, healthy looking bodies...should look tightly toned.” (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 83). Within dance, the body may be viewed as “being alienated from the self, something to be subdued and managed” (Fortin et al, 2009, p. 49). Dancers who experience somatic practices, can develop a new relationship with themselves, becoming sensitive to feelings, sensing actions and becoming not an object, but the creators of their own lives (Green, 1999).

6.4 REFLECTION AND MOVEMENT

Reflecting on experiences of movement may have consequences for the way in which we think and construct meaning, as well as how we are seen and see ourselves to move. It is commonly assumed that thinking is tied to language, and that it takes place only via language,

and that only thinking and language are tied in an exclusive way to rationality. Instead, consider the possibility that movement constitutes the thoughts themselves: “movement and non-verbal communication...essentially involve emotion and embodied cognition” (Fischman, 2009, p. 43). Movement becomes the presence of thought (Merleau-Ponty, 2002), or “thought and language are qualities of the body itself and separating them off from the body acts to reinstate the body-mind split” (Totten, 2003, p. 133). However, it must be noted that thinking in movement, or a descriptive account of thinking in movement, is not challenging a linkage between thinking and language, nor between thinking and rationality, nor even thinking and symbolic systems of thought, but the view that there are no other forms of thinking: that language *is* thought. These assumptions are often accompanied by a parallel assumption rooted in a Cartesian separation of mind and body (Leder, 1990). Research into this is hampered in that “qualitative investigations of embodied, affective phenomena encounter a further difficulty because most qualitative analysis presumes a linguistic epistemology” (Cromby, 2011, p. 83). If thinking is separate from its expression then it can only ever be transcribed or transliterated into movement, but language cannot easily be separated from movement of the body:

“The signs of language are never separate from the signs of the body: what we speak and what we hear is always influenced by what we feel and vice-versa. Meaningful signs arise directly through and within the body, as well as through and in language.” (ibid. p. 84)

Yet the same arguments made by Wittengstein (1963) and Merleau-Ponty (2002) with respect to thoughts existing separately to their expression in language, applies to their corporeal expression in movement. In movement, as in language, there are not necessarily meanings

going through a mind in addition to the expression of thoughts. This also implies that thinking in movement is not subject to an outside or critical eye. In improvisational dance for example there is no external choreographer. As in other forms of thinking in movement it is not subject to a judgemental outside presence, and again this thought in action can be seen to be the work of a mindful body.

From a developmental perspective, it has been found that a child's view of the world, and of the language used to describe it, is formed in relation to how the world and the objects within it moves in relation to him or herself (Bloom, 1993), and that this idea of objects ties in with how both von Helmholtz and Husserl describe how we learn about objects. It can be said that movement is a foundational character of the world, and that an infant's (or an adult's) knowledge of the surrounding world is derived from physical knowledge of it. We, as human animals have all been nurtured by an original capacity to think in movement, a capacity that can become submerged or hidden by the practice of thinking in words. Even as a foetus in utero, an infant has a sense of gravity, a sense of her joints, and a tactile kinaesthetic sense of her own body as an articulable, essentially dynamic form. While thinking in movement can be opaque to language, language is post-kinetic, and "language is profoundly embodied as an element of thought" (Cromby, 2011, p. 86). Spatio-temporal-energetic concepts come from experiences of movement. A common kinetic theme can be said to weave between improvisational dance and human development. It is the non-separation of thinking and doing, and the non-separation of sensing and moving. A body that is dynamically attuned and knows the world and makes its way within it kinetically, is thoughtfully attuned to the quality of its own movement and the movement of the things that surround it (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009).

6.5 CHILDREN'S REFLECTIONS THROUGH JOURNALING AND MARK- MAKING

Journal writing can serve as a form of self-reflection (Oliver & Lalik, 2001), and as such the idea of using writing throughout the sessions was introduced to all the children in the study. This aspect of the work was most eagerly accepted by the oldest participants, and they would frequently take advantage of the standing instruction that they could write, draw and sketch out their thoughts on the work at any point during the sessions. The participants were using words and pictures to describe their embodied experiences and to thus place verbal definitions on them (Pink, 2009).

“C.: I felt that was really good because then like we keep it in our heads because like we’re doing all the different things to help us, and I just thought that was like really fun.

Me: Okay. What was fun about it?

C.: Because we got to do...instead of just doing the movements, we got to do all different things like drawing and things like that.” (C. Year 6)

“It was cool to write down everything and feelings and...” (E. Year 5)

Some children chose to document what they did and how they felt throughout a session, adding to their notes when they felt like it. One child, L., wrote about her experiences of being still.

• I would rather be bouncing up and down.
• It's relaxing.
• calm
• but I like giggling around all the time so it's a bit
hard in ~~any~~ a way.
• If the 1 minute standing up seemed slower.
• harder than on our own but not as hard as standing up.

FIGURE 58 JOURNALING ABOUT BEING STILL

Another girl, A., documented how she felt in a session on balancing. Both girls share their feelings about their experiences, whether they were challenging or easy. They were not writing to please me, A. says “it felt boring” initially, although she did move on to describing her experience as “quite relaxing” later on in the session. She also writes about the challenge of looking in one spot only (to aid balance), and working with a partner.

Some of the younger children focused more on sharing their experiences to the whole group within the circle which formed part of every session, expressing themselves verbally rather than through written words.

Me: How was it talking about what it felt like?

J.: Really good.

Me: Yeah, what was good about it?

J.: Well, actually I can't remember that.

Me: You just remember it felt good?

J.: Mmm." (J. Year 2)

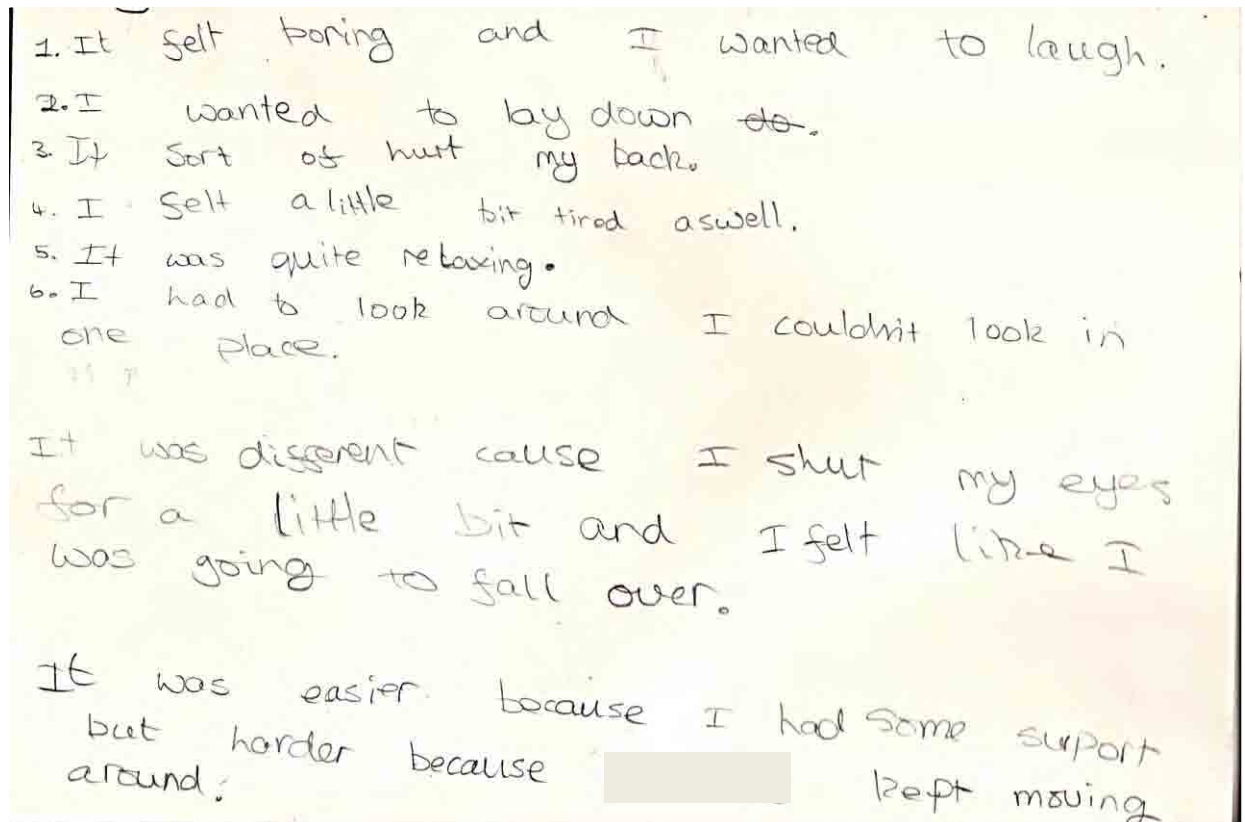


FIGURE 59 JOURNALING ABOUT BALANCE

However, some of the younger children also enjoyed the journaling aspect of the work. One girl, in Year 3 at the end of the sessions, but the youngest in her class, said the following in her interview about journaling and communicating about and around the work.

“Me: Do you remember I used to ask you to think about and talk about and write about and draw about what it felt to do all the stuff you did?”

S.: Yes.

Me: Yes, what was that like?

- S.: That was fun because you really get to explain your feelings and stuff.
- Me: Was it easy to do that, or hard?
- S.: Well, sometimes it's hard to find words for your feelings.
- Me: Yes?
- S.: And, sometimes it's really hard to talk about your feelings, so it's easier just to write them down, because you can- when you write it down you can rub it out and do it again if you don't think that's right, but when you're talking, you're saying no, but- well, yes. They know you've already said it.
- Me: And how about moving what you felt, what was that like?
- S.: Moving what you felt?
- Me: You know I asked you to move in a certain way and what you felt about it, what was that like, thinking?
- S.: Well, again it's hard, sometimes it's hard to say, like I felt like this, because feelings are very complex, but it's also nice to share with other people how you feel." (S. Year 3)

The ability this young girl had to elucidate on what it meant to her to be able to express herself on paper and to take the time to reflect on her words to ensure that she is writing and communicating exactly what she means to, demonstrates that she is using the process to reflect on her experiences. She also commented on how the medium in which reflections are shared alters the experience of sharing. There is a difference in reflecting with others (i.e. talking through the process of reflection) and sharing thoughts already gathered together in the form of writing.

Another girl, in Year 5, spoke about how she felt when asked to communicate through drawing and writing.

“Me: And how was it when I needed to ask you to move and think and write and draw about how it felt to do something?”

A.: Well, it was very fun to do it and, well, really...[laughs]

Me: Is it hard to find the words?

A.: Yes.

Me: Is it because that’s recording you?

A.: Yes. It made it fun, it was just harder for thinking of words to write down or say or...” (A. Year 5)

This aspect of how the children felt about being asked to communicate and reflect through writing and drawing was something that I asked all the children.

“Me: How was it when I asked you to move and think and talk and write about what it felt like?”

E.: Um...all good.

Me: Yes? Was it easy or hard?

E. Um...I don’t think it was too hard. No.” (E. Year 5)

“Me: This is about different ways of how and why and what we move and you wrote...can you read what you wrote?”

J.: Bouncy, happy, excited, joyful, grumpy, great, upset, sleepy and stretchy.

Me: What was it like, thinking about all those different ways of moving and being? Was it easy, was it hard?

J.: In the middle.

Me: In the middle, okay.” (J. Year 3)

“Me: Do you remember that I used to ask you to do some movements and then we would sit in a circle and we would talk about it and I would ask you to write or to draw about what it felt like as well?

K: Yeah.

Me: How did it feel when I asked you to write and to draw about moving and feeling?

K: Happy.

Me: Why did it make you feel happy?

K.: Because I felt like I was stretched out and I was stretched ‘til I couldn’t walk.

Me: Did you like feeling stretched out like you couldn’t walk? Yeah? Why did you like feeling like that?

K.: Because I had stretched and I couldn’t walk because I couldn’t lift my legs up.

Me: And that was a nice feeling, was it? Or was it a horrible feeling?

K.: No.

Me: No, what did it feel like when you couldn’t lift your legs up?

K.: It felt like funny stuff what tickles me.

Me: And how did it feel when I asked you to write or draw about that as well?

K.: It felt funny.

Me: Yeah? Is that something you do a lot?

K.: Yes.” (K. Year 2)

Throughout this section of the interview K. was showing me with her body what it felt like, lifting her legs up and stretching them out. It seemed as though for her, the physical sensations that she experienced from the work was strongly interlinked with her memories of the writing and drawing aspects of it.

El., in the following passage, starts to reflect on what it felt like to write and draw in this way throughout the project, and how it was to look back on her work from when she was younger.

“Me: What did you think about, you know, when I asked you to move and then I asked you to think and draw and talk and write about what it felt like, how was that?

El.: I found that like quite hard to like think about it but then it was easier to write, to draw and write about it.

Me: Okay. And did it get easier because you've been doing it for quite a long time now?

El.: Yeah, it got easier as we did more.

Me: Do you think that writing about what you feel and think is a good thing?

El.: Yeah.

Me: Why?

El.: Because you get to like look back on how you felt at that time.

Me: And then what does it feel like to look back at what you felt at that time now?

El.: It feels weird like because I'm looking. But yeah, I don't know...

...

Me: And this is all about how you feel as well.

El.: Yeah.

Me: Is there anything you want to say? Have you read it through? And this is all about different feelings and then how you've moved to be in those feelings.

El.: [reading]

Me: Why are you laughing?

El.: Because excited you would just jump up and down.

Me: Yeah. Is that not what you'd feel now?

El.: Yeah, but it's just strange." (El. Year 5)

El. spoke about how practise and experience of reflecting through journaling and drawing made the process easier over time. Familiarity with the concept may have allowed the children to gain some of the positive benefits of an embodied reflective practice, similar to those experienced by practitioners (Smears, 2009). It must be considered, however, that over the time of the study all the participants grew older, and this may have been the reason that the reflective process became 'more easy'.

Another girl in Year 5, K., expressed similar sentiments to El., stating how the reflection aspect of the work made her feel. She, like many of the children, said that it was important to her to share how she felt with others. Reflection was not a self-absorbed activity, but one that gained more meaning in context of the relationships of those around her.

"Me: How did it feel when I used to ask you to think about what it felt like and to draw about it and to talk about it and to write about what it felt like to do all this stuff?

K.: Sort of- there was- it makes me calm.

Me: It made you calm? What, thinking about how it felt made you calm?

K.: Yes.

Me: Yes? Why's that?

K.: Well, I think it's because you really have to think about it and be quiet.
Sometimes you have to be loud and things.

Me: What was it like writing it or drawing it as well?

K.: It was very fun drawing and writing.

Me: Why was it fun drawing and writing?

K.: Because you got to write how you felt and what you done and things.

Me: And you liked doing that?

K.: Yes.

Me: Yes? Why did you like it?

K.: Because people get to see how you feel.

Me: Is that important?

K.: Yes.

Me.: As you've got older, you've written more. Has that bit got easier? Is it different?

K.: Yes.” (K. Year 5)

Writing was not the only way that the children were able to communicate their experiences of embodiment. They were also given the opportunity to model with modelling clay, and with pipe-cleaners.

“Me: Do you remember making this pipe-cleaner person? Yes? How was it, making a pipe-cleaner person and then...

J.: Fun and quite hard.

- Me: What was fun and what was hard?
- J.: The hard part was getting it into the shape. And the fun part was seeing everybody else's.
- Me: Okay. Why was it fun seeing everybody else's?
- J.: Mmm...
- Me: Not sure?" (J. Year 3)

One boy in Year 6 spoke about how he combined writing and drawing to reflect on his experiences of moving, and what it meant to him to be able to reflect and record it.

- “MI: I liked how you let us draw and write about we feel because if we just tell you you might not be able to remember everybody's thoughts but if we wrote it down then you've already got it there.
- Me: Did it help you remember or to think about it?
- MI: It depends. Some of the activities we did, it helped me remember. But some of them I just remembered it using my... Well, I wrote more than I drew because when you draw something you might not be able to tell what I'm going on about but if I write and do a little bit of drawing as well then it's more easier for you to understand and also it might be a bit easier as well. On the few pages before it would tell you more if I wrote it instead of drawing it, but in this one I would say that drawing is more important than the writing.
- Me: Okay. And is it good to be able to use both to think about how you feel when you're doing the moving?
- MI: Yeah. But sometimes it's more important to do more of one than the other, I would say. Yeah.” (MI. Year 6)

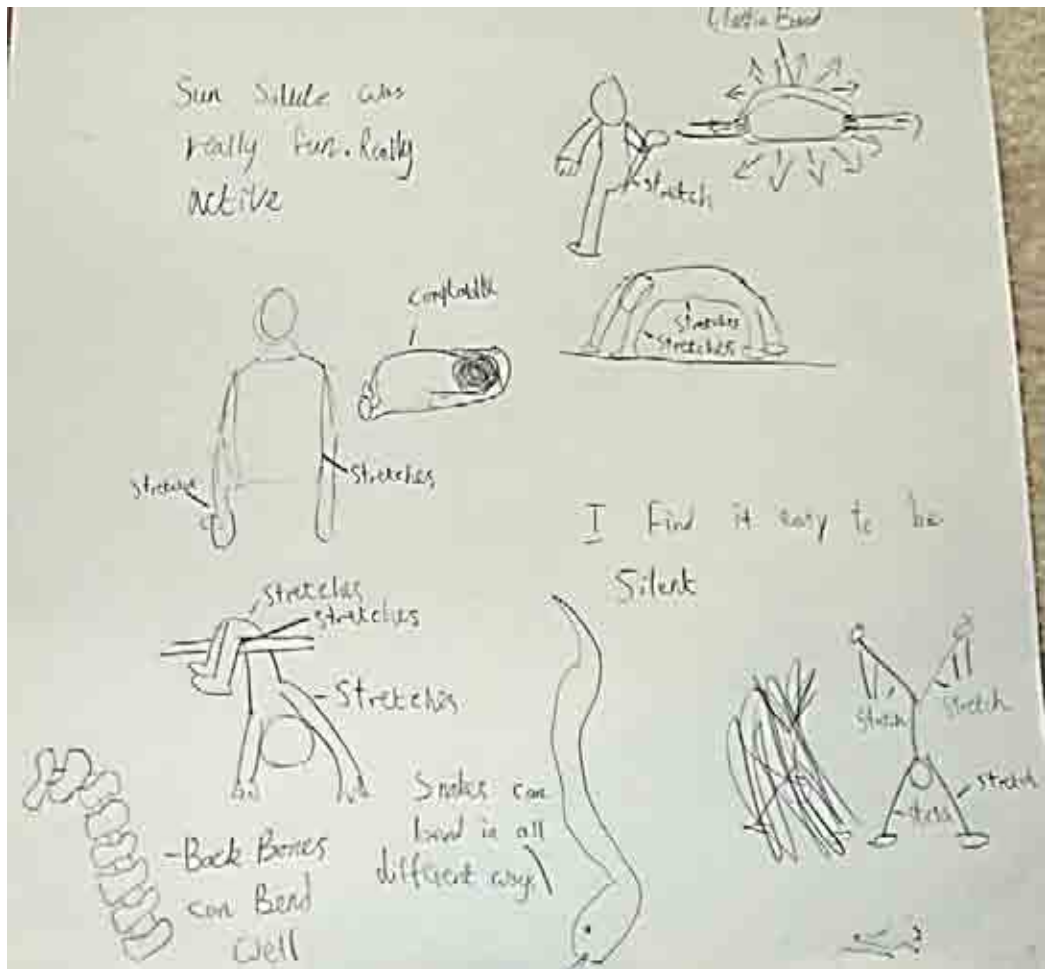


FIGURE 60 MI. JOURNALING THROUGH WRITING AND DRAWING

The journaling within the sessions combined writing and drawing, and the children were given time to write, draw or say what they wanted to without direction. They may have been asked a question to prompt thinking, but were also reminded throughout that whatever they wrote or thought was fine, that there were no right or wrong answers. Some chose to describe their movement, or how they felt when they moved, or stayed still in a balance.

P., in Year 1 (age 4), described his movement in words. D., in Year 3 (age 6), chose to draw a picture of himself balancing, and wrote how he felt when he balanced, "It's quit esey and some timse its quit hard (sic)."

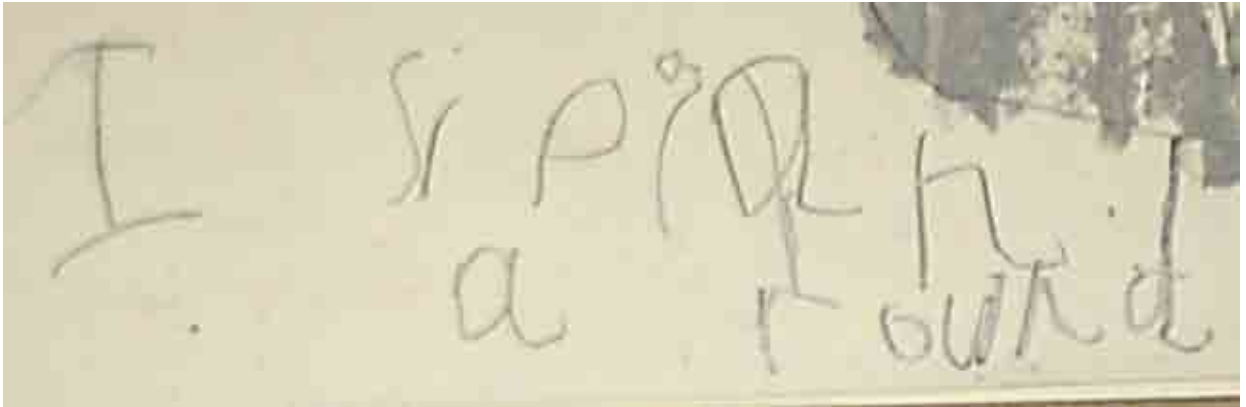


FIGURE 61 P. "I SPIN A ROUND"

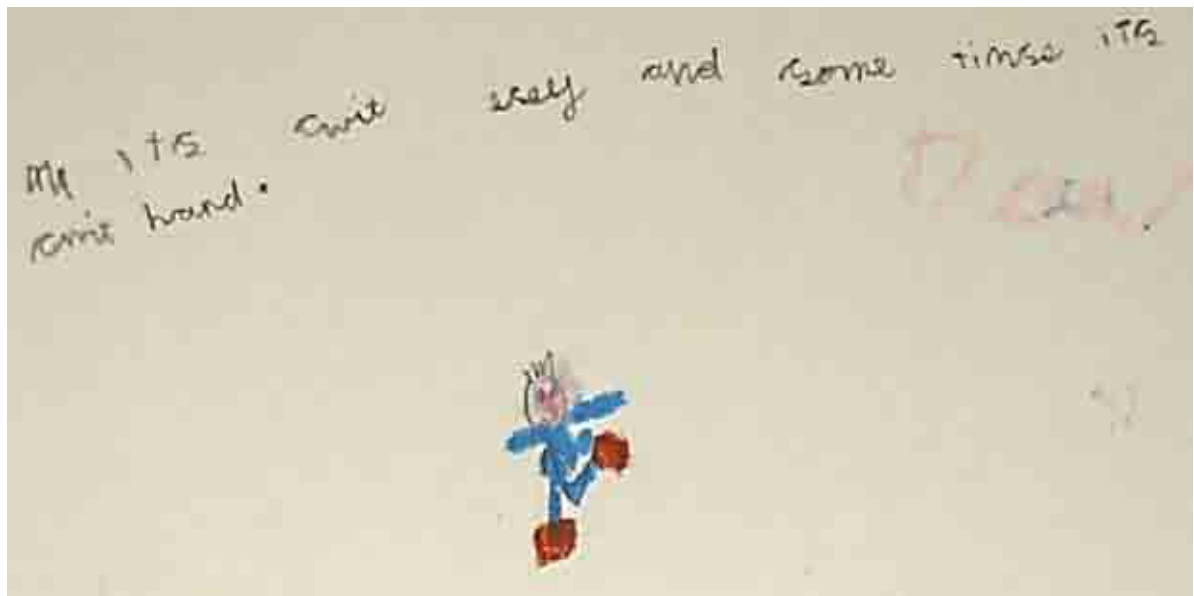


FIGURE 62 D. BALANCING ON ONE LEG

The children were also encouraged to write about how they felt in general as part of gaining awareness about their state of mind and physical self. This included stating how easy or hard they found aspects of the work. When B. wrote “it’s hard to concentrate because I am fidgety”, he was becoming aware of his state of mind, and beginning the process of reflecting on it. This awareness, coupled with acceptance, may allow B. the choice of changing his state

of mind and empower him to choose to change it (or not). Awareness and acceptance are necessary precursors to change within the framework of SME (Hartley, 1989).

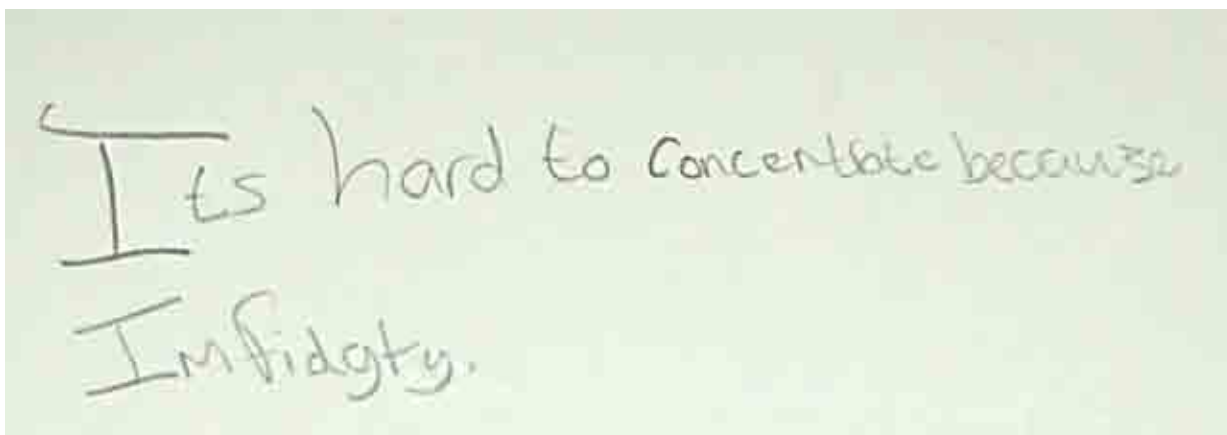


FIGURE 63 B. "IT'S HARD TO CONCENTRATE..."

The drawing aspect of the work definitely appealed to some of the children, who communicated without using the written word. The lack of emphasis on language may have allowed those that were younger, or those that felt more comfortable expressing themselves creatively, to take part and to reflect on their experiences (Driessnack, 2005). One girl in Year 4 drew the following after a session on emotion and how we move and feel them in our bodies. She uses imagery of weather, and vivid colours to express how she feels as emotions move through her body (see Figure 64).

One child, A. in Year 6, did not often choose to write or journal. However at the end of one session described he drew a picture of a gorge walk, the thing he had identified as making him happy. I commented in my journal at the time "beautiful picture of a gorge for gorge walking...most expression ever on paper". A. was able to communicate through drawing, where he was still as yet unable or unwilling to communicate verbally (see Figure 65). The

provision of art materials facilitated A. to choose to express and communicate his voice to me and to the others in the group (Driessnack, 2005).



FIGURE 64 L. HOW WE MOVE AND FEEL EMOTION

M. spoke about the drawing in the sessions as she reflected on the work she had done over the previous year. At the time of the interview M. was in Year 2, although for much of the work she had been in Year 1 and Reception. This extract came at the end of the interview, after we had talked about writing and drawing about how it felt to move.



FIGURE 65 A'S PICTURE OF A GORGE WALK

“Me: Do you think looking back and remembering all of those months ago what you would have liked to have done more of?”

M.: More pictures.

Me: More pictures. Do you like drawing pictures? Do you like drawing pictures about moving and what it feels like to move?

M.: Yeah.

Me: Why do you like drawing pictures like that?

M.: Because it's fun doing that.

Me: Why is it fun drawing?

- M.: Because it's all colourful and I like colouring in the picture...
- Me: Okay, so when you draw pictures of you how you feel when you move, you like drawing them all colourful?
- M: Yes.
- Me: Is that how you feel when you move?
- M.: Yes.
- Me: You feel colourful when you move?
- M.: Yes.” (M. Year 2)

The association of colour with movement by M., may have been triggered by the use of vibrant oil pastels to draw within the sessions, or conversely, she may have expressed her enjoyment of using colours because of her internal experience of moving.

In phase 3 of the study, which was with the oldest children only (Years 5 and 6), one element of the work was that they were going to produce something that could be shared with others. The format of this 'sharing' was to be determined by the children themselves, and options included putting on an assembly, doing a display to be put up within the school, making a video to show the other classes, or gathering parents and students together to witness them moving. A small amount of time was given to thinking, discussing and negotiating how they would like to share the work that they had explored with others, and the majority decision was that they would like to make posters for display within the school, so that the other children, teachers and their parents could see them. They wanted to work in small groups of their choice, or individually, and all choose their own focus, rather than choose themes as a class and distribute them. Only two children chose to work alone, and this was a positive choice,

rather than a feeling of being left out. Other groups had between three and four members, and were single sex.

The themes were chosen by the groups and they had three full afternoons to work on the posters. Each session included time as a whole group to warm up, to move and to feed back to each other about the work and progress. The first session was spent planning and designing within the groups and experimenting, the second was mostly spent drawing, practising movements, taking photographs and compiling them. The last session involved finishing off the posters. They were placed on the door of the classroom which is also used for assemblies, and so the work was visible to the whole school. Many of the children from phase 3 mentioned the making of these posters as one of the things they had enjoyed the most over the time of the study. This may have been because it had occurred most recently. However, as shown by the quotes following, they were able to express verbally why they enjoyed the activity. Two girls, E. and A. mentioned that they enjoyed being able to write down their feelings, and then to share them with others.

“Me: Is there anything else that you want to say about the stuff that we did?”

E.: I enjoyed making those posters.

Me: The last thing that we did, that’s on the door now?

E.: Yes.

Me: Why did you enjoy making those so much?

E.: Because we could like do stretches and balances and everything, and it was cool to write down everything and feelings and...

Me: Are you happy with how it all turned out?

E.: Yes.

Me: Do you like seeing it on the wall?

E.: Yes.” (E. Year 5)

“Me: What did you enjoy the most?

A. Where we made a poster and that to show what we did. How we show our emotions through yoga.

Me: Okay. Did you like doing that?

A.: Yes.

Me: Why did you like doing that?

Me: Because it was a time we could express our feelings and show how we did it.”

(A. Year 5)

I asked C. explicitly about the poster work, and she expressed how much she enjoyed the freedom of working in the way that we did.

“Me: And then you’ve got ideas about how we can share stuff. What do you think about what we ended up doing, that’s on the door?

C.: I thought that was really fun because like we got to have our opinions and we got to do like what we wanted, not like given something, which I think is fun to be given something and to do something in your own way. And I thought it was fun when we got to do all the different balances. And then make up things on that piece of paper and then make it into a poster.

Me: Okay. Are you happy about how that turned out?

C.: Yes.” (C. Year 6)

K. was also asked about what she thought of the display.

“K: Yeah, it’s real good.

Me: Do you like seeing it on the wall?

K.: Yeah.

Me: Why do you like it up there?

K.: Because you get to see what you did then and then you get to see lots of other people’s work in the classroom so you can look at it whenever you like.” (K.

Year 6)

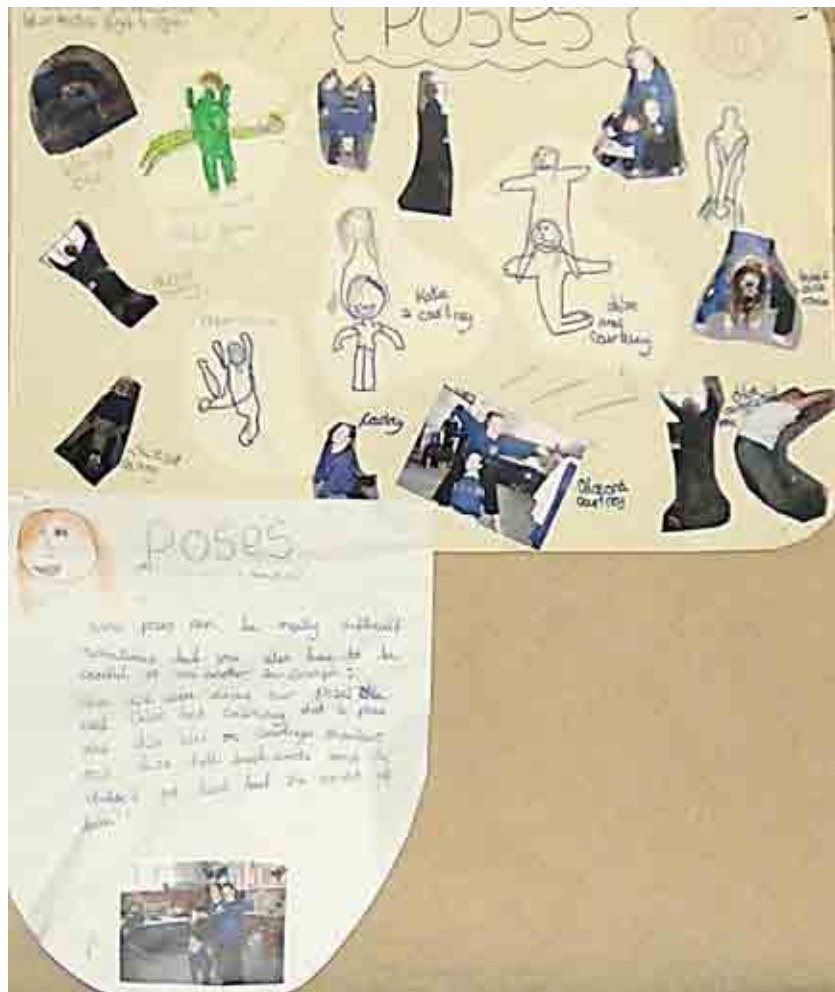


FIGURE 66 POSTER BY C., L., AND E.

The children's reflections through journaling, speaking, drawing, model-making and moving showed how they used their embodied self-awareness to make sense of what they were experiencing and feeling.

6.6 SUMMARY

Reflective practice has been seen to be an important part of professional practice in education, therapeutic and health care professions. The 'slipperiness' of the rhetoric about and around reflective practice (which can be compared with Best's (1978) discussion of the slipperiness of philosophy of movement) does not help an individual wishing to learn about reflection. Mixed messages from educators about the purpose of reflection as well as the process, may mean that students end up (or are asked to) ruminate on their experiences rather than reflect. This may mean that a potentially useful process becomes a negative experience for the would-be reflector. In addition, assessment requirements for courses, or the use of line-managers as supervisors, may inhibit the honesty with which a reflector shares their thoughts and feelings. What it means to reflect effectively, and individual perceptions of reflective practice could be explored further, as the stakeholders in the practice may have different views and expectations of the exercise.

Using mindfulness techniques or increasing embodied self-awareness may be useful in developing an effective reflective practice as well as tools that could be used to teach effective reflection. This is applicable to both children as learners, and those in teacher training programmes. However, care has to be taken to ensure that such methods are not introduced in a way that lacks awareness of the potential therapeutic (or transformative) aspects of this type of approach even when used educationally.

The children in this study demonstrated that they were able to use their sense of embodied self-awareness to reflect on their emotions, their experiences and even the process of reflecting. They did this through the use of art materials, mark-making and drawing, sharing with each other and journaling as well as in reflective interviews. Although the oldest children appeared to journal most frequently, even the youngest ones in the study seemed able to reflect on and express their experiences.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS

The genesis of this research study was the desire to explore and find out how children perceived and expressed themselves as embodied beings. Although previously the children were always given time to reflect to each other how they felt and what they experienced as they moved, I had not before incorporated the use of drawing materials, modelling and writing as a way to journal and reflect on the process of the work. Although I had kept professional notes on the content of sessions, I had no formal field notes or observations, or a record of the children's experiences. Informally, they, their teachers and parents fed back to me how they felt the sessions impacted on their lives. The use of mark-making and scribing is a form of reflection and sharing more common with adults, particularly in dance and movement forms. I was interested to see how the children would respond and take to introducing the element of reflection into the work, and how this could record their own experiences of embodiment as experienced through the sessions.

My research questions were:

1. Do children experience themselves as embodied beings?
2. If so, how do they express, create and perceive their embodied self?
3. Does an experience of somatic movement within a school day affect ability to reflect and process in an embodied way?

The first question was exploring how embodiment, that is an awareness of the living body inside and out, was experienced by the children. This included how they reacted to being asked to think about themselves as embodied, and to become aware of their bodies in this manner.

The second question related to how they developed this awareness of their living body, and explored it through the mediums of movement, images, mark-making, scribing, reflection and sharing. This question included how the children choose to share their experiences with others, and the ways in which they reflected on their work, and how they learned about embodiment.

The final question was of a broader nature, as it included what it meant to reflect and process information in this way both for the child herself, and the practitioner, teacher or therapist working with her.

Throughout the study my own reflexive process was integral, both as source of information, reflection and analysis. My own “sensing body [was] at the centre of the analysis” (Pink, 2009, p. 14).

7.1 EMBODIMENT AND CHILDREN

The communication aspect of the work was appreciated and embraced by the children. The opportunity to reflect, to process their experiences, and to share those processes with others was valued. It allowed the participants to integrate the elements of it that best served them into their everyday lives. Journaling, mark-making and drawing may have allowed the children to begin to develop a reflective practice (Punch, 2002).

In addition to using the sessions to learn new ways of reflecting on the material, the children were also invited to become much more mindful. Mindful about themselves, about how they perceived and experienced their inner self and the workings of their body, about how they

moved through and interacted with the world around them: “some of the children (particularly the older ones) are very willing to participate in the ‘journaling’ aspect of exploring themes, their feelings, thoughts and movement through writing and art” (Field Notes). This mindful awareness increased the amount of data they had available to reflect on and process. The children were more able to be aware of the perspectives of others and the impact of views on other people, and to increase their empathy (Cromby, 2011; Sheets-Johnstone, 2010), by remaining open not only to their own interpretation of the world, but also those of others.

The children in the study did seem to perceive themselves as embodied beings. They showed that they were able to express their sense of embodiment through qualities of movement and different movements, through drawing, mark and model-making as well as verbally. They were able to express how they moved, types of movement, and why they moved, making a connection between their movement and conscious thought process and language (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010). The children began to be aware of how they felt when they moved, both physically and emotionally. They were able to express and share these feelings, and articulate them, as well as show empathy towards others based on seen movements and expressions. These aspects of the sessions were among some of those most commented on by the participants in the follow-up interviews. The children in this study explored their internal structure through experiential anatomy, moving, drawing, modelling and examining the language that is used to describe the organs and parts of the body. Again, the children appeared to enjoy this aspect of the study, although it seemed that the younger ones were more able to express themselves, whilst some of the older children were perhaps more conscious of what they ‘should’ do or say at times. In addition, to expressing their sense of

embodiment, the children demonstrated the process of learning about embodiment and embodied self-awareness through somatic movement education.

There were limitations to the research strategies used in this study, for example, the choice of the case study school. Although it was useful due to the prior relationships that had been built up, and the familiarity of the children with aspects of the work, the school was not necessarily representative. It is a very small rural school, in a predominantly white area. Because of the small number of children in each year group (some years have only five children), any statistical information on the arrival or departure of a child from a different ethnic group, or with special educational needs could be very misleading and so has not been included. The children are from relatively affluent socio-economic groups. In addition, the ethos of the school is one of nurturing where close relationships between teachers and pupils are encouraged. This meant that the pupils were receptive to the hands-on approach used in the sessions. It may also have meant that the children wanted to please me, and to say and to act in ways that they thought I wanted them to. Although they were encouraged to express themselves, there were expectations around behaviour and conduct that they had to adhere to. I was present in the school in roles of a teacher, a researcher and as a parent. As such, it was my role to reinforce behaviour when the children were with me in the classroom. Had I encountered the children out of school, it may have been possible to build a different relationship with them, and the data may have reflected this. The children in the study ranged in age from 4–11. Having such young children as participants also had implications for the research methods used, and the ways in which the material in the sessions was presented to the children.

7.2 EMBODIMENT AND LEARNING

Learning an embodied way of being in, looking at and reflecting on the world could fall within Brighouse's idea of developing children to lead "flourishing lives" (2005, p. 47). This idea of flourishing includes being 'happy', though he describes flourishing as a "richer property than happiness, sensitive to many more features of a person's life than just her inner states" (ibid.).

The idea that education should equip students to lead flourishing lives, and help others to do so is discussed by White (2007). He states that "a personally fulfilling life is one largely filled with successful and wholehearted engagement in intrinsically worthwhile activities" (2007, p. 18). The nature of exactly what is a flourishing or fulfilling life is given consideration, as is the question of who judges which activities are deemed to be worthwhile. If aesthetic values such as expressiveness, humour, balance, contrast and complexity are used as a basis for determining qualities, then these are produced within a culture. According to White, personal flourishing "is not... a matter of the satisfaction of the individual's informed desires. Its ingredients are not relative to our particular wishes. They lie outside us as individuals. They are largely created within cultures" (2007, p. 27). The worthwhile activities that make a flourishing life are not relative to individual preferences, although personal autonomy is a wellbeing value. But if these activities are virtually all cultural products, and individuals are not authorities themselves on what a flourishing life is, how can it be determined: "no one can lay down in detail how a person will best flourish in the future. There are simply so many ways of thriving, so many forms of wellbeing goods" (White, 2007, p. 22).

With respect to the body and wellbeing, Mill (1861) wrote that mental or intellectual pleasures and activities are of higher value than physical ones. This is not, however, something that can be determined by a group of wellbeing critics, as “there is no community of experts on what constitutes a flourishing life” (White, 2007, p. 23). White continues to say that authority on wellbeing lies not with an authority, nor one particular group or social class, but instead with the population, as we all have an equal voice in determining our society and as such what activities are worthwhile within it.

If one purpose of education is to equip people for a flourishing life, how does this then relate to the physical body, physical activity and somatic movement? While considering physical activity and young people, Wright, Macdonald and Groom (2003) state that all physical activity is influenced by the making of identity in relation to the world. Young people draw on cultural resources to make sense of their engagement. White would also equate wellbeing values with those found to be worthwhile within the society or culture. According to Bailey, Bloodworth and McNamee “it is widely maintained that sport and physical activities contribute to the development of young people’s well-being” (2010, p. 2). Using Bailey’s definition that physical education refers to “developing students’ physical competence and confidence, and their ability to perform in a range of activities” (ibid), then somatic movement encountered within an educational context, i.e. within the school day, would fit into the arguments made for the value of sports and physical activity, being that they are necessary for human flourishing. It must be noted, however, that the nature of somatic movement is not necessarily the same as that more commonly associated with sport per se. It is not something that could be practised with a ‘knack’, rather than an understanding (McNamee, 2005).

It can be agreed that somatic movement forms, and practices such as martial arts fall under the wider category of physical or sporting activities. If “certain elements without which flourishing becomes impossible, and... sporting activities offer distinctive ways to help realise such elements” (Bailey et al, 2010, p. 3), then as well as forming part of the provision of these opportunities, it could even be argued that SME, which by its nature allows an individual opportunity to assess his or her state of being and develop a positive and non-judgemental awareness of self, has an even greater role to play in the education towards wellbeing. Indeed, if the hedonistic approach that equates wellbeing to a certain quality of experience is utilised, then SME, which increases an individual’s depth of experience (Fogel, 2009) could form an integral part in the education of young people to lead flourishing lives.

Pleasurable experiences are not the exclusive contributor to wellbeing. Bailey et al (2010) discuss the importance of authentic relationships, and relate this within the domain of sport to the difference between process orientated and goal orientated experiences. Again, this has relevance for somatic movement forms, as they are by their very nature experiential and process orientated. The discipline and dedication that is required for successful sport participation is no less relevant for somatic movement practices, which, although may not require the “experience of harsh and unpleasant means to the desired end” (Bailey et al, 2010, p. 10), often involve experiences that are difficult, painful or challenging, and as a result any achievement is made “more meaningful and enduring” (Bailey et al, 2010, p. 10). As such, it is easy to agree with the following:

“To focus on certain forms of pleasant experience, such as fun, may well foreclose other satisfactions associated with exercise, play, games and sports. The value of

effort and mastery to be found in sport will typically be associated with non-hedonic means such as perseverance and tenacity.” (Bailey et al, 2010, p. 12)

In particular, the word ‘tenacity’ has relevance to the practice of yoga, which has as one of its guidelines the idea of *tapas*, a Sanskrit word meaning self-discipline, and the rigour required to work towards a larger goal of personal development, freedom or self-actualisation. This broader view of the purpose of practice would concur with the idea that it is not desire-fulfilment that bears on well-being. The desires one may feel may be incidental or even detrimental to one’s wellbeing (Bailey et al, 2010), and again this is reflected in the yoga principles, where one is advised to move away from greed, avarice, and the feelings of momentary desires and towards *santosh*a or contentment with what is. Yoga is a movement form which often results in participants ‘feeling better’. It is not, in its nature, competitive, unlike sports such as soccer in Britain. In particular, youth soccer has become renowned for its competitive nature and the “inappropriate ethos” (ibid, p. 15) that is found within it. That said, there will always be individuals that seek out competition, and within yoga certain forms attract those more than others.

If wellbeing and health are said to include the capabilities of life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotions, and practical reason among others (Nussbaum, 2000), and health is determined in terms of the bodily and mental ability to achieve vital goals (Nordenfelt, 2007), then physical activities that enhance the participants’ development of bodily control and awareness can only contribute to a flourishing life. The word ‘engagement’ is used to describe the achievement of flourishing by Brighouse—engagement with family, with friends and I would suggest, with the world. This engaging

with the world is a key theme in Body Mind Centering[®], Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy, and other forms of somatic movement. But what does it mean for this to be part of education? How would it affect the delivery of a curriculum?

In a sense, the Every Child Matters Agenda which was introduced into the United Kingdom in 2004 (Every Child Matters: Change for Children Agenda, 2004) attempts to address this, by calling for measurable outcomes for each individual child and that they

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being. (ibid)

This shift in the purpose of education is not welcomed by all though, as Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) make the argument against what they term a therapeutic turn in education, and any curriculum that is not purely based around the development of the mind seems to warrant this term. They see it to elevate “everyday feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability, discomfort or lack of confidence and depict them as ‘treatable’” (ibid, p. 155). This alternate view of the purpose of education is at odds not only with educational philosophers such as Brighouse and Bailey, but also runs contrary to the principles of somatic movement. In addition, the principles of somatic movement would advocate that every individual has the potential to learn and to progress working from a picture of health and not a pathology of vulnerability, discomfort or lack of confidence.

How humans learn is addressed by Bailey, who discusses the differences between teaching and cultural learning (Bailey, 2003). If learning is to take place through instruction, he specifies that a teacher must operate at a higher level than the student. For trainee teachers to learn how to reflect effectively then it follows that effective reflecting must be modelled by the teacher educators. However, this in turn may contradict Gadamer's paradigm of learning in which "knowledge takes the form of an object" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 15). In this view, there is an expert or voice of authority which "belongs to the one who knows the most or best" (Breen, 2000). This mode of learning seems far from Schön's idea of reflection in practice, where individuals "identify and criticize the mechanisms of metaphor that lead to understandings...to facilitate a process of "frame restructuring" in which we come to new understandings" (Richmond, et al, 1997).

In a paper on the idea of 'cultural' learning Bailey (2003) discusses the idea of learning to be human within an evolutionary model. The developmental aspect of this argument resonates with that of philosopher Sheets-Johnstone (2009) and bodyworker and therapist Hartley (1989). With respect to learning, and how a child learns the social, psychological and emotional skills necessary to live and to flourish Bailey distinguishes three types of learning, imitative, instructive and collaborative. These modes of learning are different from the models postulated by Bruner (1985), which are; tabula rasa, hypothesis generator, nativism and constructivism. With respect to imitative learning Bailey states

"The learner must be able to recognise the intentionality of the model. However to provide that model, the teacher must operate at a significantly higher level, as the teacher must have some notion of the learner's knowledge or ignorance of a specific task. Therefore the teacher needs to be able to recognise false beliefs in the learner,

and also have some acknowledgement of the learner's beliefs about the teacher's intentions, so that the teacher is able to spot misunderstandings on behalf of the learner.” (Bailey, 2003, p. 185)

With regard to SME and the idea of education about embodiment I would replace the concept of ‘misunderstanding’ with ‘integration’ or ‘unseen’. SME is concerned with the idea of integrating movement patterns and bringing into visibility and consciousness unseen ways of moving and being in the world so that the individual has more choices of how they wish to act and to react. The teacher of embodiment then, has to be more than ‘one page ahead’ of the students. She has to integrate and embody embodiment and make the intention behind the work clear, as “human experience cannot be fully fathomed unless we are fully embodied” (Sills, 2000, p. 8). The intention behind the work helps to give a “clear realization that there is no separation between the mind and the body. Intending something is the beginning of doing it” (Linden, 2002, p. 7). In addition the teacher has to be able to use a combination of approaches whilst allowing the students to fully imitate and participate and construct their own meaning of embodiment from experience. Imitation as a means of learning body based practices is discussed by Downey (2010) in relation to capoeira, a danced martial art. Capoeira is traditionally taught through imitation, minimal instruction, practice and exercises, and as such is similar to yoga and the material in the sessions in this study. It is experiential rather than theoretical. By watching, experimenting and imitating a movement pattern or position, it is possible to integrate knowledge into action and understanding. However, in order for another to imitate, the teacher has to be embodied and present within their movements, and may also need to use touch, as “an awareness of ourselves through skin

contact of some sort does seem to be important for an on-going sense of self” (Westland, 2011, p. 21).

By stating that the teacher has to be embodied it is not meant that to teach embodiment a person has to be ‘perfect’. Embodiment is used here to mean both a process of learning about the self and a state of being (Wright, 2000). Although SME is intrinsically linked to embodiment, ‘somatic’ is defined by Hanna as having “evolved to mean the living body in its wholeness” (1979 p. 6). To be whole, and to be living does not mean to be perfect. Instead I mean a consciousness about where in the process one is on the path seeking “to increase the sense of the embodied self, ‘the body experienced from within’, and to cultivate awareness and harmony within the body-mind-spirit continuum” (Hartley, 2004 p. 12). For example, within a yoga class, it is perfectly possible for a teacher to teach students to do a free standing headstand in one lesson, yet be unable to perform one herself. Ideally she would be honest about her limitations and practice, and support her students to fulfil their own potential, and not pretend that she can in fact achieve poses that she has not yet mastered. In addition, in yoga or any other form of bodywork, before touching another individual in the context of a therapeutic (or teaching) relationship, she should have experiential training that includes “knowledge of how to touch...and having adequate supervision from someone who has also had touch training” (Westland, 2011, p. 25).

The somatic movement sessions in this study were educational. However, somatic movement has the potential to be therapeutic even when used in an educational context, as can be seen from the case studies in Chapter 5. The case study of child A. demonstrated the need for a practitioner to be aware of any developmental issues or difficulties, and the challenges that

can be faced when a child would seem to benefit more from a therapeutic intervention than group educational sessions. The challenges were also present for me as the practitioner, and supervision was vital throughout the sessions to ensure that there was a duty of care to the students as well as to myself. Child M., in contrast, appeared to show how he was able to take the educational context of the sessions and use it to his own therapeutic advantage. He expressed how, as a result, he was able to regulate his own emotions more effectively through the use of music, and recognise emotions and feelings in other people. These both show that if somatic movement is to be used educationally, it is vital that the practitioner remains aware of the therapeutic context and possible implications of the work.

7.3 EMBODIMENT AND REFLECTION

I believe that the effectiveness of a reflective practice depends on the data the practitioner has to reflect on. She needs to be able to pick up on how, when and in what manner what she does impacts on the teaching environment and the learners within it. To be aware of how she feels and holds herself within a given situation. This relates directly to my understanding and utilisation of embodiment. I believe that it is possible to embody and project feelings of confidence whilst internally feeling less secure. This would echo teacher trainers who advise that trainees ‘act’ in order to control a class and establish themselves discipline (Kyriacou, 1998). I found this to be directly relevant when sharing my own personal experiences about embodiment and reflective practice with the science teacher in the case study on reflective practice. We discussed how scientific knowledge of the body enhanced and also detracted from our embodied experience of it. I can relate this to how my bodywork training was managed. It was aimed primarily at dance artists and movers. The main component of the theory was on anatomy and physiology of the living body. I found this element of the course

very easy, having studied biology and chemistry to a high level. Others on the course found this more challenging as they did not have a scientific background. Most of the students would have described themselves as being aware of their environment intuitively, but without detailed anatomical knowledge that would enable them to visualise the internal workings of the body clearly. For reflective practice I believe that “the teacher’s attention is focused both inwardly at their own practice...and outwardly” (Kemmis, 1985). It is the inward focus that I believe vital, as in order to achieve it a practitioner has to access all of the information available to her through her physical body and senses. If she is conscious of her body processes, and the environment around her she will have a greater resource to analyse and reflect on. A practitioner able to evaluate her body’s reactions to the stimuli of the learning environment; to pupils as individuals; perceptions of her students’ reaction and engagement will be able to reflect effectively and model reflective practice. Embodied reflective practice, as used to model reflection for learners, can be compared to using mindfulness in psychotherapeutic treatment, in that it is not a tool, but “requires an attitude and process...It also requires that the therapist immerses herself in its practice so that its spirit and effects come to life” (Weiss, 2009, p. 13). However, an embodied practice is not a guarantee that reflection will be effective, a Pilates instructor writing in the role of a ‘Professional Investigator’ reflected that “self-reflection consistently slipped into confessional self-criticism” (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

It is the idea of reflecting in an embodied way that links somatic movement to the world of education. Embodied self-awareness can be taught, (Bainbridge-Cohen, 1993; Fogel, 2009; Hanna, 1988; Hartley, 1989; Feldenkrais, 1981), but teaching reflection is somewhat harder (Hatton & Smith, 1995). Reflection is something you do *about* something, it cannot be taught

in isolation. Like any core skill it cannot be de-contextualised. Within the frame of reflexivity, reflection on levels of self-awareness and about our work is what we want to do, and to teach. The very things that appear to be 'unconnected' may be those that eventually give us the greatest insight. Our body is connected to the mind, as “when we are speaking of the body, we are not only describing the functional aspect of movement, but how our psyche and emotions are affected by our thinking and how movement itself effects change within them” (Chaiklin, 2009, p. 5). Such reflection may include a teacher reflecting on how she feels when she has to teach, and then implements a routine that is more supportive and has a positive effect on her practice. It might be a learner realising that he has had an insight into what he is doing, and why, and how it connects subjects for him. Having a reflexive or reflective practice, means that we take time to reflect on and analyse our actions and awareness of ourselves, and use these insights to change what we do.

My depth of reflexivity and awareness in my own practice allows me to be what Fogel (2009) calls, ‘intersubjective’. I take questions and thoughts into supervision and shape further work. As a teacher I do not have access to confidential and impartial supervision, nor am I guaranteed observations from teachers experienced in owning their judgements and projections into a situation. Such observations now form a part not only of teacher training, but of on-going evaluation by line managers and OFSTED.

In order to address learning through modelling (Bailey, 2003), the school ethos and the teachers directly involved with the children ideally need to model embodiment with their body and demonstrate what it is to be and achieve these things. The idea of what it is to educate about engagement, about how to flourish or how to be embodied needs to take into

account how children learn. For example in relationships children are influenced by the models they see around them. The break-up or change of the family home has been seen to have an effect on children in many arenas, not least of which how much they participate in sport (Quarmby, Dagkas, & Bridge, 2010). Physical activity and sport are relevant here, as sport and physical education are subjects in which it may be assumed that the body and the experience of moving the body is of a primary concern.

The children in this study demonstrated that as part of their experience of SME within the school day they were able to reflect. Reflection was an integral component of the sessions. All the children were given time and space to reflect on their experiences in every session. They did this through sharing in a group as well as individually by way of writing, drawing, model making and talking. When offered the opportunity to journal their experiences throughout each session as well as at specific times, the older children in particular chose to reflect in this way. As part of the third phase the children reflected on the elements of the sessions that they wanted to share with the rest of the school. In addition, the children were given the chance to look back through their work and reflect on their experiences as a whole as part of the interview process. The children appeared to develop their ability to reflect, to be mindful, and to express what they were reflecting on in an embodied way. They appeared to gain insight into their embodied experience. That is, they used their embodied self-awareness linked in with their ability to reflect on emotions, experiences and events in their lives.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As a trainee teacher I received little guidance, and less modelling of reflective practice. I feel that if trainees and teachers are expected to reflect on and in their practice, then initial teacher

training needs to change to encompass this. It could more closely model itself on the training in the helping professions such as counselling and social work, and also provide on-going support and supervision for the students and resulting professionals. If trainees were supported and given the opportunity to become effective reflective practitioners, they may show good and outstanding teaching rather than the ‘competence’ required of them. In addition, they would then be well placed to pass on these skills to their students. This relates back to the idea of embodying a skill and then being able to model it to others. Although reflection per se is challenging to teach, a more self-embodied awareness is not, and can start as simply the highlighting of “appropriate body parts and how they feel...[so that the]...neuro-developmental process of self-awareness and self discovery [can] take root” (Fogel, 2009, p. 208). The reflection process then naturally occurs. Within the therapeutic model of reflection and supervision it is not expected nor demanded that a practitioner holds the space to do this alone. Both the supervisor and supervisee take responsibility for recognising fear and negativity, and ensuring the quality of work. The supervisee is expected to begin self-supervision where they appraise themselves, and by taking these thoughts into the supervision setting they can take the opportunity to process them and allow it to form part of their on-going self-development, their care-taking, self-awareness and commitment to learning. A lack of supervision can lead to “feelings of staleness, rigidity and defensiveness” (Hawkins & Shohet, 1989, p. 5) that lead towards burn-out or the maintaining of illness as described for rumination.

Educating teachers about embodiment and how to increase and use levels of self-awareness could aid a reflective practice. It may also be key to enabling children to learn reflection through modelling (Bailey, 2003). If an individual has not had the opportunity within her

life-experience to develop self-awareness then she is limited in the amount and quality of information to reflect on. Embodied self-awareness includes being aware of what is going on in the physical and physiological self, and how that relates to emotions, feelings, thoughts. For example, if you hurt, what kind of hurt is it (bone, tissue, muscle), or a more general awareness of you, the world around you, and others. By making the link between embodied self-awareness or embodiment and reflection, the self-awareness has a purpose and is not just self-absorption. You reflect, and in order to reflect, you have to be self-aware. The two are connected, and in the teaching of embodied self-awareness, there are the tools to learning reflective practice.

How an individual perceives her body, and perceives what a 'sporting' or 'able' body looks like and how it moves, can colour how she feels about participation in sport and other physical activities. If children are allowed to gain pleasurable experiences and memories of the physical expression of their body, then this will inform how they view their ability to participate and increase their confidence in doing so. If, on the other hand, they are subjected to activities and experiences they do not enjoy, that they are unable to conform to, then it is likely that enjoyment and future participation in physical exercise will decrease (Wellard, 2006). Thus, the experiences of moving and enjoying and experiencing their bodies in activities such as somatic movement, may increase future participation in other forms of exercise and physical activity for these children. A longitudinal study would be needed to examine whether early experiences of somatic movement affected participation in exercise and sport in later life. For example, achievement has been identified as a motivation factor for participation in sport, and can be either task-focused or ego-focused orientation. These modes would be referenced by perceived competence, effort, task mastery and improvement

or comparison with others, norm-referenced perceptions of competence or winning (Pickard & Bailey, 2009). This goal-orientated motivation found in young dancers and athletes, can be compared with the non-competitive, process-orientated nature of yoga and somatic movement. However, one aspect that the movement forms share, is that they become “not simply something they do, but also something they are” (Pickard, 2007, p. 42)

With regard to future research of this nature, in order to focus on the sensory and embodied experience of the body, it is necessary to “have a clear idea of what sensory and embodied experience involve[s]” (Pink, 2009, p. 24). In addition, Pink (2009) speaks of the meeting points between research (specifically sensory ethnographic research), scholarship, art and intervention. In studies of this nature there may also be ‘thin’ boundaries between therapy and education, and it is important that any research takes care to maintain the relationship between the need to make an academic contribution to scholarship and discussion as well as performing a service or intervention and maintain a professional duty of care towards the participants.

Educating about self-awareness and embodiment is a long way from “physical education as a government technology that regulates and shapes bodies” (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 47). Somatic education (and therapy) has as its core, an emphasis on individual expression and freedom of choice (Fogel, 2009; Johnson, 1995). This choice comes about in part through self-reflection, and a focus on self-transformation. Which is coherent with *kaivalya*, (liberation, emancipation and freedom), the traditional goal of yoga (Iyengar, 1966). However, although there have been calls for more research to investigate mindful practices such as yoga (Markula & Pringle, 2006), there is still a scarcity of peer-reviewed research.

This study has implications for reflective practice in education, physical education and initial teacher training. Learning to increase embodied self-awareness is a route to developing a reflective practice, but further research would be necessary to determine how this could be implemented and utilised. This further research could be in the form of studies exploring:

- Longitudinal effects of SME sessions, tracking children and young people over time, and recording participation in physical activity, experiences of embodiment, reflection;
- SME sessions with secondary age young people;
- SME sessions with trainee teachers as part of developing a reflective practice;
- Embodied reflective practice and practitioners (e.g. physical educators, coaches);
- Aspects of SME (e.g. touch) used with children with special educational needs (e.g. autism).

I have been awarded a small research grant from the University of Kent to explore parent perspectives of touch and raising children with autism and tactile defensiveness. This will include parent views on the possible shape of intervention projects, and will be used as a pilot for a larger study providing an intervention in the form preferred by the parents.

At the beginning of the research process I identified myself primarily as a practitioner. As such I was most familiar with the language, assumptions and terminology found in somatics, yoga and bodywork. By placing this work in an academic context I had to learn new languages; of education, physical education, sport, philosophy, dance, psychology, psychotherapy and health. The disparity in terms used to describe the nature and experience of embodiment highlighted the challenges in bringing experiential work into an academic

realm. It also clarified to me the importance of doing this, as experiences of embodiment and embodied reflective practice could have relevance to a number of fields if the work can be disseminated using language that is understood and accepted.

Yoga and somatic movement were used as tools to facilitate the children's experience and expression of embodiment, but the study was not a study of SME and how it could be utilised in schools. Instead, it developed from an exploration of the embodied experience of a child, to include the development of a reflective practice and an embodied reflective practice. The children were able to express their experiences of embodiment along with an exploration of reflection through talking, moving, mark-making and journaling. Due to the crossover between my teacher-training and the research study, I began to examine the importance of teaching reflective practice for educators, and the impacts that this could have on learners. These two strands – the developing of an embodied reflective practice for professionals, and the expression of children's embodiment, form the elements that I would like to focus on as I move forward from this research study.

On a personal level I experienced a journey encompassing a growing number of roles from therapist/practitioner to researcher and educator. The balancing of these roles was not always easy, as each placed demands on my time and tensions between them challenged me, as can be seen from my reflective journal. The intensely personal and reflective nature of this study was not planned initially, and this too challenged me. Overall I have found the experience rewarding and informative.

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APPENDIX 1 META-ANALYSIS

Title	Methods	Findings	Notes
<p>Anderson (2006) Body Intelligence Scale: Defining and Measuring the Intelligence of the Body.</p>	<p>Designed to assess forms of body awareness that support overall wellness. Qualitative and quantitative methods used to develop the BIS. The concept was defined from listening to embodied writings by colleagues and students of transpersonal psychology, and textural analysis of body theorists and practitioners. Items were generated by authors own personal experience. Three focus groups generated items and these were also used to form preliminary BIS. Participants were then used to take part in Likert scale format of 200 items.</p>	<p>BIS composed of 3 sub-scales, Energy Body Awareness, Comfort Body Awareness, Inner Body Awareness. Report concludes first stage of BIS development.</p>	<p>Further research needed to validate Scale. Also whether it could be used/adapted to be used with children.</p>

<p>Beaudoin (1999) Integrating Somatic Learning into Everyday Life.</p>	<p>Reporting on what areas of daily life followers of somatic education use their learning, and what degree of integration they achieve. Using the Experiential Taxonomy of Education (Steinaker & Bell, 1979) and the taxonomy of the Affective Domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964). The researcher interviewed the participants 6 times over 6 months. Each participant had an average of 6 years experience in a body-centred approach.</p>	<p>Participants used their somatic learning techniques when they were experiencing discomfort, in recreational activities, in self-care activities, at the workplace, at home or whilst observing others moving. A majority used somatic techniques when experiencing emotional discomfort (fear, anger or distress). Elements that were helpful to them included moving, modifying body posture, coming back to the body's sensations, being attentive, allowing themselves to go with what was happening and being present. Participants reported beneficial outcomes; feeling happy, having a new attitude, enjoying life's pleasures,</p>	<p>All participants had prior experience of somatic techniques, and were shown to have integrated them into their lives beyond the initial learning experience. They had transformed the original learning into their own ways of doing things.</p>
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		<p>looking at difficulties differently, feeling changes, reducing stress, an overall feeling of wellness. The Taxonomy analysis revealed the majority of participants reaching the second and third levels of integration.</p>	
<p>Cullen-Powell & Barlow (1995) The Self-Discovery Programme for children with special educational needs in mainstream primary and secondary schools.</p>	<p>Exploratory study using a qualitative approach. The SDP was delivered to children referred to the programme by contact teachers. 34 pupils attended in groups of 6-8 for 16 sessions over 3 terms. Sessions covered; sensory awareness, touch therapy and relaxation. Behavioural profiles of the children were completed at baseline, observations of the first and last sessions</p>	<p>Primary Age- All children attended had low academic abilities, poor social skills and were receiving additional support at school. The observations showed children initially unsure and apprehensive and becoming confident and more interactive. Teachers noticed improvements in communication skills, self-esteem and social confidence. Teachers also reported transference of skills</p>	<p>This study does not look at the children's experience of the SDP. Only 2 sessions per group were observed. Practitioner/tutor notes were not part of the analysis. Teachers' reports and reviews were used to assess the effect of the programme.</p>

	<p>were recorded by an independent researcher and reviews with teachers and tutor were completed at the end of the SDP.</p> <p>Demographic information was also collected at baseline. A middle order approach was used to analyse field notes from observations and the reviews. A summary of behaviour profiles provided background information.</p>	<p>from the SDP.</p> <p>Secondary Age– The children were all reported to have numeracy and literacy difficulties, low academic ability and severe social and home difficulties. The children all had reported low self-esteem.</p> <p>Observations showed children initially demonstrated self-stimulatory behaviours and difficulties with self-control. At the end of the program all of the children’s attendance at school had increased. The children had begun to participate more and offer information and ask questions.</p> <p>Teachers reported that the children seemed happier with themselves and showed</p>	
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		<p>improvement in communication skills and relaxed body language. Some children had begun to transfer the skills learnt into the wider school environment. The study as a whole showed SDP may be helpful by providing children with SEN practical relaxation skills and a greater awareness about themselves.</p>	
<p>Fitzerald (2005) Still feeling like a spare piece of luggage? Embodied experiences of (dis)ability in physical education and school sport.</p>	<p>Data generated as part of a larger project involving 35 schools. This study reports on data from a school where a set of 3 focus discussion groups were held. All of the participants were boys. Discussions were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were coded into categories and themes. This</p>	<p>The key themes identified included; the status and values attributed to different activities, embodying difference through the habitus, legitimate participation and attaining capital, and the PE teacher as the nurturer of ability? Students reported that they perceived the sports in which they</p>	<p>The importance of a teacher having a positive regard for all students, with a disability or not. How an individual's experience of PE and/or sport at school is affected by the support and encouragement they receive.</p>

	<p>paper looks at the boys' experiences and understandings of PE and sport.</p>	<p>could take part had a lower status in the school. They spoke of the differences between themselves and 'normal' students where they might do gym or fitness, while others played rugby. This was at times considered an advantage– particularly in cold weather. They did not always feel accepted in team games and experienced peer-led exclusion. They appreciated how one PE teacher in particular was positive in his comments and approach, and this affected their feelings about PE and sport.</p>	
<p>Green (1999)Somatic Authority and the Myth of the Ideal Body in Dance</p>	<p>A qualitative data collection process, a post positivist paradigmatic framework, and a naturalistic research approach were used.</p>	<p>Participants did reflect previous experiences in dance had an emphasis on the ideal body. Reported dualistic perception of body as</p>	<p>The course was not looking at the efficacy of somatic movement practices. Analysis methods</p>

Education.	Five dance students chose to enrol on a course titled 'the gendered body in dance education'. Data collection occurred throughout. Discussions were taped and transcribed. Individual interviews were held at the end of the course. Observations and videotapes were also used, and participants kept a journal. Data analysis was through informal analysis in the field and more formal cut up and put into folders approaches.	separate from mind, and viewed objectively.	useful for my study? Analysis in the field and cut up and put into folders?
Junker, Oberwittler, Jackson & Berger (2004) Utilization and Perceived Effectiveness of Complementary and	Questionnaire survey completed by 180 members of the German Dystonia Society asking about experiences and perceived effects of various complementary therapies	73% of patients reported experience with complementary therapies of some kind, with no significance gender bias. Many (86%) had experience with more than one	This study collected perceptions of 33 different therapies, and did not seek to differentiate between them on the basis of practitioner

<p>Alternative Medicine in Patients with Dystonia.</p>	<p>including botulinum toxin A injections, physiotherapy and psychotherapy.</p>	<p>type of therapy. The most effective were perceived to be breathing therapies, Feldenkrais and relaxation techniques. Perceptions were also gathered on cost effectiveness.</p>	<p>training, evidence or intention.</p>
<p>Khalsa (2004) Treatment of Chronic Insomnia with Yoga: A Preliminary Study with Sleep-Wake Diaries.</p>	<p>Participants with chronic insomnia kept a sleep-wake diary and participated in an initial 1 hour training session in kundalini yoga, and a daily home practice for eight weeks. They were supported with a brief follow-up after the first week, and then with telephone calls every two weeks or so. Total wake time was shown to decrease, total sleep time, efficiency and quality were shown to increase.</p>	<p>Although the exercises chosen were said to be simple, the lack of time and encouragement from an instructor in person may have contributed to the high drop-out rate of participants (18 of 38 initial participants).</p>	<p>Only one form of yoga was investigated as part of this controlled trial.</p>

<p>Linden (1994) Somatic Literacy: Bringing Somatic Education into Physical Education.</p>	<p>Illustration of elements of somatic literacy by a case study. Elements include: body awareness training; relaxation and stress management; efficiency of posture and movement; emotional awareness; social awareness; environmental awareness.</p>	<p>The case study was chosen to illustrate the elements discussed. It appeared to be based on practitioner notes.</p>	<p>Not a critical analysis of a method.</p>
<p>Prichard (2008) Relations among exercise type, self-objectification, and body image in the fitness centre environment: The role of reasons for exercise.</p>	<p>571 female fitness class participants were recruited from 6 fitness centres in Adelaide, S. Australia. They completed a questionnaire incorporating pre-existing standardised measures of background information, exercise participation, reasons for exercise, self-objectification, body-esteem and disordered eating symptomology. Results were shown using</p>	<p>The sample had on average a normal BMI, although many wished to be lighter. Exercise in a fitness centre was found to be positively correlated with self-objectification when compared to time spent exercising outside the fitness centre. Appearance based reasons for exercise were positively correlated with cardio-based exercise and negatively with yoga-based</p>	<p>I have reported here the findings that relate to yoga primarily, although yoga was not the focus of the study.</p>

	descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.	exercise. Yoga was also associated positively with health based reasons for exercise when used as mediator with appearance. Appearance based reasons for exercise fully mediated the relationships between individual cardio workouts and body image and disordered eating.	
Raingruber & Robinson (2007) The effectiveness of Tai-Chi, Yoga, Meditation, and Reiki healing sessions in promoting healths and enhancing problem solving abilities of registered nurses.	Nurses at a US hospital were offered one session/week of tai-chi, yoga, guided meditation or reiki. They were asked to attend only one class. They were given a self-care journal and asked to reflect weekly on several questions. A Heideggerian phenomenological approach was used to identify the meaning and significance of	Themes identified included: noticing sensations of warmth, pulsation and calm; becoming aware of an enhanced problem solving ability; noticing an increased ability to focus on patient needs. Quotes from the journals were used to illustrate the themes. The experiences of the nurses indicated a larger study of self-care approaches might	It was not attempted in the analysis to differentiate between the complementary classes offered, although this was stated as an aim.

	<p>their lived experience. Weekly attendance was consistent, and the journals were amalgamated in the analysis. Themes were identified by the authors through reading and re-reading.</p>	<p>show an impact on patient care and nurse retention rates.</p>	
<p>Ritter (1996) Effects of Dance/Movement therapy– A meta-analysis.</p>	<p>Studies evaluating use of DMT were reviewed. Studies that included control groups and included statistics were used for the meta-analysis. Effect size calculations were performed on studies that looked at the effect on children, non-disordered subjects, adult psychiatric patients, mentally retarded/physically disabled people, other populations, head injury/neuropsychological patients and the elderly. From the studies</p>	<p>A modest effect size was found for studies involving children, although observational reports show improvement. Psychiatric patients showed a modest effect size. Body awareness showed a moderate effect size. Changes in anxiety were shown to be impressive, although this may be state versus trait anxiety levels. A small effect size was associated with a change in self-concept. A main limitation for this study</p>	<p>DMT defined as “use of movement as a process which furthers physical and emotional integration of an individual” (Sandel, 1975)</p>

	<p>the original sample group size, age range, diagnoses, references, scales used and variables studied, length of treatment and statistics and degrees of freedom were recorded. The effect size, measuring the strength of the statistical change was calculated. Variables including mood, balance, and movement were investigated. Effect sizes were then aggregated. Results were shown in tables.</p>	<p>was the lack of well-designed quantitative studies that used control groups.</p>	
<p>Wright (2000) Bodies, meaning and movement: a comparison of the language of a physical education lesson and a Feldenkrais</p>	<p>Discourse analysis of transcripts of a Y9 PE gymnastics lesson and a Feldenkrais class in a university creative arts course. Questions of how the embodied selves are constituted in the language used.</p>	<p>The PE lesson showed a predominance of action processes where the body or body parts were the grammatical object. There were many instructions and modal auxiliaries used such as, “you should”,</p>	<p>The contexts of the classes were very different in age and choice of student to be there. There was no mention of tutor’s intention for the class. I felt that the underlying</p>

movement class.		“have to”, “must”. The Feldenkrais movement class showed a similar lead by the teacher, but prompts and requests to “take notice”, “to visualise” were used. The teacher did not set up a particular standard of movement performance, and seemed to be more self-reflective.	philosophy of Feldenkrais was misrepresented or misunderstood by the author, and this may have impacted on the findings and analysis.
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APPENDIX 2 WESTERN SOMATIC MOVEMENT PRACTICES

A2.1 GYMNASTIK

A Western form of meditation was developed by Elsa Gindler (1885–1961). Many of her writings were destroyed by Nazi soldiers in the last few months of the war, however her students, including Lilly Ehrenfried, Carola Spreads and Charlotte Selver went on to disseminate her work across Europe and the U.S.. Gindler termed her work *Gymnastik*, and defined it as “not the learning of certain movements, but rather the achievement of concentration”(1986 - 87, p. 35). Her emphasis was that it was not the learning of exercises (whether movements or relaxation techniques), but the bringing of the full consciousness and intelligence to what is done that is essential. She said that “each of us must try to gain understanding...of our own constitution in order to learn how to take care of ourselves” (Gindler, 1995, p. 39) rather than be taught or corrected by somebody else.

One student of Gindler, Charlotte Selver, immigrated to the U.S. in 1938. For Selver, the meditative work was “no method, it’s always meeting new whatever reality brings, whatever at that moment is acute” (Schick, 1987). There was a therapeutic goal in both her and Gindler’s work, as it was aimed to enable a person to fully know their self and develop their whole personality through breath and movement. She spoke of the dangers of becoming so involved in the study of the self that the connection with the world, with reality, was lost. The students she taught to become practitioners worked to enable their clients to “wake up...learn to trust their own sensations” (Schick, 1987). Another student, Carola Spreads, applied Gindler’s work to the experience of breathing. She named her work Physical Re-education, although she recognised that “this type of work had to do with much more than the mere physiological” (Hanna, 1981). For her, breathing work was fundamental for both mental and

physical well-being. The body sense of breath was vital to this work, as she thought that “intellectual development, not the development of our body sense, is emphasised in our culture” (Spreads, 1986, p. 9). Although movement was thought to be one way of activating the body sense “all too often sports training is so mechanical that it does not develop any sensing of the body at all” (Spreads, 1986, p. 13). Spreads did not believe, like Leboyer (1974), that the way we breathe is set irreversibly at birth, but instead that through awareness and attention, it is possible at any stage of life or health to increase the quality of breath, “as if your breathing had waited for the chance to be freed!” (Spreads, 1986, p. 15).

A2.2 THE ROSEN METHOD

Another refugee to the U.S. was Marion Rosen, who developed the Rosen Method (Mayland, 1991). She was trained by Lucy and Gustav Heyer, who combined massage, breath work, relaxation and psychoanalysis. Lucy Heyer was a student of Elsa Gindler, and Dr. Gustav Heyer was a colleague and former student of Dr. Carl Jung. The mixed approach had the claimed effect of greatly reducing treatment times for patients undergoing psychoanalysis. Rosen moved to the U.S. after spending some time in the U.K., and worked as a physical therapist. The Rosen Method stems from physical therapy, and evolved through clinical practice. The method is summarised:

“The underlying concerns of the approach are transpersonal and transcending, based on our common experience as embodied beings. The method is based on the premise that a natural and optimal state of human physical and psychic strength exists. The Rosen Method aims at obtaining or regaining this optimal state where the full range of possibilities for expression, and authentic, spontaneous behaviour exist. As such,

Rosen Method is a pathway to self-awareness and self-acceptance.” (Mayland, 1991, p. 18)

The practitioner uses touch to facilitate a change in the body state of the client, paying attention to breath and bringing their awareness to areas of tension or holding. Although the approach does not intentionally probe the origins of any blocks to relaxation, “the client may become aware of the emotional content of the barrier and thereby gain access to a new way of behaving” (Mayland, 1991, p. chapter 2).

A2.3 MIDDENDORF

An approach combining breath work, psychology and movement, was developed by Ilse Middendorf. She believed that if “a person finds his way based on the experience of his breathing, he finds his own power and creativity” (Beringer, 1988 - 89). Her approach includes stretching, pressure points, vowel-space breathing, cave breathing and movements out of breathing, and is individualized to the needs of the client. Middendorf believed that “all the yoga ways of breathing come out of the male way...we are the opposite” (Beringer, 1988 - 89). The aim was to increase sensory awareness so that the breath and the movements of the breath were in the awareness at all times as she believed that the breath was the key to corporality—the embodied self—which needed to be experienced rather than understood (Middendorf, 1990).

A2.4 ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

A more structural approach to the body was taken by F. M. Alexander (1869–1955). The Alexander Technique is a one-to-one method, and one of his students for twenty years was

John Dewey, and “Pragmatism and Progressive Education bear the marks of his work” (Johnson, 1995, p. 83). The method involves learning to inhibit automatic reactions to simple every day movements and instead learn to move with grace and ease and to be more fully present, to remove habitual patterns and inhibitions. A student of his, and a Master teacher, Majory Barlow, spoke about the aims of the method “teaching people to know how to work on themselves” (Schirle, 1987, p. 24), and how for the practitioner “it is very important how you put your hands on...[and]...how you take them off” (Schirle, 1987, p. 24). The feelings of tension that we associate with everyday activities, such as standing, sitting, breathing or talking, can inhibit a sense of awareness of our body in that moment. A new way of holding may not ‘feel right’ initially. Old habits must first be unlearned, and this can be more challenging than addiction to nicotine as “the smoker can abstain from smoking without interrupting the necessary activities of his daily life” (Alexander, 1932, p. 86). Alexander Technique is very much about bringing new patterns of movement into every aspect of daily life.

A2.5 FELDENKRAIS

Another structural hands-on approach to the body is that developed by Moshe Feldenkrais. He pioneered group sessions of ‘Awareness through Movement’ and one-to-one ‘Functional Integration’. His sessions were innovative, creative and improvised. “he would do what was necessary in order to discover how to do a movement more efficiently...he would explore his body for hours at a time in order to discover the process and its connections” (Hanna, 1985 - 6, pp. 8 - 20). A student of his, Mia Segal, also trained in Judo, in Japan, and found that “their philosophy is the same as Moshe’s; that is, in the way both consider the whole body as a unit” (Hanna, 1985 - 6, p. 18). It was the ‘how’ of the approach, not the ‘what’ that was important.

Although the sessions may appear to the outside to look like physical therapy, or dance, it is the inner awareness and experience that is the work. “to understand how my techniques work...I have deliberately avoided answering the whys” (Feldenkrais, 1981, p. 1). He worked with people who came to him in pain, either physical or mental, although he did not claim that his touch was therapeutic. Feldenkrais felt that it was the learning of his clients that contributed to their healing “the accent is on the learning process rather than the teaching technique” (Feldenkrais, 1981, p. 10). He saw that after sessions they breathed easier, their eyes were brighter and they felt lighter and taller. Feldenkrais denied that he had ‘healing hands’, but that he danced with them “I bring about a state in which they learn to do something without my teaching them, any more than the woman taught the dancer” (Feldenkrais, 1981, p. 11).

A2.6 ROLFING

Rolfing is a form of deep tissue manipulation that again uses touch to bring about healing effects. It is a form of somatic bodywork. Ida Rolf (1896–1979) taught Rolfing in the U.S., Canada and England from the 1950s. Rolf developed her work from what she knew about yoga, osteopathy and homeopathy (Feitis, 1978). Rolfing differs from osteopathy, in that soft tissues are manipulated to realign the bones of the body. The body is seen as a whole, so that if one aspect is out of balance, it will affect all the rest. Rolf’s practice of yoga over many years lead her to believe “that work with the body will improve not only the physical but the emotional and spiritual life of the individual as well” (Feitis, 1978, p. 6), and that “a balanced body will give rise to a better human being” (ibid.). After finding the asanas of yoga to not lengthen and separate the joints as she wished, Rolf learnt exercises from a Miss Brown and Amy Cochran, two osteopaths. Cochran claimed to have been taught exercises by a psychic

intervention from Dr Rush (the medic who signed the U.S. declaration of Independence). The combination of exercises and manipulative techniques then formed the basis of her work, which crystallised into an exact method when she began teaching others how to practice her technique. Rolf did not appreciate others taking elements of her method and incorporating it into their own work, and in order to put a stop to others stealing her ideas, she developed a sequence of treatment that would be applied equally to all bodies, whatever they presented with. Her students were not taught educational, psychological or physical aspects of the body, but were expected to find anatomy and physiology tuition and strategies to deal with emotional issues on their own. Rolf's approach to the body was holistic in that she sought to balance the body, to find a structural alignment and effect change that would affect the whole person (ibid.).

A2.7 ASTON PATTERNING

A lighter manipulative approach was favoured by Judith Aston. As well as manipulating soft tissues gently, in her work she recommends the redesign of the daily environment to support balance and promote flexibility. Aston was fascinated by movement as a child, and trained in dance. She did not pursue Laban movement notation or dance therapy at university, as would have been the conventional progression from a dance training, but went on to work as a movement and dance teacher in a community college. Her view of teaching became “if you begin where people are already successful, you can help them transition into the new material, step by step” (Aston, 1995, p. 209). Aston suffered severe spinal injuries in two car accidents in the 60s, and having been told by her physical therapist that she would never dance again, she went to Ida Rolf. Although the sessions were painful, the effects were positive, and Aston was asked to develop a comprehensive system to teach Rolfers how to see a body in

movement and in stillness so that they could judge which structural changes would be most beneficial. Aston also trained in Rolfing, then adapted it to become less painful, and softer. This new form became known as Aston-Patterning[®]. This registering of approaches and names as they developed is endemic within the somatic movement field, as practitioners seek to find secure business models for their work, and protect its integrity. Aston's work was endorsed by Feldenkrais as "we shared the understanding that people usually need to be in a more everyday consciousness to learn to use body/mind changes and improvements in their everyday life" (Aston, 1995, p. 212). Aston's approach recognises an intrinsic asymmetry in every body, and rather than seeking to work towards a perpendicularity with respect to gravity and symmetry, she encourages a "negotiation of the body's natural asymmetries through movement, and helps to problem-solve each unique structure according to its own needs, limitations and abilities" (Aston, 1995, p. 213). Although Aston's work is not primarily aimed at children, she states "if we had been taught some of these ideas about our body's optimal movement possibilities when we were children, we wouldn't encounter so many of these problems as adults" (Aston, 1995, p. 216). In addition to movement and manipulative bodywork, Aston designed, patented, and now sells objects for people to use in their everyday lives, including products for the car, home and office.

A2.8 DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY

Dance Movement Therapy originated from the work of Rudolf Von Laban. His exploration of the emotional and psychological dimensions of movement patterns was brought to the U.S. by Irmgard Bartenieff (1900–1981). She trained with Laban in Berlin, in the first few years of his school. Laban was a contemporary of Gindler, Alexander, Dalcroze and Freud among others. His work resulted from the study of martial arts, and was applied to dancers. Laban

developed Labanotation, a way in which to record the movements of dancers and to choreograph. His trainings emphasised “exploring your own capacities in the movement” (Rubinfeld, 1977 , p. 11), and he later developed dance within the English Public school system. Bartenieff trained in physical therapy and worked with children rehabilitating from polio. She introduced dance and dance rhythm to bed-ridden children, and liaised with their psychiatrists and art therapists to work “on the mental problems as well as the physical” (Rubinfeld, 1977 , p. 11). She went on to work with patients suffering from mental illness as a dance movement therapist and use how movement influences the state of mind “I sometimes tell people...to put their arms towards the ceiling and say “I’m depressed”...it’s a fun way of demonstrating how movement affects feeling, and feelings affect movement” (Rubinfeld, 1977 , p. 12).

A2.9 EUTONY

Eutony, a modern school of somatic work, was founded by Gerda Alexander (1908–1994). Eutony is a system of training designed to teach improved control over movements and posture in everyday life and in order to treat neuro-muscular disorders. It has also been incorporated into the training of theatre, music and physical education. Alexander initially trained with the ideas of Jacques Dalcroze. Dalcroze is a music education for children, whereby they experience the music with their whole body. Having progressed through the system, she later taught it in Denmark. From Dalcroze, Alexander began to develop her own system of movement, that was less imitative and incorporated “living movement which freed the personality” (Bersin, 1983 - 4, p. 5). Eutony does not give models of movement, but instead allows every person to develop their own expression. The balance of tension and muscle tone is fundamental to Eutony (which comes from the Greek *Eu-* harmonious, and the

Latin *tonus*- tension). Alexander believed that tone changes as a result of effort and emotional state. An artist needs to be flexible in their tone so that they can create and express their message. For the audience “what you do not experience in your whole body will remain merely intellectual information without life or spiritual reality” (Bersin, 1983 - 4, p. 5). It is the tone, or tonus of the body that regulates how an individual relates to the world around them, “a normal, flexible tonus enables a person to adapt to all life situations and to have a whole range of feelings and not to be fixed in one state” (Alexander, 1985, p. 21). By working with someone to regulate their tonus, Alexander saw differences in their physical, emotional and spiritual state. She began to use the work in therapy, looking always to bring “the person into greater awareness and contact with himself...awareness of mind, sensation of the outer form of the body, in contact with the surroundings, awareness of breathing, circulation, tissues, inner space with organs and bone” (Bersin, 1983 - 4, p. 8). Alexander’s work became associated with free schools such as Summerhill (Vaughan, 2006), as well as physical rehabilitation and psychological trauma. However Eutony was a system designed to be part of everyday life, not practised apart from it.

The summary of somatic approaches gives an idea of the variety, and the connections between methods. From working with the breath, to the structure of the body; giving sessions that are improvised and never repeated to a series of set manipulations; using movement for music and dance education or therapy. As has been seen, the fragmentation of the field, and hence the difficulty it has in some fields of gaining recognition, has in part come about as practitioners have sought to preserve the integrity of their work by registering or patenting their approach. With many of these forms, although practitioners have undergone similar trainings, they have individual approaches to each client or group they work with. In an effort

to bring together practitioners and schools working to the same aim, organisations such as the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association have been formed (ISMETA). In 2011, ISMETA had twenty-two member organisations, including Alexander Technique International, Laban Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies and the Rolf Institute. My own training organisation, the Institute of Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy (IBMT) directed by Linda Hartley, along with the School for Body-Mind-Centering® (BMC), the school through which she trained, are represented. ISMETA offers accreditation for its practitioner members, so that a cohesive and united front for this field may be portrayed to the world. My training in IBMT incorporated principles of BMC, and integrated Hartley's training in Dance Movement Therapy, transpersonal psychotherapy and the movement form Authentic Movement.

APPENDIX 3 LESSON PLAN FROM PHASE 1

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
<p>Introduction to who I am, and what the project is. Who they are. Clapping hands names in a circle. Sit down stand up, stand on one leg, clap hands, jumping (a bit like simon says) standing quiet for one minute- what is it like? Circle discussion sitting for one minute (what is it like?) lying for one minute roll around, find a pair talk about which you liked/didn't like which was easiest/hardest, join up pairs, then come back to a circle. Make a shape game.</p>	<p>Introduce week's class– finding shapes to be still. What do they think will be easiest? Will the easiest be what they enjoy? What would make it easier? Harder? (20 mins) Sit for one minute. Clapping, standing, stretching, jumping for about 10-15 minutes stand for 1 minute. Talk to a partner about how they felt standing/sitting, then choose to either stand or sit back to back for one minute. Back to circle, what was it like with a partner? Favourite shapes– choice of drawing or showing, in a</p>	<p>Introduce week's class– finding shapes to be still. Start off by asking class to be still for one minute, notice what they think then take 2 minutes to write/draw what they thought/felt. Use ideas of images, feeling emotions, what you sense from your body. Explain about the project, introduce a little about the philosophy of body/mind and phenomenology- children's experience of embodiment important work. Ask class what they think would make it easier to be still? What makes it harder? Can you ever be entirely still? (you still breathe, your organs function...) What is still? Take lead from them. Try exercise-based around sunsalute/stretches/jumps etc.</p>

	circle.	Try standing still. Try in pairs sitting, standing. Ask them to take 2 more minutes same piece of paper and draw/write any notes additions... Choice of lying still or favourite shapes game
Notes– for the group with children I know already, allow time to ask about their summer, how they are. Possibility of missing out name/clapping if too shy or whole class calling out everyone’s name.	Notes– allow the groups discussions to let everyone talk. Direct a little more with the younger group. Clap names/throw a ball if new children in the class. Extend by talking about breathing– did you notice yourself breathe? With your partner did you breathe at the same time? What was it like to be so still?	Notes– play the ball catching game if new children. Ask about what they think philosophy is (they have philosophy sessions with the head...) Extend by talking about breathing– did you notice yourself breathe? With your partner did you breathe at the same time?
Resources– mats, digital camera.	Resources– mats, balls, paper, pencils/colours, digital camera.	Resources– mats, ball, paper, colours, digital camera.

APPENDIX 4 DETAIL PLAN FOR LESSON FROM PHASE 1

Week 2– Balances– **How can you be still and balance? What happens to your mind and body when you balance? How would you like to be able to balance? Can you imagine that? How does it feel inside?**

Introduce balancing– how would you like to be able to balance? What does it mean to be balanced? What do you need to balance? (concentration muscles eyes thinking stillness...)

Curl up (mouse pose 1 min)

Talk– make a mind map of answers as a class/individual

Let's see how we can balance...

On bottoms, curl up, boat, upanista konasana

On two feet, squatting, on toes, clasping hands, head down twisting

On two feet, eagle, twisting

Utkatasana, wideleg standing

Two feet one hand, one hand down twist, down dog variation

One leg tree, dancer, crow

Two hands two feet, plank, front plank

Two hands one foot dog, one foot plank side plank leg up

Two hands– crow lolasana

Mouse again 1 min

Show and tell balances– in pairs?

Class 2- keep breathing whilst balancing– eyes open eyes closed what does it mean to be balanced? Balance in pairs– pic of each pair

Class 3– is it easier or harder to be still and balance? Is your mind quieter or louder? Is this a different way of being still? Breathing? Draw how you would like to be balanced own mind map (particularly Group 2) balance in pairs ?

Class 1– more simon says style– mats in rows– images of pupils balancing class mind map

- Group 1– clapping in positions again– clap clap name clap clap pose clap clap pose balance on 1 point balance on 2 points balance with a partner in a circle balancing on one leg, sit stand
- Group 2– clapping names clap up down sit one leg two legs pictures of balances.

APPENDIX 5 LESSON PLAN FROM PHASE 2

Moving about (developmental movement patterns + animals)

0:00 Come in sit on mats– start in mouse pose

“how we move about”

0:02 After 1 minute stretch forward onto belly

0:04 move just your head, very slowly from side to side, look about and around you

Move your arms, and legs, keep your belly on the floor, then lift that off too

0:06 let your self move like a snake, twist, roll wiggle

Cobra, hands down, arch back look over your shoulders– free hear and neck

Grow your legs, let them come up and stretch like a gecko or a lizard

Can you move forward like a lizard?

0:10 roll onto your back and stretch as much as you can, then curl right in and twist from side to side to side to side

Rock up to sit and balance on your bottom

Stretch your arms up and legs out then plank pose and move forward legs and arms and bottom all working

Easier? Harder? Same? Different?

0:12 kneel up

And squat, then dog, then moving, crawling like a bear or a baby or a cartoon animal or a frog or a rabbit

0:18 take 3 minutes and draw how you move and why

0:23 1 – balance, 2 – move on 2 parts, 3 – on 3 parts 4 – on 4 parts, 5 sit game, also everyone watch _____ so they can show how they like to move

0:30 1 min mouse

APPENDIX 6 PLANS AND PRE-SESSION REFLECTION FROM PHASE 3

“This is the first time I am back working at the school for a long time. I am to be with this class (Y5+6, age 9 - 11) on Friday afternoons for most weeks for at least this term. Friday afternoons their Teaching Assistant is not in school, so my presence as a qualified teacher and known person to the children is helpful. Also because of the current building work and upheaval the school are not able to use the village hall for indoor PE. The school have bought in outdoor games/PE for every class, but they used to also do sessions with the children in the week. These sessions help to meet the curriculum demands for dance and PE.

My ideas for these sessions are to focus on the reflecting, self-awareness and embodied sensations of movement. These wider aims can fit into citizenship, Personal Social Health Education and Every Child Matters criteria. I would like the sessions to be partly child directed in that over time they can be shaped to the desires of the children in that we could use cameras, artwork, words and movement to create displays, tell stories and explore what it means to move and reflect and think for each of us.

My plan for the first afternoon is to focus on stretching. With questions including:

- What does it mean?
- What does it feel like?
- What is the difference between a good stretch and a bad stretch?
- Thinking about the sensations we get from our bodies and what they tell us, and how they make us feel.

- How else can we feel stretched?
- What helps when you feel stretched too far?
- What happens if we stretch something too far?
- How can we use the sensations from our bodies to process what we feel?
- How can you tell if someone else is stretched?

I want to include simple warm-up *sukhasana* twists, side ends and forward bends, sphinx pose, wrist and toe stretches, ½ dog and sun salute preparation and sun salutes.

I would like to include sun salutes most weeks as a good sequence to practice and build up. I also plan to allow time to write, to draw and to rest.” (Reflective Journal phase 3)

Plan:

- 1 min quiet
- Warm up– on floor wind releasing pose, leg stretches, supine twist, hip stretches, rock and roll (Schiffmann, 1996, p. 259)
- *Sukhasana* (cross legged) twist and forward and side and back (Farhi, 2000, p. 161)
- *Trikonasana* and reverse *trikonasana* (triangle and reverse triangle pose) (Farhi, 2000, p. 98 & 108)
- *Prasarita padotthanasana* (wide legged standing pose) (Schiffmann, 1996, p. 150)
- *Parsvotthanasana* including back bend (Schiffmann, 1996, p. 144)

- *Vibrabhadrasana* I, and *Vibrabhadrasana* III with a partner (warrior 1 and 3 poses) (Iyengar, 1966, p. 69 & 73)
- Freeze game– think of a feeling/emotion show with body/face then partner has to guess
- Write– think which were easy to show/share which were harder + why
- Rest (Plan phase 3)

APPENDIX 7 DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS

Pattern	Brain Area and Associated Functions	Evolutionary Level of Pattern
1. Cellular Breathing.	Each Cell– Basic life processes; internal respiration and energy production, “being”.	Invertebrate: one celled organisms.
2. Navel Radiation.	“Abdominal brain” solar plexus– integration of limbs into the centre, digestion and basic metabolic processes.	Invertebrate: echinoderms e.g. starfish.
3. Mouthing.	Spinal cord and lower medulla– control of visceral functions, establishing of vertical axis, some primitive reflexes.	Invertebrate: tunicate e.g. sea squirt.
4. Pre-Spinal.	Spinal cord and upper medulla– as for 3., “doing”.	Invertebrate: lancelet amphioxus.
5. Spinal Push (Head).	Hindbrain: Lower Medulla- as for 3..	5.&6. Vertebrate: inchworm as movement example.
6. Spinal Push (Tail).	Hindbrain: Upper Medulla- as for 3..	

Pattern	Brain Area and Associated Functions	Evolutionary Level of Pattern
7. Spinal Reach and Pull (Head).	Midbrain: Lower Cerebral Peduncles.	7.&8. Vertebrate: Fish/snake.
8. Spinal Reach and Pull (Tail).	Midbrain: Upper Cerebral Peduncles.	
9. Homologous Push (Upper).	Midbrain: Inferior Colliculi- Relay centres for auditory and visual impulses.	9.&10. Vertebrate: Amphibian (frog).
10. Homologous Push (Lower).	Midbrain: Superior Colliculi- as for 9..	
11. Homologous Reach and Pull (Upper).	Ancient Forebrain: Hypothalamus- important for emotional and visceral processes, control of the Autonomic Nervous System and maintenance of homeostasis.	11.&12. Vertebrate: Land dwelling (rabbit).
12. Homologous Reach and Pull (Lower).	Ancient Forebrain: Thalamus- relay centre for sensory information, pleasure/pain reflexes, seat of perception.	
13. Homolateral Push	Hindbrain: Cerebellum/Pons-	13.&14. Vertebrate: Reptile

Pattern	Brain Area and Associated Functions	Evolutionary Level of Pattern
(Upper).	helps to establish vertical axis with Medulla and Midbrain. Controls balance, and automatic movement / control.	(lizard).
14. Homolateral Push (Lower).	Hindbrain: Cerebellum/Pons (Anterior portion)– as for 13..	
15. Contralateral Reach and Pull (Upper).	15.&16. Modern Forebrain– centre of many complex motor and perceptual functions, the cerebral cortex is the seat of conscious learning, intelligence, creative and intellectual thought, imagination, communication and language.	15.&16. Vertebrate: mammal.
16. Contralateral Reach and Pull (Lower).		

Adapted from (Hartley, 1989, pp. 96 - 97)

APPENDIX 8 DATA FROM SCIENCE WEEK

“We had just over an hour to think about a story that we could show just using ourselves...

We wrote and sketched our ideas.

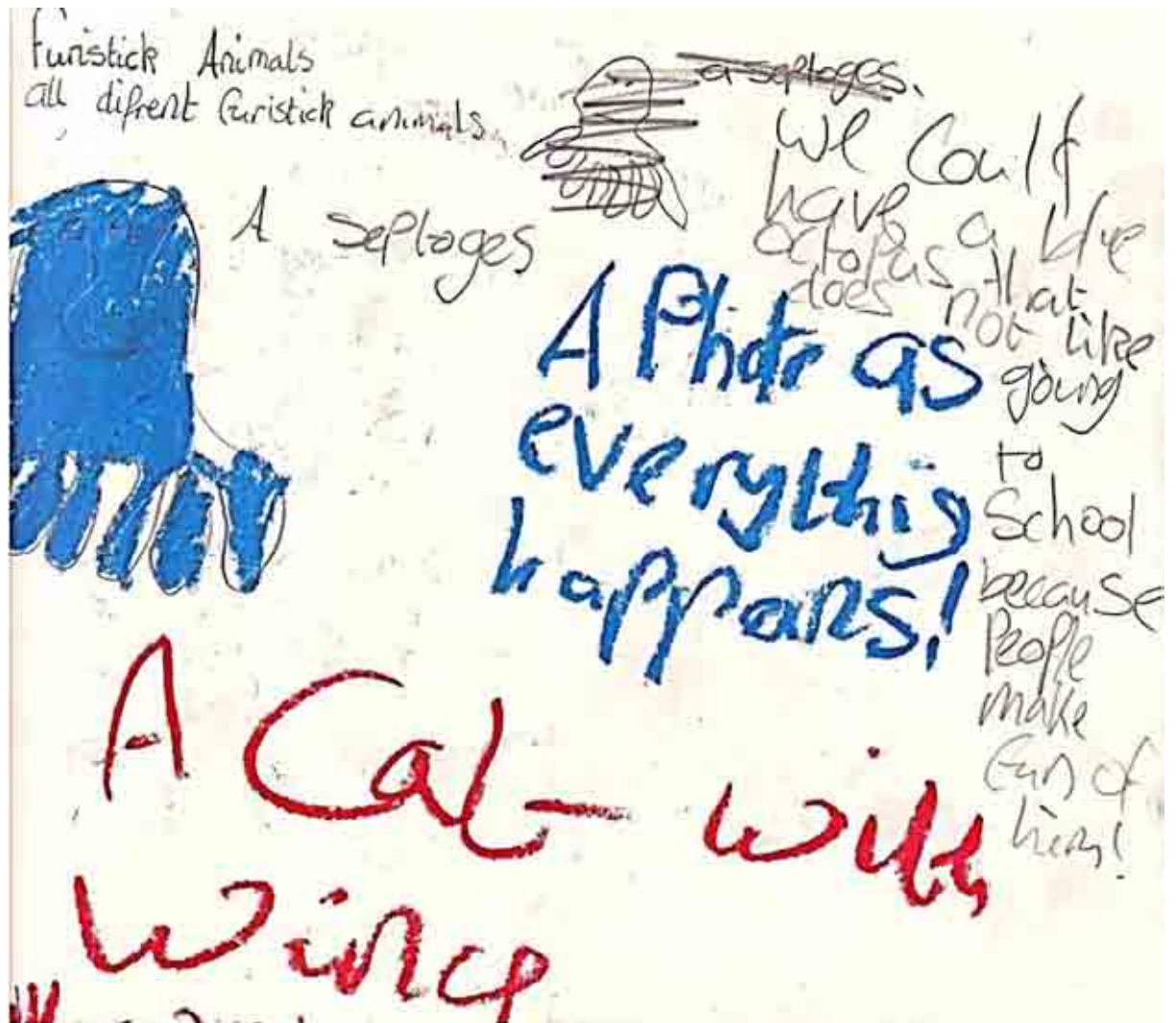


FIGURE 67 L.'S NOTES FROM SCIENCE WEEK

The body - heart, brain, soul, feelings
 ↳ LINKED TO ANIMALS
 ↳ body positions, posture, 'feelings'
 lion - proud / strong etc
 mouse - small / nervous

FIGURE 68 T.S THOUGHTS FOR SCIENCE WEEK

Lots of us drew pictures of animals



FIGURE 69 A.'S GIRAFFE



FIGURE 70 T.'S HERON

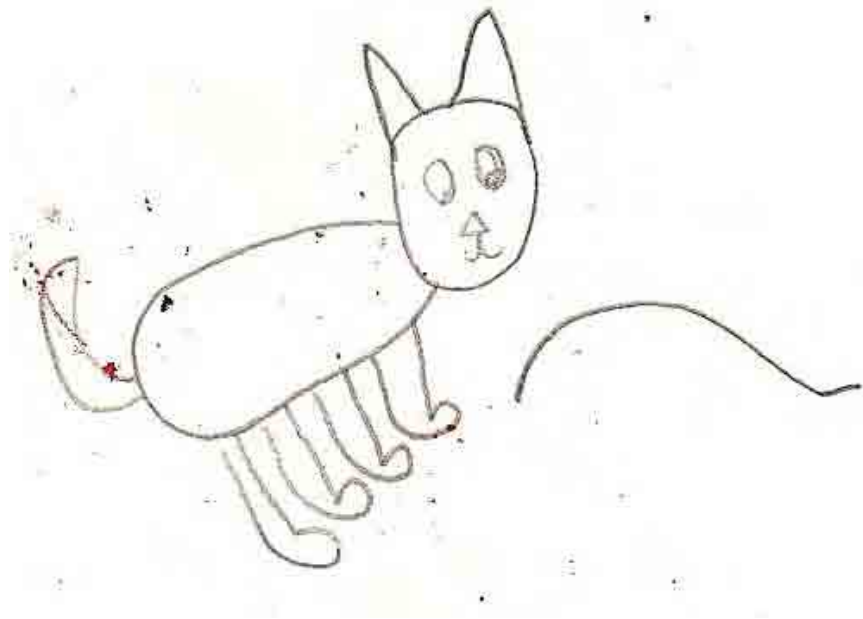


FIGURE 71 K.'S CAT

Some of us drew pictures of futuristic animals

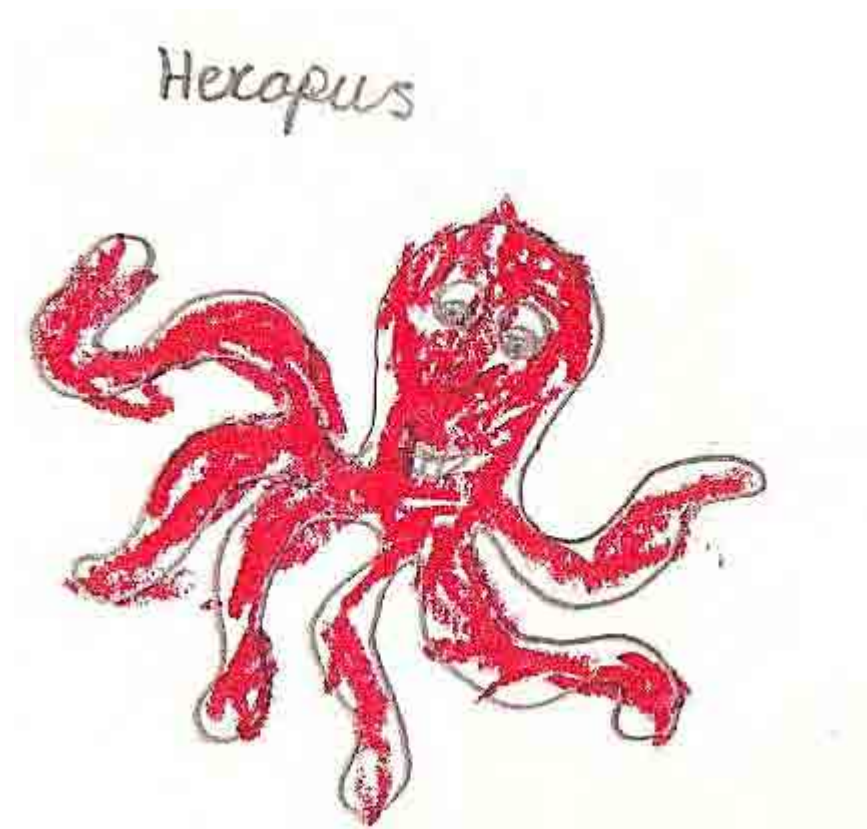


FIGURE 72 E.'S HEXOPUS



FIGURE 73 M.'S FUTURISTIC ANIMAL

Others drew pictures of themselves or thought about what they would like to do



FIGURE 74 R. SPINNING AROUND

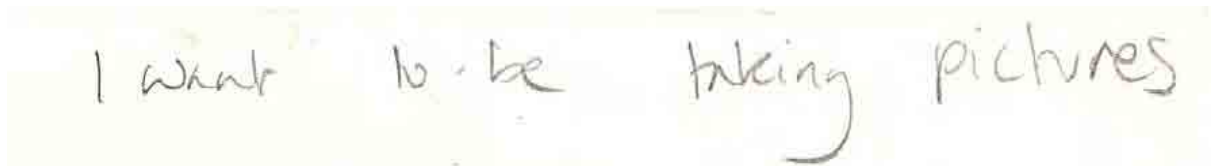


FIGURE 75 C.'S WANTING TO TAKE PICTURES



FIGURE 76 B.'S MOUSE POSE

We looked at some stories for inspiration

We combined all of our ideas to include chasing, running and our favourite animals.

Our Story

A Butterfly saw a flower

A Blue-Tit saw the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Mouse saw the Blue Tit seeing the flower

Another Mouse saw a Mouse seeing a Blue Tit seeing the butterfly seeing the flower

A Cat saw the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Leopard saw the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Gecko saw the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Heron saw the Gecko seeing the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Giraffe saw the Heron seeing the Gecko seeing the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

A Lion saw the Giraffe seeing the Heron seeing the Gecko seeing the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

An Explorer saw the Lion seeing the Giraffe seeing the Heron seeing the Gecko seeing the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower



FIGURE 77 THE EXPLORER SEEING THE LION SEEING THE GIRAFFE, SEEING THE HERON...

A Penguin saw the Explorer seeing the Lion seeing the Giraffe seeing the Heron
seeing the Gecko seeing the Leopard seeing the Cat seeing the mice and the Blue Tit
seeing the Butterfly seeing the flower

The Penguin didn't know what the funny creature was and decided to frighten it

The Explorer was frightened and saw the Penguin and ran away. The Giraffe saw the
Explorer being frightened and ran away.

The Butterfly saw the Blue Tit and ran away.

The Mice and the Blue Tit saw the Cat and ran away

The Cat saw the Leopard which saw the Gecko and the Heron and they all ran away

Then there was pandemonium!"



FIGURE 78 THEN THERE WAS PANDEMONIUM!

APPENDIX 9 MY HEART LEAPS UP (WORDSWORTH)

‘My Heart Leaps Up’ by William Wordsworth.

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky;

So was it when my life began;

So it is now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety. (Albery, 1997, p. 95)

APPENDIX 10 NOTES FROM YEAR 2 PHYSICAL EDUCATION

SESSION

“The class are still working on the theme of journeys overall but in the last two weeks have also been looking at instructions– first, then, next and wrote instructions for an elephant dance which they all showed to me. My idea had been to start sequencing movements used to journey– over, under, through imaginary obstacles in pairs and this fitted very well.

Working with the topic of ‘pictures’ that is art, and the overall term’s topic of ‘festivals’. Using the word “picture” as a verbal cue for the children to freeze and strike a pose.

We started with the children moving how a firework moves when it is bought from a shop on its journey home (i.e. no exploding!)” (Notes from PE sessions).

APPENDIX 11 FOGEL'S PRINCIPLES OF THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT

Principle	Definition
<p>1. Resources. Recovering, finding and maintaining resources</p>	<p>Resources are a constant and reliable presence in the body, mental imagery, or surroundings that feels safe, stable, and supportive. People need resources as they re-experience the feelings of threat, anger, or pain that led to the suppression of embodied self-awareness</p>
<p>2. Slowing down. Getting off the fast track of thinking and doing in order to learn how to stay longer in the subjective emotional present.</p>	<p>Encourage shifting from thinking to feeling by starting with what the person can already feel in their bodies and develop a sense of competence to experience these, to expand their tolerance for more embodied self-awareness, and to come back to resources for safety when needed.</p>
<p>3. Coregulation. Therapist as coregulating psychological regulator to enhance a sense of safety in the relationship and in one's own body.</p>	<p>Monitoring autonomic arousal and relaxation and helping the person to maintain homeostasis by shifting intensity, speeding up or slowing down, helping the person to come back to resources when needed; pointing out when the person leaves or comes back to the subjective emotional present.</p>
<p>4. Verbalisation. Verbalising</p>	<p>Helping the person find words to describe</p>

Principle	Definition
<p>interoceptive body sensations and emotions while remaining in the subjective emotional present.</p>	<p>their experience, encouraging communication about experience without losing contact with embodied self-awareness.</p>
<p>5. Links and boundaries. Clarifying location and connections in the body schema within the self and between self and others.</p>	<p>Locating sources of sensation in the body, opening defensive or immobilised postures, finding and feeling “lost” body areas (feet and legs, pelvis, the back) coordination of movements, finding links and boundaries between self and others, feeling, moving.</p>
<p>6. Self-regulation. Taking the initiative on one’s own self-restoration.</p>	<p>Becoming one’s own resource by being proactive in finding needed resources, asking for and arranging for guidance, healing, and soothing from things and people (warm baths, massages, soft clothing etc.).</p>
<p>7. Reengagement, Engagement with active embodied self-awareness.</p>	<p>Ability to remain in the subjective emotional present of embodied self-awareness while experiencing the world with empowerment, triumph, and assertiveness. Using awareness to make choices about well-being such as to leave unwanted situations, to say “yes” and “no”, to slow down, or to rest. Growing empathy for others and ability to be in touch with others while staying in one’s own</p>

Principle	Definition
	subjective emotional present.
<p>8. Letting go. Allowing oneself to engage in forms of restoration, engagement and normal absorption in the subjective emotional present.</p>	<p>Only after the previous steps have been achieved can one “let go” without losing embodied self-awareness. Letting go includes being able to “step off the treadmill” of life to take care of yourself, the acceptance of your limits, a sense of compassion for others, and the ability to let yourself get lost in pleasurable creativity and self-discovery</p>

TABLE OF PRINCIPLES OF THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT OF LOST EMBODIED SELF-AWARENESS (FOGEL, 2009, PP 23 - 24)

APPENDIX 12 CASE STUDY: REFLECTIVE PRACTICE WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION

Whilst on placement in schools as part of my PGCE I chose to explore the idea of reflective practice and embodiment from the perspective of educators. The voices of the staff I spoke to seemed to be in accordance with each other a lot of the time and focus on the issue identified by Hatton Smith (1995) in that in order to develop reflection, the ideology of teacher education needs to be different from that traditionally employed. The traditional approach emphasises competencies, whereas a change of emphasis that establishes and supports conditions for different kinds of reflection would allow a critically reflective approach. This model of reflection needs to consciously take in the wider values, beliefs and frame in considering practical problems. Within the context of teacher training this means including the tension between reflecting to improve practice and the need to show reflective practice to pass an assessed course. This has bigger import when it comes to the idea of educating children and young people to reflect effectively.

I was interested in how other staff perceived the questions of ‘what is effective reflecting? How do we go about being an effective reflector? What is it that we reflect on? How do we perceive ourselves as reflectors?’ I wanted to know the aspects of what it is that a reflective teacher then does to change their practice– when they become a reflexive practitioner, as I felt that this also had relevance to my research work with children. The first aspect I investigated was how teachers perceived embodiment and embodied reflection.

A12.1 MEASURING EMBODIMENT

The nature of embodiment as a state of being is challenging to quantify. There are no standardised tests to ascertain whether an individual is embodied. This is in part because embodiment is not only state of being but also a process. In order to address this gap

Anderson (2006) designed a scale to assess forms of body awareness that support overall wellness. She terms this the Body Intelligence Scale (BIS). Body Intelligence is not meant to be the same as body awareness or kinaesthetic intelligence but a measure of conscious awareness of an individuals' physical body and environment. The BIS is an online questionnaire of thirty-two statements relating to three sub-scales, Energy Body Awareness (E-BAS), Comfort Body Awareness (C-BAS), and Inner Body Awareness (I-BAS). Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to develop the BIS. Participants took part in developing a Likert scale format of 200 items. The report indicates the need for further research to validate scales, as if standardised it has potential as a measure that could be analysed quantitatively. It is a limited measure, due in part to its reliance on terminology that may be considered 'woolly' or 'hippified', as well as the risk that participants would answer aspirationally rather than reflecting their true embodied experiences. I felt it was not suitable for those with a good knowledge of somatic practices, nor was it suitable in its current form to be used with children or young people. I used the scale with a science teacher and an artist, and completed it myself to explore perceptions of issues relating to reflective practice and embodiment.

The science teacher (AR) volunteered to be involved, and as such may have displayed an atypical interest in the research topic. She was a young teacher at the beginning of her career, with a strong physical background in dance and swimming. It would be necessary to conduct a much larger scale research project to identify whether AR was a typical example of a science teacher. The conversation was open ended, in that we were talking about reflective practice, but the path of the conversation followed AR's comments and interests. I took her through Anderson's questionnaire. AR has dyslexic patterns, so this was achieved with me

asking the questions, and writing down the answers on a printout. If the meaning of a statement was unclear, then we discussed it before AR gave a response. The Likert scale asks for an intensity of feeling towards statements, and these were recorded as AR stated them. We returned to my notes from our conversation, and AR clarified, added to and explained any points that she wanted to. A second meeting allowed her an opportunity to discuss the results, the questionnaire or any other issues arising from the conversation.

The themes that I have chosen to include here are on effective reflecting and scores from the BIS– perceptions of embodiment from a science teacher’s perspective.

A12.2 EFFECTIVE REFLECTING

What is effective reflecting? How do we go about being an effective reflector? What is it that we reflect on? How do we perceive ourselves as reflectors? As discussed, there are no definitive answers. This theme arose due to AR’s questioning and defining what it is that makes a good teacher, which to her was part of what it means to be a reflective practitioner. Also here is the aspect of what it is that a reflective teacher then does to change their practice– when they become a reflexive practitioner.

“Nowadays I reflect by just thinking about it all– and I do things differently as a result...I relate teaching encounters outcomes to the specific groups of children and the group dynamics in different classes and that affects the choices I make about activities and approaches to topics...My own reflections are useful to me...I make my own reflections on an ad hoc basis– I make mental notes during a lesson or at other times and this becomes automatic...A flexible teacher and a reflective teacher are the same thing...A reflective teacher equals a good teacher but a good teacher does not automatically equal a reflective teacher. You have to be an effective reflective

teacher...It is important to be effective at reflecting...A reflective teacher makes changes due to the class, the individuals' history in that class and their own self and mood...Being reflective is also about being more aware of yourself, your ability, your feelings and your health.” (AR)

This part of the conversation was one that AR felt most need to clarify as we went through the collaborative process. The definition of a ‘good’ teacher and an ‘effective reflective’ teacher and how they can be the same and yet different was something that she needed to explain. The ways in which some teachers can, “do the same thing the same way each time and just change for the ability of the students” and yet be a ‘good’ teacher. AR definitely saw herself as a reflective teacher. She also saw herself as a good teacher. She identified colleagues within the school who would benefit, in her opinion, from learning to reflect more effectively. This included individuals who did not seem to be aware of how they were perceived by the students with regard to their voice, manner and mannerisms.

A12.3 SCORES FROM THE BIS

The effectiveness of a reflective practice depends on the data the practitioner has to reflect on. They need to be able to pick up on how, when and in what manner what they do impacts on the teaching environment and the learners within it. To be aware of how they feel and hold themselves within the situation. AR identified herself as sceptical about ‘energy stuff’ and things that were too ‘hippified’, yet was interested to find out more. My preconception was that she would score low in the BIS as scientists are not perceived to be in touch with their bodies, and this was based purely on knowing her profession. Before this interview I had not spent much time with AR, and did not know her well. AR also thought she would have a low score. As AR and I went through the questions, her responses were discussed, explored and

recorded. I perceived her to have a developed awareness of herself and her body. I realised that my preconceptions were not necessarily accurate. The statements were separated into the three subscales– E-BAS, C-BAS and I-BAS. The descriptions of the scales and their meanings are paraphrased from Anderson’s website (2007). For contrast, I include my own scores, and those of the artist. The information on other’s scores was unavailable to AR as I did not want her to perceive the BIS as a competitive activity, but rather a tool for self-development.

The E-BAS included the questions that AR perceived as most challenging to her view of the world. She questioned statements like, “I can sense the life of the plants and trees in my environment”. Her comments on this sort of question were that it seemed very American. This reaction is noted by Anderson who comments that “for some, Energy Body Awareness may seem unusual or like the sort of thing that people in California do” (Anderson, 2006, p. 360). AR’s score was 42%. This tallied with AR’s own perceptions, as she stated that she just didn’t believe in the environment having energy fields. My own score was 100%, and the artist scored 53%. AR scored the lowest and this may indicate a need to grow her self-awareness in this area. However she also demonstrated and talked about a strong intuitive sense that she used when teaching, and to reflect on her teaching. This was a point we discussed as it could be used not as a ‘failure’ but an area to be reflected on and developed. She talked of a sense of confidence within class that was not available to her when in a group of colleagues or professionals. She wished to progress her career and challenge herself in this way, perhaps by applying for a pastoral position of responsibility. We talked about how it is possible to embody and project feelings of confidence whilst internally feeling less secure.

AR's C-BAS score was 71%. This measured a level of comfort in and satisfaction with the body in everyday life. This scale included statements like, "I feel comfortable in the world most of the time". In conversation AR talked of how she used to do a lot of dancing and swimming when she was younger, and had noticed that whilst teaching she doesn't get as much time to do this. She does exercise by going to the gym, dance classes and walking to work, however she mentioned often how she has little time to focus on herself and is very tired by the demands of her job. AR's answers were quite divided on this scale— either strongly agreeing or disagreeing with statements. My own score on C-BAS was 92%, and the artist scored 78%. These higher scores indicate a greater sense of internal comfort and satisfaction which may be expected due to differences in age, and career path. I was both reflecting with AR and also sharing my own personal experiences as a woman. Although AR has more experience teaching science in a school setting that I do, I am ten years older than her. I have also had children, which changed my perceptions of myself as an individual and towards my embodied self.

AR's I-BAS score was 89%. This scale relates to the awareness of minor changes within the body and how these relate to immediate and changing circumstances. An example statement includes, "I notice when I have been in one position too long." AR was very happy to achieve a high score. She related her awareness of her inner body directly to her teaching subject and scientific background. She spoke of how her knowledge of anatomy and physiology meant that she is able to visualise the internal workings of her body in a way that is not accessible to those without this training. She gave the example of her mother being surprised by a bruise compared to her knowledge of the workings of the body's healing mechanism. My own score on this scale was 96%, and the artist scored 100%. This high score may indicate the high

level of self-awareness that a creative individual needs in order to produce art works that represent the world around them and the creative process.

From the data it can be seen this science teacher did use the information from her body to inform her reflections. However she did not initially perceive herself to be embodied, nor did she consciously choose to reflect in this way. Her unconscious awareness of herself informed the intuitive process that she developed in order to reflect on her teaching. This process was not developed by her training, but her practice. My own preconceived ideas were that a science teacher would be less embodied than someone who had spent years practising to develop their inner and outer body awareness: “the scientific mind is set apart from what is to be known” (Bordo, 1986, p. 451). This may be due to its extreme masculinization, or separation of mind and intellect from the body and nature. To an extent this was true. However, the scientific training in the inner workings of the body allowed this science teacher to develop an inner awareness and understanding of her body which she could use to make sense of her own perceptions. After using the BIS with AR, I decided that it would not be appropriate for my research sessions. The scale was aimed at adults, and I felt that many of the statements could alienate the children.

A12.4 PERCEPTIONS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

But what of the purpose of reflective practice? Views of this, as seen by education professionals, can be seen to focus very much on day-to-day practice. The importance of a clear definition of what it means to be reflective, and what reflection actually is also becomes clear when it is used within an assessed Initial Teacher Training programme (ITT). However, for any given individual, a reflective practice can mean something slightly different. Their perceptions are personal and subjective to them. My own ITT tried to address this by asking

the following question of trainees, “Reflecting on practice seems a good idea, but how will I know if I am reflecting on the right thing?” (iTeach , 2009). However, asking trainees to think for themselves only develops one aspect of reflection. It does not model reflective practice.

Teaching reflective practice is an issue for teacher educators. The pedagogy of reflective practice is discussed by Hatton and Smith (1995). They discuss the ideas of Dewey (1933) and identify four key issues:

“[1]whether reflection is limited to thought process about action or is inextricably bound up in action...[2]whether reflection is immediate and short term or ...extended and systematic...[3]whether reflection is by its very nature problem-centred or not...[and 4] how consciously the one reflecting takes account of wider...values and beliefs in framing...practical problems.” (Hatton & Smith, 1995)

The importance of available time is identified as essential to the development of effective reflection. The structure and ideology of ITT programmes is also discussed. The practice of assessing reflective writing or journals is considered by Bourner (2003), who believes that “if reflective learning is not assessed it is most likely to be neglected”. Yet enforced reflective practice was described by AR as “a ‘tick box’ activity”. If this is how a trainee approaches reflective tasks and questions then they are unlikely to develop and learn through a journal (Breen, 2000).

In order to see whether AR’s views of effective reflective practice and her experience of ITT were shared by other education professionals, I chose to investigate perceptions of a reflective

practice from three different perspectives within a different school. I interviewed a member of a Senior Management Team (FA), a newly qualified class teacher (LT), and a non-teaching member of staff (HI). FA acted as mentor for trainees, although was not actively taking that role at the time we spoke. She informed me that she speaks nationally about the importance of Emotional Literacy within teaching. HI is the Inclusion Manager of the school and had built up a department that consisted of a number of staff, who took on various roles to teach, support and contain those pupils who are at risk of exclusion. In the school Inclusion tended to have those boys whose behaviour in class, or non-attendance at school was a problem. HI also acted as key person within the school for Looked After Children, of whom a number also visited his department on a regular basis. LT was a teacher who had recently finished her induction year. She was not a new entrant to the teaching profession. She had previously worked as a teaching assistant. Her voice is of someone who has recently completed the requirements to become a fully qualified teacher, but also as an experienced educator.

During semi-structured conversations I asked questions, encouraging discussion and elaboration. The dialogues were directed around my interests, in that we were discussing reflective practice and the educators' perceptions of reflective practice. At the beginning of each conversation I offered them the chance to see my notes, read through and add to them, and to see the typed up transcript so that they could check again and add to or amend anything. Each declined this offer. Although I was explicit about the subject being the participant's own perceptions of reflective practice, FA spoke as though she were guiding me on my own reflective practice. I did ask her whether her experience of reflection in her voice as a member of the Senior Management Team of the school would be different to her own voice as teacher, but she said that it would not be. In our dialogue she kept referring to me as

a trainee teacher, and techniques that I could do. At first I reiterated that the questions were not about my own practice, however as this continued throughout the interview I chose to take on the role of an inexperienced reflector as this elicited more comment and dialogue. Within the school context, I was aware of the balances of power and when I spoke to this senior colleague I felt that she wished the power to remain with her. I did not feel that I was seen within this context as an equal, and this was made explicit with comments on reflective practice such as, “it is different for me in my Masters and for a student on Teaching Practice.” In contrast, the other senior colleague I spoke to described reflection as “being humble, and being human”. This interplay of power and expectations echoes the cautions that have to be applied when working with children that they do not say what they believe you, as the adult with power, expect or want them to say, but rather have the trust and freedom to find their own voice (Greig & Taylor, 1999). This was to me, an example of how the role of the researcher, and how the participant perceives the researcher, will lead them to speak with a voice, or to say words that they are expected to say.

A12.5 THE PURPOSE OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

When asked the purpose of a reflective practice, LT needed time to think and to clarify her own opinion, “personally I think that you need to reflect to...Reflect to enhance and if there is something more positive to keep that. It is to not keep making mistakes and to evaluate your own practice and approach.” This idea was echoed by HI, “reflective behaviour is not making the same mistakes again and again”. He added, “It is to improve your working capacity with young people.” For FA, the answer was more analytical, and she chose to speak about the process of reflection as well as the purpose.

“Reflective practice is different depending on the purpose of it. You need to know the topic and the focus. Reflective process is to improve the process but also need to understand what a good teacher is in order to aspire to be one.” (FA)

Here I perceive that LT and HI were speaking and relating the topic of reflective practice to their own work with children and young people. This was corroborated by later comments; “if they don’t get on with me I reflect and hope that they get on with someone else” (HI). In contrast, LT spoke of a less personal approach; “an effective reflective practitioner has to be well read and up to date with research to compare their practice with good practice through reading, team teaching and observations but it all has to be in context.” This view resonates with that of Cordingley (1999) who writes from the “perspective of a policy making organisation” (ibid, p. 186). She states that evaluation is a routine part of professional practice, and that the interpreting of evidence and research from others is central to reflective practice. Although Cordingley likens teachers to athletes in that the knowledge they draw upon has to be fully assimilated and integrated, she does not extrapolate on how one might reach that integrated state, nor comment on what it means, and how one reflects. Similarly, although reflective practice is a term widely used within educational discourse and rhetoric (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006), beyond the relation to children reflecting on their learning, it is not widely used within policy documents in England (Coldrun & Smith, 1999).

A12.6 SUPPORTING A REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The question ‘how do you think a reflective practice is best supported?’ allowed each participant to share their own view of what was needed to support their perception of reflective practice. For HI reflective practice was something that everyone did, and he made his own view of the lack of reflection among some teachers very clear.

“It’s not supported– because it’s not felt necessary at a Senior Management Team/whole school level. We should not be scared to challenge other people’s way of working. We need support for staff– but they need to be less resistant to change. It’s about creating an ethos. Teachers don’t have the time to look at the whole picture– a more holistic view– by talking to each other about how a pupil behaves in one class is different to another, what works and why. Fear of failure is overwhelming– if you ask for help you are deemed to be weak and this is true for teachers as well as students” (HI).

For HI reflection was also about the relationship between him and the students; “it takes time to build trust.”

The need for peer support was made by LT and FA although in slightly different ways; “[peer support] depends on department and friendships and acquaintances” (LT). LT admitted that the relationship between peers was vital for useful dialogue. FA, in contrast, spoke of the value of peer support:

“[reflection is] sometimes best supported with fellow students and peers. Colleagues can chat about what they are doing/how they are doing. There is a need for emotional literacy. Peer support is less judgemental than through a mentor. It can be negative if lots of staff teach a difficult group– where it can become issues about pupils rather than teaching.” (FA)

FA mentioned that a mentor may be more judgemental than a peer, however she did not talk of the implications for career progression that may accompany using a manager as a reflective

supervisor in the way that LT and HI did. Peer support, as part of peer reflective groups for student teachers, or study teams and peer coaching for in-service teachers have been found to encourage the participants to examine their assumptions, beliefs and practices (Ferraro, 2000).

A12.7 SUPPORTING LEARNERS THROUGH REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The last question, ‘do you think that a reflective practice can also support learners?’, was answered with the different language that each participant had used throughout. HI chose to speak again of the need for humbleness, a school ethos, and of the self as a model for the students; “reflective practice has to be effective to support learners– it also has to be the culture of the school. If you are reflective, then the kids learn to be reflective”. LT echoed the need to show that as teachers we are also able to learn from our mistakes and to move on, as they can and so empower themselves, “if you can reflect and change it or approach it from a different way then it’s going to help them. Let’s try another way– modelling it. You can make mistakes and do something about it”. In contrast FA chose to use her final words as a directive towards a particular model of practice, “it is imperative that reflective practitioners focus on learning– so it must support learners.” HI and LT seem to be talking of reflection from a model that almost encompasses the Person-Centred Therapeutic Model (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1990) as they relate the need for their own reflective practice and their modelling of it to the pupils’ ability to learn and witness and develop a reflective practice of their own.

The sample here was very small, and may not be representative of the views of other education professionals. They are the views of three members of staff in one school in which I had a placement as a trainee teacher. The context of that particular school in which they work may also affect views and opinions and the extent to which they are shared or not.