

Improvisation: ?
Motions for Living Texts

by

Connie Jean Frey

B.A., Bloomsburg State College, 1967
M.M.T., Antioch/New England Graduate School, 1979

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Dr. A.A. Oberg, Supervisor (Department of Communication and Social Foundations)

Dr. L.R. Baxter, Departmental Member (Department of Communication and Social Foundations)

Dr. R.V. Peavy, Outside Member (Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychological Foundations in Education)

Prof. J.P. Anglin, Outside Member (School of Child and Youth Care)

Dr. C.M. Chambers, External Examiner (Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge)

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University of Victoria

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Supervisor: Dr. Antoinette A. Oberg

ABSTRACT

Enjoining improvisation as chrysalis for dissertation creation, I draw upon immediate responses, surprise, familiarity, and diverse knowers. Being engaged with improvisation as topic and methodology reveals my assumptions and vitality. What matters is my decision not to primarily describe experience as much as express from experiencing. And I acclaim my readers, valuing others' felt experiencing.

Along with shaped expressions of my present-time improvisations, improvisation as variously conceived in education, culture, and other meaning-making is reviewed. Throughout this text, intertwining in my ongoing awareness, are feminist, nonlinear systems, hermeneutic, and postmodern theories.

Improvisation--approached intentionally--is not reducible to knowledge acquisition nor learned accomplishment. Shaping expression improvisationally activates unbidden responses, events, and textual artifacts. Generative structures include creative dialogue, impressionistic writing, explication, poetry, and letter-writing, along with spatial design and invitations for participation. Improvisational structures and possibilities invite the protean manifestations of themes.

Improvisation calls discipline into play, requires paying attention to what is happening with possibilities. Discipline abides with freedom. Constraints--what's a river without banks?--are associated with shaping expression while freely generating movement, sound, concepts, or concrete forms.

Improvisation: ? Motions for Living Texts is organized in four sections. The first section considers kinesthetic, or movement, improvisation and related awareness, or felt life. The creative work and pedagogy of Barbara Mettler and Viola Spolin are introduced along with Eugene Gendlin's philosophy of experience. The second section elaborates my transition from moving to writing as an improviser. In the third section, meaning becomes expressly engaged and associated further with Gendlin and with diverse proponents of improvisation. In the final section perspectives on language intersect articulation of "living in situations," where knowing remains in motion. Overall this improvisational discourse valorizes experience as well as knowledge, participation as well as accomplishment.

Examiners:

Dr. A.A. Oberg, Supervisor (Department of Communication and Social Foundations)

Dr. L.R. Baxter, Departmental Member (Department of Communication and Social Foundations)

Dr. R.V. Peavy, Outside Member (Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychological Foundations in Education)

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In walking you lay down a path. . . .

Alberto Machado
(Francisco Varela, Trans.)

Preface

Improvisation: ? offers a site of possibilities for experiencing experience. Above, “Armature for Jello” erupted to head the contents. Gesturing for protean life and responsive motion, the juxtaposition of *jello* with *armature*, an internal structure for sculpture, suggests creative tension, recurring slippage, and unsteady states.

With improvisation, one begins without knowing where one will have been. Not knowing does not foreclose revealing situatedness nor emergent constituencies of experienced meanings. I write and rewrite an invisible question: How does textuality bear life’s surge cursively?

(Mary,¹ please witness² my improvisational dissertation. You know my interest isn’t performance, and that observed improvisations may be kept at “arm’s distance.”)

Living this methodological inquiry as my dissertation, I render textual artifacts, moved, marked, sounded, written. My responsiveness animates courage to offer out of experiencing. Much occurs without cognitive precedent--fingers tapping keyboard, ideas quickening, wounds and wonders appearing.

Not escaping death, I declare, "Now I am alive." I breathe, my belly expands. I expire, inspire, sense a lightening of my skull and warmth of my face. Riding words, my eyes are closing. (Imagine.) I don't know what time it is, do you? I hear the keyboard and other sounds, notice tightness at my waist, my tilting torso impressing the chair, posing weight slightly onto forefeet.

I invite you to join me and wonder what you are experiencing. Are your eyes going to close? And your breath, how interesting? What inspires you? (I stayed still, words not joining page.) I begin to wonder about time, about going on like this.

Let's breathe together in different times--myself, a sample of text, another time. I may open my eyes to mark the revelation: myself, a sample of text, another time. (I opened my eyes.)

Like me, you might notice your breath and the volume of your belly and the weight on your hunches, feet understanding. Do you have any ideas? (I have three minutes. You could go to the refrigerator in that time.) I continue to write without the breath and weight of your being, gathering a loose weave. (If you were here, what might occur?)

One minute to go, feeling my urge to say, "This isn't the end." I will continue until time runs out--out of time, space, motion.

Waiting. (Time to wonder about what is improvised. I have claimed to "render textual artifacts, moved, marked, sounded, written," samples of text in my time.)

Will you, too, wait? Remembering Eliot's oft-quoted perspective, shall we "not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and to know the place for the first time"? Might you return to this preface after reading beyond?

I engage the ~~absence of the reader~~.^{*} You are welcome.

* De Shazer's (1994) cross-out convention has been applied to "I engage the ~~absence of the reader~~" and subsequently for my own usage of "~~body~~," denoting "a word used but not really meant. Since the word is inadequate, it is crossed out; since the word is necessary, it remains legible" (p. 5).

Introduction

Improvising this text is associated with my experiences shaping expressive forms and with others who articulate improvisation in living. I began early with delights of my first language,³ movement, and singing, two beneficent characteristics of my childhood. Missing reverence for authority and knowing aversion for dominance, I revelled in self-direction. Possibly my working-class background cultivated appreciation for what is “free for all” without necessity of equipment, setting, or status. Once engendered as tolerance for the unknown and curiosity about the unexpected, my improvisational activities and eventual discipline opened possibilities.

Not reducible to knowledge acquisition nor learned accomplishment, improvising engages materials, that is, standard media of art forms and (spoken and written) language and data. Assuming ongoing living awareness of felt experiencing, improvisation is approached intentionally. Shaping expression activates unbidden responses, events, and textual artifacts. Discipline in immediate involvement with materials abides with freedom. Constraints--what’s a river without banks?--are associated with discriminating awareness in generating shaped expression while engaging movement, sound, concepts, or concrete forms.

Rather than enacting mandatory or stylized forms, generative structures characterize my professional practices for shaping expression, including dance/movement therapy, free creative movement expression, and authentic movement practice. My training in these three disciplines has primarily been through apprenticeship. (Alongside these expressive approaches to movement experiencing, I have been strongly influenced by somatic education⁴--keeping me in motion variously.) During my dance/movement therapy training, I was expected to reflexively respond to unfolding motional and other expressive processes, to narrate without predeliberations. Thereby, *multidimensionality* became defined for me as living matters of immediate experiencing. In all my practices as movement facilitator, others' improvisational activities and inquiries intersect with my ongoing education.

Enjoining improvisation as chrysalis for dissertation creation, I draw upon immediate responses, surprise, familiarity, and diverse knowers. Being engaged with improvisation as topic and methodology reveals my assumptions and vitality. What matters is my decision not to primarily describe experience as much as express from experiencing. And I acclaim my readers, valuing others' felt experiencing. Textually, your moves conceive with my conceptions.

Improvisation In Motion

If dance is an expression of life, exact repetition is impossible because we are never exactly the same at any moment of our life.

Barbara Mettler

From the middle of this century, improvisational dance training has influenced and shaped worlds of dance and movement (Blom & Chaplin, 1988; H'Doubler, 1940; Forti, 1974; Halprin, 1955, 1967/1968; Hawkins, 1964, 1991; Mettler, 1960, 1966, 1974, 1983; Morgenroth, 1987; Nagrin, 1994; Schneer, 1994; Tufnell & Crickmay, 1990). Out of the cultural shifts of the sixties and seventies, a postmodern dance movement occurred, intensifying the earlier break-away of modern dancers from "academic dance . . . dedicated to the preservation of a style, a code of manners, a representation of society and art" (Siegel, 1979, p. xvi). Multiple philosophies of improvisation developed (Banes, 1980) as well as a new discipline, contact improvisation (Novack, 1990; Paxton, 1975, 1993, 1994). Instead of guaranteeing the audience "be regaled with its own excellence, to be reminded of the world's perfectibility even in imperfect times," writes dance historian and critic Marcia Siegel, proponents considered style "only one of several possible means" (p. xvi).

Although living amidst the New York impetus for postmodern dance, only later did I begin dance training with Barbara Mettler who had presaged postmodern dance developments. Considering possibilities for people to engage within their own capacities and uniqueness, Mettler (1971/1972) states

We must be bold in leaving behind outmoded conventions of dance and fixed rules of dance-making. Every dance must follow its own rules according to the participants, the time and the place. There is no need for audience-stirring climaxes, pretentious beginnings and endings, or literary themes involving obscure psychological problems or world-shaking philosophies. There is no need for fairy-tales or pretence of any kind. A dance must be approached as . . . any other life experience. Why segregate dancing and dancers in an atmosphere of remote, unteachable glamour? Of all the arts dancing is the most earthy and universal. It should be authentic life experience, not an escape from or an interpretation of life. (pp. 132-133)

In studying free creative movement expression⁵ with Mettler (1966) I became oriented to dance as a creative art activity where “creative activity means creating something yourself, not letting someone else create it for you. It means participating actively in the creative process. . . . All art is activity: something *to do*” (p. 58).

My living awareness of creative activity, as “the ability to make and/or express something that, at least partially, [originates] from oneself” (Peavy,

1979, p. 61) offered abiding satisfaction in practice and eventual teaching. Mettler (1974) guided my perceptions and practice of “ways of liberating and cultivating the natural creative movement resources, [giving] ordinary people authentic dance experiences which depend neither on rehearsed techniques, a fixed number of trained dancers, a special show place, or spectator approval” (p. 11).

My pedagogical devotion to dance, movement, and other shaped expression is oriented by Viola Spolin. I inscribed a frontispiece to *Materials of Dance as a Creative Art Activity* (Mettler, 1960) of Spolin’s words:

Accepting simultaneously a student’s right to equality in approaching a problem and his lack of experience puts a burden on the teacher. This way of teaching at first seems more difficult, for the teacher must often sit out the discoveries of the student without interpreting or forcing conclusions on him. Yet it can be more rewarding for the teacher, because when student-actors [and dancers] have truly learned through playing [or improvising], the quality [and satisfaction] of performance [or creating dance] will be high indeed! (Spolin, 1963, p. 9)

Through an improvisational approach, creative dance discipline is based on kinesthetic sensitivity, requiring attention to directly experiencing awareness in shaping expression. Considering *awareness*, Mettler (1990) means enlivened *movement feeling*: “movement which begins as a physical

sensation in the muscles and joints and is then felt throughout the entire body, involving the whole person" (p. 99). Halprin (1955) proclaims

The first and most important factor is that the dancer must rely primarily on the kinesthetic sense in the process of improvising. The second requirement is that there be absolutely no preconceived notion [excepting specifications of structure] to direct the action. (p. 11)

What informs kinesthetic reality? Adler (1987) perceives kinesthetic development when "one begins to lose the illusion that one is anything other than one's body. In so doing, what is affirmed is the body, not the knowledge of the body or not the self. The body is not a symbol" (p. 21).

As movement educator, I exist situated in a dominant Western tradition and witness the ambiguity of meanings attached to *movement* and other feeling. I participate in taken-for-granted patterns of motional behavior, dance sequestered from collective life, and restricted expressive mobility.

Limitations of our culturally constituted moving lives begin to be articulated when dancer and philosopher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1979) differentiates "between movement and objects in motion . . . to appreciate the complex nature of the visible in dance" (p. 33).

In crystallizing the static impression which attends experiential realms--in this instance, dance--Sheets-Johnstone (1979) declares, "In the course of everyday living it is the object in motion and not movement which commands our attention" (p. 35). Not noticing--that is, not sensing, or kinesthetically resounding--means our kinesthetic astuteness and fuller proprioception has been desensitized for perceiving others. What happens "at home" to our awareness of experiencing experience? What occasions our multisensorial amalgam of "seen" with sound, rhythm, vibration, other motional qualities? These living questions animate the subtext of this dissertation.

Anthropology of the senses, a new field initiated by Howes (1991), stimulates interdisciplinary discourse to investigate "how the patterning of sense experience varies [culturally and to trace] the influence such variations have on forms of social organizations, conceptions of self and cosmos, the regulation of the emotions, and other domains of cultural expression" (p. 3). (Reconsider the significance of *stand still*.) Noting "that it is only by developing a rigorous awareness of the visual and textual biases of the Western episteme, that we can hope to make sense of how life is lived in other cultural settings" (p. 3), Howes's orientation provokes me to call for what's missing. That is, what are we disinclined to perceive and what do we long for?

Our capacity for kinesthetic empathy, or felt resonance--which culture shapes, does not eclipse--comprises part of everyday living. Recall recognizing someone's footsteps, or remember identifying a friend from a distance when one's attention--not eye alone--is caught by walk or gestures. Another's expressive characteristics awaken felt resonance. Yet, reiterating Sheets-Johnstone (1979) perspective on dominant culture, "It is the object in motion and not movement which commands our attention" (pp. 34-35). It is not incidental that the objects are ourselves, perpetuating an *idea* of organism Cartesian style.

But "dance is not only *about* reality," Siegel (1973) incites, "it is *real*. It is a real thing happening to a real person" (p. 110). What does the necessity for her speaking the obvious tell us? What is suggested about the status of corporeality, our ground of living awareness? What needs to change for us to experience a difference in living matters? What is at risk--besides ourselves already?

Siegel (1973) offers a thought-provoking perspective on the price paid on both sides of the stage:

Society pressures the artist to be less real, to act out the safest prototypes and pave the escape routes with modish dissent. If the artist cops out, it's

with our collusion. If he reveals himself, he does it because we have made contact with ourselves. (p. 110)

We have been systematically enlisted to see motion attendant to objects, not to our living sentience. Where better to recognize our constraint than in not dancing and in wanting dancers to manage images. (They receive more than a handful.) Diminishing felt experiencing enacts reductionism differently and crucially by reducing lively awareness. While the lively awareness of dance is fundamentally kinesthetic, the distinction that dance is a kinesthetic not a visual art jolts many listeners. What Fraleigh (1987) notices as “a direct ‘this means that’ association of meaning with movement” (p. 235) belies our vivid individual felt experiencing.

I resonate with Gendlin’s (1962; see also 1965, 1969, 1973) philosophy of experience perspective; how it “is not only your sense of your muscles, your legs, the back of your head. It’s not only a sensing of things like the floor, the chair, or whatever you see or touch. The bodily sense is also your sense of your situations, your life” (Gendlin, 1992c, p. 206).

(Mary, how do you relate to this perspective from Eugene Gendlin: “I am now part of your situation. You have been permitting my words to have an effect on how your body feels to you right now”?⁶ Or this one? Please read aloud words offered by poet Robert Hass: “If I say, ‘Tomorrow, and

tomorrow, and tomorrow, / Creeps in this petty pace from day to day / To
 the last syllable of recorded time, / And all our yesterdays have lighted
 fools / The way to dusty death,' . . . you take in the physiology of the
 phrases. Whitman says, 'I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of
 summer grass.' You have to let all the carbon monoxide up out of your
 lungs to say that line."⁷ How's that for writing that moves you?)

Whether launched by a theme or open possibilities, in shaping expression,
 no replicable specifications propel improvisation. Self-as-medium (elaborated
 below) experiences shifting expressive meanings.

Up against the dominant ideal
 of control as preexisting knowledge
 and learning externally motivated.

I return to formalized grounds. In disciplines of the established arts,
 dominant culture does endorse--is that also tolerate? modulate?--living
 awareness, the "breath of life." Each art instantiates felt meanings generally in
 prescribed contexts of stage, gallery, studio, or literature where "experience as
 a source of meaning" (Gendlin, 1962, p. 55) abounds and expression
 flourishes. And legitimating these sites of expression--shout, sob, sing, shake--
 allows sensual liveliness. Without expressive occasions, which language

documents as *human experience* and invigorates with metaphorical abandon, how else might we make sense of life textually?

Expression

I know insults and kindly suspicions about *expression* and continue to proclaim *shaping expression* to distinguish, not to legitimate. Because “expressive activities shaped with living awareness” constitute what I mean by improvisation in motion, I seek expressive companions both in motion and discourse. Fraleigh’s (1987) distinction pertaining to aesthetic experience fits my connotation for shaping expression: “It differs from the process of sense perception accomplished through an investigative or practical attitude, in which our attention is focused on some functional or practical use of the object in our perceptual field” (p. 64). Here I translate “object” as self-as-medium experiencing shaping expressivity. (Reminder: We are culturally inclined to consider dance a visual more than a kinesthetic art. One interpretation of that is designating dance as something to watch others do rather than do ourselves. More germane is that we may not be experiencing kinesthetically when we watch.) Most educators and critics describe and interpret dance primarily as associated with music or drama, or reference technical virtuosity. I recall Rudolf von Laban’s lament that not only have we

stopped speaking the language of movement, we have stopped understanding it.

(Mary, do you notice my amplifications through compounding, to breathe meaning into *shaping expression, experiencing experience, and living awareness*? Shall I drop the amplification and trust awakened connotations will survive? I sense a difference when saying experiencing and experience. The *ing's* got the swing! You know, language changes, we respond.)

Experiencing expression--*ex* marks living. (Considering discourse's rigorous wrestling with propositions or rhetorical shifts, does epistemic literacy ask too little of felt life?) *Ex* marks the spot for living expression, ideas borne on keyboard, arising in speech, appearing as gestures. *Ex* a site of disciplined awareness for conceptual freedom. "The freedom to express," Whitehouse declares, is not "the same as self-improvement or growth or doing what is good for me" (quoted in Wallock, 1981, p. 47).

Noticing What's To Notice

We find that everywhere, just beneath the surface of our conventional "objective" world, lies waiting

a forgotten world of overwhelming authenticity,
which is not alien but is ours.

Charles V. W. Brooks

Improvisational expression shapes moving awarenesses. Common ushering of felt awareness into emotion or variously esteemed arts, accents how little we notice what's to notice in everyday living. Because improvisational shaping depends upon direct experience, awareness is our means whereby.

Stevens (1971) distinguishes three realms of awareness:

1. Awareness of the outside world. This is actual sensory contact with objects and events in the present: what I now actually see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. (p. 5)

Notice the canonized five senses "so firmly rooted in thought since the Renaissance" (Rivlin & Gravelle, 1984, p. 16), absencing the kinesthetic and proprioceptive realms. Consider that "seventeen senses is probably a more accurate count" (p. 17). In other words, "The Renaissance notion that there are but five senses, and but five separate sensory organs to experience them, must finally be exposed as an inadequate explanation and laid to rest" (p. 40).

Returning to Stevens's (1971) articulation of the favored five--maybe you will notice signs of others embedded in his text:

2. Awareness of the inside world. This is actual sensory contact with inner events in the present: what I now actually feel from inside my skin--itches, muscular tensions and movements, physical manifestations of feelings and emotions, discomfort, well-being, etc. (p. 5)

Another not so discrete "kind of awareness is quite different, namely, my awareness of images of things and events that do not exist in the present ongoing reality" (Stevens, 1971, p. 5):

3. Awareness of fantasy activity. This includes all mental activity beyond present awareness of ongoing experience: all explaining, imagining, interpreting, guessing, thinking, comparing, planning, remembering the past, anticipating the future, etc. Right now I am wondering how long it will take me to write this book. I have an image of what it will look like when it is finished, and I wonder how you, the reader, will respond to it--will you find this book useful, and will you like me for writing it? All this is unreality, . . . my fantasy, my imagination. (pp. 5-6)

Increasingly nondiscrete:

And yet within this fantasy there is some reality hidden. I can discover more about this reality if I invest myself in my fantasy and become aware of my sensations and other felt responses, or perceptions, and activities as I do this. As I think of how long the book will take, I become aware of the

tiredness in my body and I realize that the wish for the book to be done arises out of this tiredness now. (Stevens, 1971, p. 6)

(Where is your awareness?)

Stevens (1971) continues

As I imagine your response to the book, I am aware . . . I want to be of use to you. As I write this, the warm feelings in my body and the tears in my eyes confirm its truth. Now I stay with my sense of all this for awhile, and something else begins to develop--something more basic than your liking me or my being of use to you. Whether you like me or not, I love to be with you honestly, with reality firmly beneath our feet. . . . As I write this, my body feels solid and confident, saying "yes." (p. 6)

While Stevens's categories are traditional, he attends to lively matters undervalued and largely unarticulated--conceptually and verbally--pertaining to our felt experiencing. And, Gendlin (1962) moves from *experience* to *experiencing*:

The construct of "experience" is . . . identical in nature to contents of *explicit* conceptualization. "Experiencing," on the other hand, is a present, felt *implicitly* meaningful datum. It is directly referred to by an individual. . . . To call it implicitly meaningful is to note that it can give rise to many conceptualizations, and that conceptualizations can be checked against its implicit meaning. Thus, conceptualization of it can be accurate or

inaccurate, yet the felt datum itself will still be directly present. It will still be something other than any of its conceptualized aspects. Experiencing is thus *implicitly* meaningful. It is something present, directly referred to and *felt*. (p. 243)

Additional to “an individual’s own direct reference to what is phenomenologically given to him as felt,” Gendlin (1962) elaborates that experiencing can also be defined in terms of “observable characteristics of one’s ‘manner of experiencing,’ such as intensity, richness of detail, and other characteristics” (p. 243). And what about emotion related to expression, to experiencing? Gendlin notes because “‘experiencing’ is a felt datum . . . this word ‘felt’ may suggest that it must be an emotion” (p. 243). Not necessarily, and he continues

Experiencing is a changing, organic, spatiotemporal process, a continuous stream [and] experiencing can be symbolized by “direct reference” as well as by conceptualization. . . . *Although theoretical constructs may turn out to be quite useful, it is primarily important to enable theory to refer to experiencing as a direct datum, an observable dimension [italics added].* (p. 244)

Influenced by Gendlin because of years of practicing the technique of focusing,⁸ before discovering his extensive philosophical writing recently, am I in excess of usual gestures of philosophical embrace?

[It is] characteristic of our time that the basic question changes from one concerning only theories and schemes to one concerning the relation between all symbolizations in general on the one hand and experiencing on the other. (Gendlin, 1962, p. 4)

Engaging improvisational activities as a particular site for experiencing experience readily avails the “changing, organic, spatiotemporal process.” However I notice this accessible accessibility is commonly unknown, and being unrecognized is oddly juxtaposed to a dominant culture that

allows so little pause and gives so little specifying response and interpersonal communion to our experiencing, so that we must much of the time *pretend that we are only what we seem externally* [italics added], and that our meanings are only the objective references and logical meanings of our words. (Gendlin, 1962, pp. 15-16)

The arts do not go unaffected: Nachmanovitch (1990) expresses the difficulty facing many trained musicians who “are fabulously skilled at playing the black dots . . . but mystified by how the dots got there. . . . Music theory does not help here; it teaches rules of the grammar, but not what to say” (p. 9). Mathieu (1984/1985), in considering improvisation, notices studies largely focus on techniques or are concerned with isolated elements of its process. She moves phenomenologically to research the “holistic nature of the improvisational process” (p. ii). While neither seeking nor agreeing to an essence of *experiencing*, or a structure of *the* experience of improvisation, I

relish Mathieu's and her participants' vivid accounts of movement and sound improvisations. Experiential dimensions of living awareness which dancers and musicians enunciate reveal that "although spontaneous and immediate, the process of improvisation can be articulated" (p. ii) and that "all at once, the faculties of an individual are intensely working . . . and that this moment is privileged for its expressiveness" (p. 1):

The theme is a meaningful tool for [one solo dancer] in that it allows her freedom without losing contact with what is being created. As a guiding thread, it participates in creating relationships between different elements, holds the parts together and creates a meaningful whole. She says: "That's what I'm trying to have a sense of--to be able to be free but not to be sporadic--to have this concept in my head, so that the whole thing connects." (pp. 56-57)

Acknowledging a common experience, especially for beginning improvisers, Mathieu (1984/1985) expresses

While improvising--more particularly at the beginning of the improvisation--the subject fights against a critical attitude that prevents her from being open to her own mental and physical capacity. She aims at an open attitude that brackets out the censoring--How do I look? Is this right?--and that will allow movement and ideas "to just come through." She mentions that her improvisation is very successful when the open attitude takes over the critical one. (p. 58)

Improvising independent of predetermined moves--always already drawing upon our reservoirs of past experience--depends upon felt experiencing. And what does living awareness feel? Surveying *feeling*, Moen (Ouden & Moen, 1992) notices

In use [it] has many meanings: sentient awareness (kinesthetic and proprioceptive awareness) or sensation; or emotion, affect, and desire; or empathy; or intuition, including hunches; or the aesthetic; or "senses" as in sense-of-self, sense-of-meaningfulness, sense-of-relevance, sense-of-solidarity. (p. 216)

I add *sense of humor*, for which Erikson (1988) offers a perspective:

If Susanne Langer nominated imagination for the "oldest mental trait that is typically human, older than discursive reason," then I would submit that it must also be the source of . . . humor, that liberating recognition of the absurdities of life. . . . There is healing in laughter, for it expresses our humanity and our wholeness and alerts us against both pride and despair by keeping us in touch with the ridiculous. (p. 108)

Langer (1968), considering feeling in dance, elaborates what Henry James "called 'felt life,' using the term for that which a literary work of art has to convey . . . which sums up the human version of what might be called 'biological existence,'" and she identifies the scope as "more than just one's own body feeling, or self-consciousness, because it is more complicated than

that. . . and not natural history, but only human history, which is a pattern of feeling, of 'felt life'" (p. 15). To this she adds

On the whole I would say that I am using "feeling" to mean anything that can be felt.

There is an advantage, philosophically, in using the term that way. When you take "feeling" in this way, you can run it back [and] connect with all biology, and you can take that right back into biochemistry. Thus you make one subject of life. . . . In ordinary parlance we really have only two meanings which don't fit together. One having "feelings," emotions, getting your feelings hurt, or something like that. The other is simply external feelings; you feel in your pocket, . . . that is another sense of feeling, tactile, or cutaneous feelings; and we feel pain. I think, popularly, we don't realize how these things belong together. (p. 16)

Improvisation pertaining to felt life, participating in activities of living, has key proponents oriented to personal development, curriculum, and meaning construction (considered below). My practices with disciplined intentionality explicitly engage present-time awareness with shaped expression. And in the contextual realm of this text, I welcome others: "Will you, won't you join the dance?"--know yourself experiencing felt life?

In noticing experiencing, my emphasis is displaced from accomplishment, achievement, or validity. Valuing awareness has implications and while

improvisation engages immediate experience, what's learned is not necessarily intended. My invitations to others is only the menu, not the meal. What happens noticing what's to notice? Immediacy of expression notices itself as ongoing awareness shaping meanings discoursing--off the page!

(Mary, how often education dissects experiencing and reifies preparedness! How often beliefs prevail that preparation must antecede experiential, or engaged, understanding. As you do, I trust multiple excitements of knowing, beholding ventures of improvisation as one means.)

For me, conspicuously shifting through multiple discourses, coursing sites of experiencing, paying attention to how awareness incessantly moves, I have to declare not always have I held these notions of motion. I was discomfited by the effusion of improvisation in my early practice as creative movement educator, as expressed in my journal *innerlogue*,⁹ "Teaching and Connie":

Teaching: You believe experience is true learning?

Connie: Yes. So to be with you I have offered people opportunities for experiencing.

Teaching: Yes. You may be confused because I am very simple. . . . Very simple to offer experience which allows learning. . . . What do you see?

Connie: I think it is too simple. . . . "How come?" and "what for?" I say.¹⁰

The “how come?” and “what for?” continue to be contextualized through having others speak for themselves. My awarenesses are refracted by others’ responses of discovery, enthusiasm, reluctance, anxiousness, awe. What people notice and have to say about experiencing remains diverse and draws upon particular sensory and expressive idioms. And I hear collective resonance, sensuous affinities, and distinct perspectives in disclosures of living processes. Not always! Sometimes when our logo-centrally stunted experiential descriptors handicap verbal articulation--a cultural standard for valid knowing--confusion, skepticism, or spontaneous amnesia ensue. How disconcerting not to know what happened. Verbalizing experiencing accompanies creative dance and authentic movement practices where we are seeking and speaking expressive vocabularies for and *as* living experience.¹¹

Creative Pause

Mettler’s (1960) concept *creative pause* points to living awareness in stillness, in other words, absence of perceptible movement expression, before (external) motion resumes. Each creative pause is particularly manifested in timing, experiencing, shaping of subsequent perceptible forms.

In describing “a moment of rest and silence,” one dancer experiences her immobility as “expectation and doubt; I never know what will happen next. There is no motivic development and no sense of form in the traditional use of the term” (Mathieu, 1984/1985, p. 74). A creative pause need not be “isolated or disruptive” as Fraleigh (1987) observes: “One movement or even one stillness can be only a point of view on concrete duration, a slice of . . . real and undivided lived duration” (p. 179).

Moon suddenly spies
 smudging blue behind green spire
 ah, what happens next?¹²

Common day moon symbolizes the about-to-be from pregnant waiting, to pay tribute to my students’ carrying forward *creative pause* as an inspired trope of living.

Self-As-Medium

Mettler (1971/1972) “decentered the subject” before I conceived of *self-as-medium*:

Improvisation enables the group to make full use of the creative resources of every single member while not being dependent on any individual.

Every member is important but no one is indispensable. Regardless of who is dancing, the dance goes on. (p. 119)

Dancing with others or alone, dance creates means and meanings, myself the medium. Borrowing, metaphorically, from nonlinear systems' perspective: "The system's holism (the fact that every movement in the system in some way affects every other movement) is responsible for its chaos (unpredictability)" (Briggs, 1992, p. 140). And, "strange attractors [occur within] a system whose behavior never repeats itself and is always unpredictable and yet, paradoxically, always resembles itself and is infinitely recognizable" (p. 143). Furthermore, "one of the really strange things about strange attractors is that they do have predictable overall form, but it's a form made of unpredictable details" (p. 139).

The strange attractor never repeats itself and "yet never extends beyond the specific limitations of a system" (De Spain, 1993, p. 25). Dancer and choreographer Kent De Spain would

like to propose the rather radical idea that improvisational dance is a kind of strange attractor. That like its scientific counterpart, improvisation offers the viewer a representation of chaos, the structured chaos of human beings in this case, and that through such a representation one can perceive and understand much more about the nature of the human system. (p. 25)

While the act of improvisation is “an infinitely complex phenomenon,” De Spain (1993) identifies that “mood, training, past improvisational experience, sensory input (sound, light, temperature, etc.), physical fitness, and present bodily shape and position in space” (p. 23) are influences and these “are constantly changing, every time an improviser opens the door to the creative forces, the movement that results must be unique to the moment” (p. 24).

As constantly moving organization in improvisation, self-as-medium constitutes the heartbeat of expression and shifting motion with whatever materials: “Myself” constituting expression, expression constituting experiencing. If you like, “I am the story telling itself”—creating outruns identity. “If Being as presence is a fiction, then it follows that a stable natural human identity is also a fiction, that identity is only the production of a particular set of relations, a representation within the symbolic order, or, to blur the terminology of Lacan and Derrida, an imaginary moment of presence” (Martusewicz, 1992, p. 141).

“I” situates a medium for experiencing the immediacy of living. Extending, shaping expression, comprises living through activity, ourselves as living matters—mediumships rocking and rolling. Besides (or despite)

definitions, we each are occupants in our particular and unique *envelope of skin*, using Feldenkrais's term. Each being constituted culturally and by other unchosen inheritances, and always already expressively engaged.

As an educator, offering and participating in practices, or experiential curriculum, lively self-reflexivity and generativity co-exist. Inseparable from improvising, each person-event occurs and shifts--self-as-medium. Materials being expressively shaped may be those associated with the arts or conceptual ideas of ensuing discourses.

Me²: Hello, we are at it again.

Connie: And just who are you these days?

Me²: Still process as lived--
the more-so's, the differences, the also's.

Connie: You will keep me moving.¹³

In writing publicly, an interesting paradox arises with self-as-medium: How is it "I"--engaging what I do not know? Dear dance reminds me of the ephemeral, and that I am more than I know. Rather than offer myself as a singularity or a coherent subjectivity, or an undiscovered potential, I point to artifacts of writing, myself in motion.

Moving Into Writing

From the nest of our practice we will stretch the wings of our discipline, leap into the sky of our expression, and fly.

Christine Svane

Moving into writing, articulating my second language, resituates improvisation. In orienting awareness as moving text, I am moved two ways: I move in my discoursing and am "moved" by meanings. In Caputo's (1987) company, I endeavor to take "life as it stands, unpurged of its harsher aspects" (p. 283)--myself "a place of disruption, irruption, and solicitation" (p. 289).

I arrive at a nuance in relation to my writing:

I am not intending to communicate with Dr. Oberg,¹⁴ but rather with myself, with her as witness.

Communication isn't necessarily this or that going from me to another. Rather, here the writing is; do what you do to engage with it. Let me know what it is for you

if you care to. We can both listen
and respond--not seeking
look-alikes or echoes.

One lengthy improvisation continues as written articulation of challenges, frustrations, and serendipity. Writing as another site of meaning in motion means shaping concepts, playing with words. A paradox embodied is not assuming all meanings become explicit, even while I engage language as my means. I am "written" by known and unknown influences alongside diverse discourses. Before I entered the academy most of my writing¹⁵ was improvisational with structures or completely free form. In carrying my freedom with writing to this endeavor, I experience again--before while dancing--freedom offering awareness "something" to shape. Transferring exploratory freedom from creative arts--a contrast to performing and fine arts' prerequisite control of procedural techniques--cultivates my expressibility.

My choice to allow improvisation as
method has been engendered by a
philosophical turn of mine.

Neither accidental, nor simply curious, that moving expression shapes writings; that is improvisation's way, exhibiting language's flexibility creating

meanings. As with any material for improvisation--writing, moving, marking, sounding--unpredictable connections arise. Improvisation is the site for transforming tacit knowledge, elaborating familiar conceptions, and retrieving the net from who-knows-where-one's-fished. A journal entry offers an evocative response to improvisation: "I don't know what I know--maybe that is why I improvise. This indulgence I have for improvisation becomes curious to me." And I do not so much endeavor to necessarily recount cause nor attribute source as reflect upon experience or write through experiencing and write of experiencing.

Evidence remains: Here I write at a site that invokes the possible--by whatever name. Textual freedom in contextual awareness! Writing as a mover, an articulating mover, moving articulations shaped of living awareness or reflections. How to behold: What is it to offer? What is it to offer without knowing what might occur? My organismic version of a hermeneutic circle borne through change.

Writing is at the same time creating and researching as I use my
experience of writing as an engagement with concepts,
as event more so than production.

I use improvisation to write language and language to write improvisation. As one example, innerlogue conversants convey authority, “authoritative possession of knowledge” (Maher & Thompson Tetreault, 1994, p. 232), while positions are being articulated and sometimes challenged, revealing relations that could have remained obscured. And, “we grow in dialogue, not only in the rare intensity of passionate collaboration, but through a multiplicity of forms of friendship and collegiality” (Metzger, 1992, p. 94). Being relationally engaged, innerlogue conversants encounter conflict, consensus, doctrine, surprises, multiplicity, contradiction, and so on.

Genius: You invited. I appear.

Me: I am surprised that you exist! Anyone else?

Troubled Scholar: There is a lot at stake and just figuring that out takes time.

Me: One of the reasons I wanted to come together is that I feel time is an issue in terms of what is offered time.

Troubled Scholar: I am concerned that to leave something unexamined, which has come forth, is to overlook possibilities which may never reoccur.

Me: I appreciate your concern. However, in putting that against the tension of control which such a practice requires, I am willing to take the risk of letting go. I admire your tenacity.

Troubled Scholar: Thank you for your acknowledgment. I am not a negotiator, so you will have to overrule. Before you do, consider learning a lesson.

Genius: Yes, lessons are imminent.

Me: A lesson?

Troubled Scholar: About your own definition of responsibility. You will like this, being an improviser: I don't know what that means for you.

Me: Responsibility? The concept appeared in my "Inspiration" file yesterday. Overcoming resistance is my primary sense of responsibility. Such a commitment stimulated me to invite you into discussion to see our resistances under a responsible light.

Troubled Scholar: You're right about resistance being germane. I feel that I have to resist your desire to deny your own intellect!

Me: (laughing) You got me there! You may notice I include it, too.

Genius: Who says we are in this together? What does it matter? Coexisting and moving along, whether we collide or waltz, there is a dance going on.

Me: But me, I want some sense of hope.

Genius: Try your sensorial awareness!

Me: Very clever and *apropos*. I invite any other one of me to come forth.

Yes-Man: I know what you think--that all I do is agree and look for the correct way. I am not so facile.

Genius: No, your complexity is intriguing, but you never get credit.

Me: Yes-Man, I am not going to think about you! I want to converse with you to find out where you stand on resistances which occur in our work writing and shaping. In addition to my passion I have difficulty letting go of what has been said and written. So much for my old habit of fecundity and abandonment! Maybe Troubled Scholar has brought something new to bear in these last two years. What about that?

Troubled Scholar: Of course, do you think I have simply been a book end!

Me: No, but our communication has been limited. I am just going to leap and declare that your ability to make citations and read heady texts and delve into analysis has benefited our cause, but holding onto words can be counterproductive.

Troubled Scholar: Thank you for the acknowledgment, emphasizing *knowledge*.

Me: (smiling) You are welcome. The matter at hand is that I want to resume a little more abandonment. Trust me, there's value in free-form creativity.

Genius, before you say it, I admit we are faced with necessary limitation of possibilities.

Genius: I can help.

Me: I was counting on you. Of course, you work in invisible ways.

Genius: Often, it seems so to others.

Troubled Scholar: Now, don't run away from me. We may not strike a bargain but I know when the power shifts, and I can divert my interests to

outside activities, but you would be wise to call on me when I am the best for the job.

Me: Thank you, I will. Don't look now. Yes-Man, I am about to delete to delight.

Yes-Man: You know what you're doing, then.

Me: Of course not, how could I, those many possibilities are nascent. I do know there are others to come. Writing isn't going to dry up. Concepts won't cease to emerge. Living exists in various activities.

Troubled Scholar: What will happen if you don't keep some perspective on where you are going?

Me: I value your question: What will happen if I don't keep some perspective on where I am going? Well, it doesn't curtail the going. I guess my concern would be the feel or quality of what is being created, the kind of satisfaction which accrues. I can be not goal-directed without being indifferent.

Troubled Scholar: Yes, but it is not my way.

Me: Might you consider this a time for you to experience new perspectives which are not so much end-gaining as process-oriented, not having to be troubled by what happens?

Trouble Scholar: You sound concerned. Yes, I can agree to notice in a scholarly attempt to be open-minded.

Me: Thank you.

(Later while considering Kierkegaard's "recollecting forward" and need to be respectful of something larger than his own need to explain or to understand, I pondered, "Who knows how he or any one defines god?" and the innerlogue spontaneously resumed.)

Me: Something larger. Do you think that is what we are getting ourselves into?

Troubled Scholar: (indignantly) Why do you think I am so thoughtful!

Genius: We are.

Yes-Man: I bet.

Me: I appreciate your company.¹⁶

Encouraged by moving fingers, my habit of letting movement bring words to screen, being at the keyboard utilizes contextual readiness. Such liminal space is established whether by the individual, as Nachmanovitch (1990) describes "opening up the violin case and picking up the instrument is, for me, a context marker, a clear message to myself: 'Now it's time to respond'" (p. 41), or by cultural convention. De Spain (1993) describes the dance-space, another liminal context, as being "culturally accepted for its ability to allow us to understand aspects of the complexity that is humanity" (p. 27).

I risk writing where language discovers itself telling, improvising freely, another way of evolving text, enriched by chance encounters with events, persons, and other texts where mystery and synchrony and "slipperiness" occur on context's ground. Transplanting my confidence and pleasure to writing and discursive processes from moving, I stay in motion--carrying on!--outlasting shifts of themes.

(What has continued, Mary, to hold my enthusiasm and spirited response has been writing itself. Writing shapes my perplexities and curiosities, my cravings and eruptions, my wonderings and declarations. When my own or others' ideas feel oppressive rather than generative, in writing I refresh. Many evocative structures are available in living awareness of situations and concepts or from readings and conversing. Please join me in a retrospective of expressions:

So words are a medium of expression! I think to move into words has certainly been a long-awaited form.

My facility is altered by change of material. How does improvisation work with words? I know it does. I have been using the principles for years, and my life dance is invoked which means what occurs works upon me as constituting text.

I do not have to understand, or rather I leave space for greater understanding than explanation allows. Writing for meanings to occur, spawning concepts, having pleasure, keeping going.

I recognize that pleasure is not a necessity and that there is a term from creative dance which applies. That is *satisfaction*. I am not disinclined to struggle, but satisfaction as my sense of felt integrity in expressive events prevails--guides me.

I notice that I take learning where I find it. The fun and challenge of creating or following spontaneous excursions into topics is revealing improvisation in another dimension. I broaden the context and possibilities for improvisation and *following*, a principle in improvisation, means pursuing an interest with readiness to be affected or changed, not simply augmented or added to in traditional enlightenment.

Connie: I write because I have a passion for writing.

Colleague:¹⁷ And how does that compare to dancing?

Connie: Same thing! How does it actually compare? How would I make comparisons? I have urges, followed enough by satisfaction that I continue to reapproach, giving shape to moving and writing. In both cases I'm

learning about the materials as I do it. There's a whole lot I don't know--I mean, I don't need to know. Because like with dance, I don't need to know a lot because I can "discover," or create. Now after all of last year, I *know* what a concept is. Whereas last year, I felt like I was working with words, and by the end of the year I'm going "oh, concepts!" That's how I'm learning--an unconventional approach, of course, although people probably do similar things all the time.

In improvising as mover and writer, I shape through felt experiencing of visceral sensation and other responsiveness; expressive memories intertwine as indivisible excursions of meaning. Conception is borne of experience, articulation from the fount of expression. A lively repartee, my textual, contextual recreation, endlessly reconfiguring intent. Even disrupted writing yields awareness of obstruction and welcomes drift through transforming words. Doubled, *transforming* occurs as words shift focus and occasion multiple connotations.

Waiting for the bus, I realized more about my unfamiliarity with acquiring knowledge, possessing or seeking it as a commodity, and how it has been skills which have occupied me: typing, editing, moving. (Does writing fit here?) That information pertains to both idea and ideal in our

society has impact on me definitely (definitively!); yet involvement with activities and experiencing is what I pursue.

The life of my inquiry doesn't stand still and I discover demanding revelations emerge from meeting what I have written and considerable ruptures occur during editing. I begin to contemplate, beyond the spontaneous moves of words which characterized the rich profusion of my earlier writings.

Mary, what's moved me has been writing itself, using improvisation to write language, language to write improvisation.)

Writing playfully rather than grasping concepts or dissecting what I bring with me--from where?--or tracing lines of progression, I remain improvisationally engaged. I champion the vivacity of improvisation--ourselves as media.

Structures for Opening

Various structures--inviting moving possibilities and surprises--characterize improvisation as specific intentional shaping of expression whatever the materials. Improvisation calls discipline into play, requires

paying attention to what is happening. Diverse structures focus and jump start shaping expression. Reengaging a particular structure evokes new responses. Like Goldilocks and the three bears' beds, structures are experienced contextually/bodily/temporally.

Improvisational structures invite the protean and fleeting manifestations of particular themes, or qualities. The most open structures are those which allow writing (or dancing, marking, so forth) to move without consideration other than *shaping those particular materials*. In this text, generative structures include innerlogues, impressionistic writings, explications, fitting reflections of previous writing (flush to right margin), poetry, and letter-writing, along with spatial design. I stay alert to emergent structures. I am reflexive, hopefully without rough-riding understanding or articulation.

On the surface of this text, structure is presented as structure for forming, or generative points of departure; an equally pertinent aspect has been underarticulated although exemplified. Marinelli (1993) recognizes "an innate tendency in nature, embodied in improvisation [to create] structure from random behavior" (p. 33). For him, "when unique structures form spontaneously . . . unpredictability, non-linearity, complexity, asymmetry, and irreversibility are the rules and the possibilities are limitless," carrying with them "what we experience as the joy, fun, excitement, and enticement of

improvisation" (p. 41). Offering structure and following strange attractors both forego specific expectations.

Improvisation's unanticipated events spawn various meanings. I do not offer explanations to improvisation participants (e.g., "What I do and ways I do it may not be described."); nor do I want to primarily offer understandings to my textual participants. Yet I share the word-medium through which meanings come to my awareness. Similarly in my work as educator, I believe that not knowing what will happen feels a need; being free to not produce feels a need; doing it one's own way feels a need; interacting creatively with others feels a--often unanticipated--need. I open opportunities for something to happen--and something always happens out of the wellspring of experiencing.

In this context, where active pedagogy is a small portion, I am aware of mainly offering theory, giving few examples. I am aware that I am reluctant to delineate the *what* that occurs from opening possibilities, that is, from experiencing experience. (I exemplify.)

I stand in relationship with moving ideas which flow in my writing and with my pleasure in writing and editing and playing with ideas, interweaving occasions of significance--

to me--and keeping on. Must I find a more judicious way
to confront that a product needs to be created?

I care about awareness and each person's relationship with awareness and offer simple directions and structures for improvising generative experience. The legitimacy of improvisation exists where meaning becomes¹⁸ the participant, each experience evidencing its value. Improvisation whether enacted or responded to creates a "container" for experiencing experience, exists as progenitor of awareness, motions of meaning.

Opportunities for matters! What does this mean;
what does this assume? What between and upon
the lines of this text awakens tissue and nerves?

Possibly choose a word or concept as a structure to engage now:

Letters as one generative structure activate moving meanings without foreclosing the yet-to-be-known. In the following instance (1996), preparing myself for an interview concerning movement education, my awareness addressed "Dear Me":

The work has primarily been about individuals having time and space for self-directed learning and change, being attentive and interested in

what can come forth from one's own creativity and imagination and thoughtfulness. I've observed how close to the surface expanded awareness and fuller expression are, waiting for moments of welcome. People offer themselves wise counsel when time, space, and structures for exploration respect each individual's integrity and wonder.

Part of my express purpose in creating learning environments for deepening liveliness and self-awareness is to contradict ideas of improvement and replace them with a living encounter with one's own already present--possible--creativity and expression. People notice that creativity and expression cease to be primarily associated with conventional art forms or only self-expression. Pleasure, or enhanced appreciation, and meaning co-exist as people make clearer to themselves messages and directions which are asking to happen.

Overall my different approaches to movement and awareness are opportunities to change from the usual utilitarian and sometimes oppressive treatments of our physical, somatic being, to an attentive, caring engagement with bodily sensory awareness as a form of self-communication and engagement with others. After all movement was our first language and we never outgrow the need to move--in our own way, at our own pace.

Four structures (modifiable) for opening experiencing invite engagement:

1. If you want follow your inward awareness awhile, before returning to consider the following structure.

Walk to something that attracts your attention now. Begin to engage and experience experiencing until you decide to stop, before reading on.

First, notice what remains.

Now what is happening in transition from actual engagement?

Finally, what about instantiation of meanings in any form (e.g., words, lines, motion, sound)?

2. If you want another experiencing-structure, take time to surpass distractions to follow your sensorial experiences moment to moment. Follow experiencing until you decide to stop, before reading on.

Notice any reverberations in this transitional stage.

Fashion responses in any form of expression.

Read (or reread) your text, noticing your immediate experiencing while doing so.

3. Spontaneously record a structure for improvisation.

Engage your structure improvisationally before reading on.

Comment upon your improvisational experiencing.

Spontaneously fashion your ending.

4. Using the following stem, begin writing for five minutes without stopping your writing (repeating a word if necessary):

In my living awareness as I write

5. From Tufnell and Crickmay (1990):

LISTEN

to the sounds of the room

eyes closed in silence

What is the soundscape of this place/event?

the soundscape of the body

the breath footfall heartbeat

Warm up in silence--sounds of the room as a score

Open a door to let the sounds in from outside. (p. 180)

Would not "listening to life" (Schroeder, 1996) in the academy and elsewhere reveal difficulties and all? And would listening that hears--resonating us and moving us--initiate a form of un-silencing? Might listening to felt life through the organism¹⁹ liberate another "voice"? And as that voice is given to words, might we hear articulations of always ready responses to silence and silencing? And knowing, for instance, our own pain and strength more vividly, might we listen more attentively to others--others who may be listening to themselves in being silenced, in silence?

Fits of Interpretation

One Voice

Sometimes I contest queries or have intellectual tantrums, thinking I am encountering an enemy, only to realize--once more--I am avoiding one voice. A voice that wants to follow the initiative of spirited thought, animated recollection, lively hope--be free to ramble, mix, affirm. A voice unweakened by a pilgrimage of holy education, slaying someone else's dragons.

Oh, voice that waits deep in my chest, a simple sigh is no remedy. I confess my condition is unexercised awareness and expression.

I am close, but not touching her who needn't narrate struggle to follow action into being. Defying limits, she doesn't have to wait, to listen, to assure understanding before she speaks. How could a voice who thrives on expressing be bound to ordinary expectations?

I ask how it is that I know her, yet hear so little from her? I hear, "We converge when passion ignites attention," and I remain sceptical.

Remembering

Yes, it contradicts improvisation as methodology to know where I am going. The dance goes on, impulse, accident, attraction activate. I can forget, too, and remember frequently during an innerlogue:

Stubbornness: It's necessary to refuse what I find repugnant. That's taken as immaturity--even by myself.

Myself: I am curious how you see what you have to offer.

Stubbornness: Consistent space and time for unreasoned activity.

Myself: And, what do you find repugnant?

Stubbornness: Your attempting to show that you know a particular way, about particular things.

Myself: What alternative do you have to support a dissertation process?

Stubbornness: Use me as your nose!

Myself: To breathe, to smell--what?

Stubbornness: To find your direction. I am not talking about a once-and-for-all direction. That's why I react strongly when you set upon a course. How are you to continue to improvise if you seek to know where you're going?

Myself: You said direction. You're baffling.

Stubbornness: What is at stake here is your own compass.

Myself: Which is?

Stubbornness: That out of which improvisation resumes--or, a play on words, your encompassing possibilities. An attitude about positioning, meaning allowing direction and redirection spontaneously. It's not linear.

Myself: People make adequate and enduring use of lines and seem to profit. You're so bold, you're likely to take me in directions that could be problematic.

Stubbornness: From my perspective in writing you don't know or require to know where you are going. You emphasize continuing improvisation--correct?

Myself: Freedom in movement is one thing and freedom in text something else.

Stubbornness: Talk about that in your own words!²⁰

Upon Waking

Upon waking this morning, I felt *movement is to be moving*. A felt sense.²¹ It dawned on me: *Movement is it*. Remember to begin in/with movement experiencing. The derivatives--be they images or writing--are just that. Each derivative may have its own vivification or volatility. Felt to know! Moving is moving, infusing the dance of consideration and writing. But, again, the clarification is I am not doing my academic work to *consider* movement. I am moving through my work.

For example, with movement participants, I declare "rich and accessible movement" exists. The current isn't gone; life hasn't been postponed, the chronicle is recorded as we breathe. Linear rationality only shrouds expressivity; endlessly manifest perceptive meanings sprout. Attention may be foggy; that which animates groggy. What is missing is that we don't appreciate--that is, recognize--that we are aliveness, that we have been distanced from our sensational lives, recruited to desensitization.

Organic or Not

“Unearthing somatic wisdom. Is it always already there?”²² A pivotal question! One tilt of the sphere of experience for new possibilities; another for the already known or familiar. The medium as myself, somatized and capable of tap, tap, tapping. What makes it wisdom is that I find meaning--memory, imagery, sensation, felt experiencing--written as somatic life. I am on slippery conceptual ground because I am anxious about foundational claims. Also is it that I am embodying what language isn't?

Improvisation is innate²³ but sometimes awaits fuller play. Like any articulation, improvisation shapes responses, fused perception/cognition. Certainly attributes of relaxation and willingness influence evolvment as does confidence and past satisfaction. The immediacy of experiencing with attention directed--possibly by another--to experiential processes potentially evokes a wellspring of meaning.

Improvisation like any other medium of learning--learning itself!--is preanalytical before being configured by society in practice, sentiment, and theory. Placing attention on improvisation potentially reveals the collective and personal shadows (in the Jungian sense) where unwelcome qualities as

well as esteemed, but allocated, qualities inhere. Such disavowals and reconnections are written on behavior.

“Just do it” sounds glib but improvisation is something to do, like art forms and any practice where felt action demonstrates the propensity to create forms with meaning. The center of action and creation are inseparable until the event is past, if there are artifacts. Processes of art and artful living excite me. I long for more of those in people’s lives.²⁴ Not only enthusiasm, but sorrow: Wake up, smell the roses, hug your children, accept some differences, or get close enough to notice what they are before deciding.

Do I live exemplary myself? I am disillusioned, I realize, wanting everyone to join me in kinesthetic/tactile pleasure to save the world for hugs, make it a better place. I am saddened by cynicism--when holding onto trust feels risky. I recognize, too, that I live what matters to me more comfortably and consistently than I feel comfortable conveying in language.

Adventure

I sweat, leaping over conventional caution, to open exploration and response as means for interpretative shapes. Responding to the possibilities in simply allowing words’ motion; sometimes chaotic pressure yields form.

Outracing the prerogative to determine what is better than or what is missing from my work, I play where meanings seek and hide. Inspecting elitism stuck to arts, high peaks of accomplishment and virtuosity, me knowing I favor fecund, destructible, vulnerable, regenerative, terminal matters.

Theory

Theory points to what happens:

We are more than we think. We act more than we notice. We experience forms of living awareness with natural simplicity that defies circumscription of definition. Understanding doesn't enrich absolutely or in all ways. Organismic (human) desire and reflexiveness disrupt Western traditional restrictions.

Danger of Dancer With Metaphors

Alerted by the idea of moving words! Ha! Do I mean words moving or do I mean words that "move"? Do I mean moving words to mean words that move meaning or meanings that are depending upon words to move then? Do I mean metaphor? Ha! Do I mean *mean* as "a nasty way of saying," or am I not saying what I mean? Ha!

Metaphors as metameanings--whoops, slipped, grabbed, moving hand over hand across the abyss of discursive impulses for explanation, above the grounds for proper meanings. Ha! Laughing figuratively--that's all! Laughing on paper intimately. Ha! I am not a single word--nor are you. No single words--never alone. Ha! A metaphorical community linking words. (Don't ask me about insiders. Ha!) The dangers of dancers with metaphors: fatigue, tired words, weary acclamations, hopeful proposals, blatant denials, playful flippancy. Ha! Seriously compelled to question laughing on paper. Ha--leaving an impression!

Standing Meaning

Ground to stand on: I stand with my belief that living of the ~~body~~ is preeminent. I stand with the language of movement as a language of reality. I stand with creativity as a natural ability. I stand with experience as educator. I stand with improvisation as innately organizational. I stand with doing this writing because I find what matters to me coming into words.

Body of Knowledge

Are bodies of knowledge problematic? I look for fluidity, structure, and messy contingencies. Does discursiveness presume to be corporeal, occasion incipient decay, ambivalent striving, relentless passions?

(This is a confrontative, slightly angry voice. Where is there room for dialogue? How did I come to feel affronted or harmed? Books are hard! Books are fun! Books are rude! Books are informative! Books are wrong! Books are transport! I have to look elsewhere for the underside of my cynicism. How have I become so angry because the world doesn't enjoy itself; that the ~~body~~ is not a source of esteemed wonders and pleasures and fulfilling labour? What is this--only personal? I am pointed to thoughtful consideration of a whole raft of questions. Will I give them time?)

Where the "the body" stands as object, what happens to the vicissitudes of living? Aren't we obscuring and undermining our undeveloped ability to articulate ourselves both somatically and verbally? Besides colloquial and scholarly designations, we are masqueraded peculiarly by biological science which overtly objectifies living matters. (Yes, let the *cadaver* be a body!) A stern example: excepting a recent orientation to teaching experiential anatomy,²⁵ studies have little to do with oneself; anatomy instruction focuses

upon observation and memorization of two-dimensional illustrations or lifeless specimens. How is that for a deadly version of essentialism, objectification, constructing meaning? And where oh, where, has perception gone? Expressivity? Motility?

Here I am the one (that ~~body~~) who is site and creation. I eschew "subjectivity" along with "the ~~body~~" as dualistic destruction, and notice that *agency* is missing. I don't mean the socially proscribed or intended kind of agency; I mean motion's agency.

How are we oriented to perceive ourselves in this impossible fashion of "living in our heads"? Limited organismic awareness (proprioceptive, kinesthetic, tactile, and so on) contributes a grand share; familiar cultural institutions of denial and taboo mark us. Being directed in obvious and subtle ways from bodily experiencing to body-as-object (and producer) matters to the body commercial. This penchant for appearance and presentation has taken a toll, fooling us while robbing pleasure and our felt meanings. Reductive-thinking habits veil aliveness. The medical model veils. Hegemony determines meaning and propagates language.

Language influences experience, instituting conceptual splits, recruiting self-awareness to fragment sensation, feeling, thought, action, expression.

Thus, our everyday paucity of terminology eclipses fuller awareness--disheartens the felt-unnamed. (Noteworthy are feminist and queer critiques which valorize the not-yet-named, while endeavoring to articulate new expressions of experience.) "To be or not to be" read abstractly, disembodies experiencing and inquiry.

What--Philosophy?

To relate to philosophy as a discrete discipline, what would I choose to provisionally contain preanalytical expressibility? (Is one accurate and another not?) In my inquiry the act which stays in play is repeatedly carrying on. Now with words and concepts, the issue is how to exemplify impulses and expression when I am the site of not myself alone. (I know vividly through witnessing others that what occurs is relational, known in association.) I am not only a meeting place between the familiar freedom of movement and the sustaining freedom of language, I am also a meeting place--a fluxing place--between known and unseen influences, encountering textual and contextual others. In coming to this second language renderings occur instantaneously, reflexively, and some later as reflection. I revel, tolerate, invite, lament, extol, thrill, quake--to mention a few moves.

Associates I have found in radical hermeneutics, feminist scholarship, and nonlinear systems theory evoke interpretative responses related to being oriented improvisationally. Not inadequate, enriching my perceptions of bodies of knowledge and seasoned conceptualizations, I find what's missing reveals the particularity of my attractions. What's at stake? I am not at stake, though I am the site for this inquiry. What seems at stake are my concerns about valorizing experience as well as knowledge, participation as well as accomplishment.

A pressing declaration: I desire to make my way philosophically without denying the moving fusion of writing through improvisation. It's tricky. Borrowing an instance, Caputo shows his openness to the mystery in breaking "the spell of conceptuality, the illusion that we have somehow or another managed to close our conceptual fists around the nerve of things, that we have grasped the world round about, circumscribed and encompassed it."²⁶ I interpret: Writing writes writers.

Moving Meaning

Dancing, both as metaphor and actuality, has always been part of my own life. When I was a young woman I loved to go dancing. . . . It does not worry me nor cause me regret not to dance now, for I know there are many ways of dancing other than the literal ones. These other ways, of friendships, of work, of stubborn hoping in a terrifying world, I pray to be able to go on with until my own dance ends.

Margaret Laurence

What means to respect life?

Moving meanings constitutes an activity of this dissertational process without restricting the motion of my discoursing to words. And “improvisation is a way of shifting the boundaries within which we experience our world” (Tufnell & Crickmay, 1990, p. iii), moving our living meanings. From years of inquiry outside programs, I became accustomed to motion where meanings are written on times passing, activities of interest, pleasure’s surplus, trauma’s translations. I acquainted myself with language’s

largess. My free-range research followed attractions which felt like presents. Now I ask, "In doing so, have I been improvising?" No! Shuffling and mingling ideas or spawning connections, while sometimes generative, were not approached with discipline; shaping expression yields differently at this site.

Shaping expression through shifting--sometimes shifty--meanings launches inquiries, revitalizes reflections, disrupts the already known. As I venture adjacent to discoursing others, I sniff at doors, orient to expressive motions, spot concepts to chase or run along with. I play--less alone--while referencing my uncatalogued lifetime texts. Questions explode and expression conceives through self-as-medium--a momentum--not fixing identities of person/situation/means. I join Braidotti (1994): "The suspension of belief in fixed identities of the sexual, cultural, and political kind seems to me an essential step toward a critique of rationality as a normative notion" (p. 224). And improvisation also is susceptible to being fixed when identified with *abandonment* or *chaos*. However these share a common characteristic, evasion of controlled rationality; each is for living, the unpredictable course of life.

(Mary, my recent days of searing pain were followed by *meaninglessness*.)

A surprise! I don't remember being numbed by *meaninglessness* before.

Pain has life; meaninglessness is deadening. I visited with a friend and came "back to life." I know human care warms me during painful difficulties. Now with meaninglessness comes a fresh awareness--saving grace. How fortunate for me to know so little of meaninglessness. My "meaningless" came as aftermath of lost passion during this dissertational process, mixed with obscure dilemmas.

I know for some passion would be a luxury, and for others something to avoid. For me it's required. It's life-blood of writing as a living matter. Losing meaning, caring, the sense of valuing my improvisational experiencing in writing (or responsive editing) occurred while manoeuvring myself--oh, hindsight--into expecting that I must impart particular elaborated meanings. Yes, obliged to show and tell, be a philosopher. Bona fide! I believe now that my misery--before the numbing--was not about fear or failure; I had lost my moving site, avoided and lessened my living awareness by questioning my improvisational coursing. I tried what is deadly, to say, "Here *it* is. I understand and will explain." I don't understand--that way! I need to reapproach the ideas of Gendlin differently, find another way to not diminish my living engagement. So, this moment's answer to the question I posed about being "in excess of usual gestures of philosophical embrace" is yes!

Besides the openness of Heidegger and Caputo's bold infatuation with mystery, I haven't resonated deeply with philosophers. I've been moved by thoughtful fluency and felicity, yes. What do I resonant with of Gendlin? Is it time to not take that for granted? Yes! I'm glad you're following me, Mary. You know my original delighted reunion with Gendlin as someone who has already literally influenced the shape of my living. Then meeting Gendlin, the philosopher, I became enamored of being in the company of the already honored--attempted to borrow (and burrow) ideas which awaken my resonance without finding my way with them. Pedagogically drunk on enthusiasm! I started to want to offer promising meanings, improvement for others. I wanted to perform, be effective. Those values are problematic to free creative discipline--and the power-to-move! I'd rather be satisfied than improved myself. Mary, stiff writing these words. How to become nimble? Rather than recounting, I'll try improvising to move meanings:

How fortunate that I have so little "meaningless," that my pains are searing, awakening me to living matters and deepening compassion. Attention's general fare. To feel numb, closed from living matters--wondering about loss of soul!--silenced me. I'm warming up, becoming

more flexible, Mary. Isn't stiffness a result of holding tight to make right moves--honor the already honored? I'll try haiku waters of writing:

Motion memory now
 earth-shattering stillness now
 tears going to seed.

What? *Motion memory now*, forgetfulness, futility, more of the same; stopped by "what's" and "that's" of privileged knowledge which already knows what it knows, foreclosing the living occasions. *Earth-shattering*, threat to sensing living matters, felt ground of organism, changing focus in moving situations. A particular *stillness* humbles me. No explanations; no hopes, sorrow, rage, joy, wonder, perplexity. No meanings. *Tears gone to seed!* A promise to motion in that line. Does my writing resume from tears seeded in meaninglessness? Does sprouting anxious wonder promise the survival of awareness? Indeed, writing revives, Mary.)

Taking freedom to respond and play expressively with language's Ms. Conception, I reembrace philosophy--without defining or freezing my gestures. Gesturing conceptually, communicating figuratively, I remain committed to inquiry. Evocations occur, such as *power-to-move*, a fresh

notion for moving meaning; "Meaning is formed in the interaction of experiencing and something that functions as a symbol" (Gendlin, 1962, p. 8).

(Oh, Mary! The gold from the meaninglessness, "tears gone to seed": I *live* the meaning of life. For me meaning's in *living*. All those clubs I don't belong to are not conveyors of meaning--not the meaning I have, living awareness. What a treasure for me with few worldly rewards who sometimes needs to remember what really matters.)

Sophia, notice Caputo (1987) commenting on how "Heidegger gave up speaking of the 'meaning' of Being, because that word belonged too irrevocably to the transcendental-phenomenological tradition, despite the innovativeness of his own usage" (p. 176)? I imagine you saying, "Not my words." How about

We were never sure whether hermeneutics meant a feat of deciphering which would outdo all the others or a more austere project . . . of seeing what was going on in metaphysics. And it was no wonder that the latter sense, which was quite unusual and original, was so easily missed. (p. 176)

Tell me Sophia, what is missed? (Silence.) How about your odds on disclosure of what has been going on in metaphysics? (Silence.)

Hermeneutics? (Silence.)

Arendt²⁷ (1977) enunciates:

For even though there has never been much consensus about the subject matter of metaphysics, at least one point has been taken for granted; that these disciplines--whether you called them metaphysics or philosophy--dealt with matters that were not given to sense-perception and that their understanding transcended common-sense reasoning. (pp. 12-13)

Regarding Western gender-privileged philosophy, I am in deep water:

One of the critical issues in the debate about women in philosophy is that our culture has established a very firm dichotomy between the feminine and the notion of "rationality." In other words, the fact of being a woman has traditionally been assessed as a terrible handicap for a human being who aspires to higher cultural and theoretical achievements. (Braidotti, 1994, p. 216)

Now that that is in the open, I reenter the deep waters where experiencing conjugates my philosophy in motion. That invites a cascade of inquiries: Is experience interwoven with meaning or preceding it? Yes! When does experience become cohered? When it is *experiencing*, that is,

present, felt *implicitly* meaningful datum. . . . To call it implicitly meaningful is to note that it can give rise to many conceptualizations, and that conceptualizations can be checked against its implicit meaning. Thus,

conceptualization of it can be accurate or inaccurate, yet the felt datum itself will still be directly present" (Gendlin, 1962, p. 243).

Is it different than an event, a happening? Not necessarily because, next question is who gets to define it (or anything else for that matter)? Outside of this text, it depends! Here, assisted by Gendlin's (1962) conception, *experiencing* is "something other than any of its conceptualized aspects. Experiencing is thus *implicitly* meaningful. It is something present, directly referred to and *felt*."(p. 243). What constitutes experience? Depends. Scott's remains a pertinent reminder:

To focus on subjective "experience" as a source of valid knowledge indicates a failure to understand that experiences, as well as identities, have no real meaning prior to their interpretations, and are therefore constructed in the light of the theoretical frameworks available to understand them. (quoted in Maher & Thompson Tetreault, 1994, p. 224)

What about "no real meaning"? Meanings are what happen that we notice! I venture meaning, not constrained by "the logical dimension and the operational dimension of knowledge" (Gendlin, 1962, p. 1). Rather, "when we humans, speak, think, or read, we experience meaning" (p. 45). When shaping expression, we experience meaning. Gendlin (1978/1979) stands with Heidegger to "name 'sensing oneself living in interaction in situations'" (p. 44).

Self-as-medium, my figuration--as does Braidotti's (1994) *nomadic subject--*

allows me to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience: blurring boundaries without burning bridges. . . . [It is] a move against the settled and conventional nature of theoretical and especially philosophical thinking. . . . while taking as historical evidence the decline of metaphysically fixed, steady identities. (pp. 4-5)

Moving meaning means moving means, allowing meaning to move--corporeal figuring. Not inseparable, *meaning* is what we know-tis. Mmm!

(Sitting with *Zen Keys*²⁸ and *What is Called Thinking?*²⁹ "in my lap,"

Mary, I smile. Think about that!)

Going to rest, I pause, a reward to lie down. I notice through the skylight clouds moving across the sky seemingly in opposite directions.

Skylight bright sky

two clouds gently dividing

deep space a surface.

(I witness myself drawn in many directions, Mary. Discourses attract at the same time I resonate with Audre Lorde problematizing becoming

“occupied with the master’s concerns.”³⁰ Companion that with Marilyn Frye: “As long as each woman thinks that her experience alone is thus discrepant, she tends to trust the received wisdom and distrust her own senses and judgment.”³¹)

I appreciate that rather than holding the “idea that ultimate truth must reside either (or both) ‘nowhere’ or ‘everywhere,’” Maher and Thompson Tetreault (1994) present meaning-shaping as a moving constellation.³² They acknowledge that *positionality* reveals multiple contextual roles in social interaction and that inquiry occurs at particular, diverse--how often unanticipated?--conjunctions. My constellation of positions while writing experiencing in the academic context acknowledges silencing of living awareness and the “everything else” that remains unarticulated--or rendered inarticulate *by* articulation. J. Koltai (personal communication, November 30, 1996) notices that “instead of being the continuum of experience [language] has become a means of actually hiding experience.”

For me it seems insufficient to speak of cause and effect;
to speak of skill and mastery; to speak of intention and
outcome. What does that leave me
to speak about?

“Everything else!”³³

Joining M. Johnson in “having a world”:

Meaning includes patterns of embodied experience and preconceptual structures of our sensibility (i.e., our mode of perception, orienting ourselves, and of interacting with other objects, events, or persons). These embodied patterns do not remain private or peculiar to the person who experiences them. Our community helps us interpret and codify many of our felt patterns. They become shared cultural modes of experience and help to determine the nature of our meaningful, coherent understanding of our “world.” (quoted in Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, p. 150)

Any comments on noticing your moving meaning?

Space and time for disruption:

I declare, Patti Lather, I hope to incite inquiry in realms knowing that “between the no longer and the not yet lies the possibility of what was impossible under traditional regimes of truth in the social sciences.”³⁴

Is improvisation improvisation without meaning? Not for me! Without predetermined goals, disciplined (shaped) activities reveal how paradoxically-
-if you stop to think about it!--awareness interpenetrates existence, tirelessly

available for recreation. In the galaxy of researching literature, I notice *improvisation* variously conceived; no longer confined to the arts, improvisation is shaped and shared by educators, anthropologists, and others.

What's in Motion?

“What's in motion?” is a lively question questioning living. Initiated to improvisation through kinesthetic particularity, the *improvisation* I articulate means shaping expression in present-time experiencing. As well as being highlighted as immediacy, improvisation is variously conceived in educational and other pursuits. In textual relationship with expressive scholars, please join me for engaging *improvisation* differently.

Kirmayer (1994) investigates as he applies improvisation to meaning construction. Considering “Improvisation and Authority in Illness Meaning” and entering the clinical context, Kirmayer notices the “unique epistemological constraints [which] limit the certainty of diagnosis and so make meaning indeterminate for sufferer and healer” (p. 183). Alongside the implicit problematic of how to continue, Kirmayer identifies a telling distinction: “Clinicians work toward having ever more complete and final meanings, while patients, to live their lives, must be provided with harmonically rich themes on which they can keep improvising” (p. 209). As a

hermeneutic enterprise, psychotherapeutic interpretation contributes to the “construction of healing fictions which may attain a form of ‘narrative truth’” (p. 198).

On the narrative playground, traditional discriminating and evaluating responses are surrendered when Kirmayer (1994) improvises and moves with narrative truth’s “ability to supply coherence to inchoate experience, to situate illness in an ongoing story that affirms core personal and societal values” (p. 199). (Would such stories perceived motionally enrich the texture, color, tone, and taste of living narratives?) Kirmayer ventures

Narrative truth may also serve cathartic functions as when we cry for stories that are reminiscent of our own, yet allow enough aesthetic distance for emotional release. This makes it clear that clinical narratives are not disembodied texts but devices for the regulation and transformation of bodily experience and emotion. (p. 199)

Kirmayer (1994) warns against the dangers of “the authority of interpretations sanctioned by our implicit theories of meaning and truth [that] finalize what is fluid and in transition and thus foreclose the potential for creating new meaning” (p. 206).

The discontinuities and adaptations of women’s lives documented by Bateson (1989) reveal that

the ability to shift from one preoccupation to another, to divide one's attention, to improvise in new circumstances, has always been important to women. . . . By examining the way women have coped with discontinuities in their lives, we may discover important clues that will help us all . . . cope with our unfolding lives. (pp. 13-14)

Rather than valuing "the fluid, the protean, the improvisatory," Bateson believes that even "our aesthetic sense, whether in works of art or in lives, has overfocused on the stubborn struggle toward a single goal" (quoted in Baker-Sennett & Matusov, in press). Stressing the necessity of improvisation in a world where there's no one single true interpretation, Bateson (1994) identifies "a tension created by building pluralism on an ancient tradition of exclusive truth" (p. 101). Actually "some kinds of understanding grow only in repeated participation in forms that are not fully understood" (p. 124).

Bateson (1994) appreciates, without setting *improvisation* against repetition--allowing for continuity along with change--first, how dance styles reflect other changes in society and, secondly, how current new styles of dance are "never quite spelled out, are learned through participation and carry the lessons of a new style of learning that is crossing and recrossing the oceans and spreading through the life cycle" (p. 146). Or, in other words, relating to education and learning:

The successfully learned skills of the dance floor or the street corner can either undermine or enrich the more slowly changing classroom.

Dance styles reflect the everyday experience of encounters with others in which we do not “have all the moves,” often because newcomers have no way of discovering a stable set of rules or because the rules have changed overnight. (p. 147)

Daily life contradicts the assumption of traditional school education that “skills and rules of the game of life can and should be learned before beginning of play” (Bateson, 1994, p. 149), because largely learning occurs through participation. And Bateson declares her great resource as a teacher is

the learned willingness to wing it in public, knowing that I will be faced with unexpected questions, some of which I cannot answer. This is the challenge--improvising, learning on the job--that my students will confront all their lives. (p. 212)

The Postmodern Improviser Caraher (1995) perceives a grim situation where his peers are a vulnerable audience for products of the older (American) profit-motive generation, thus, oriented away from the “improvisatory state of becoming” (p. 25). Caraher admits to his “dichotomy between the generation X penchant for nihilism . . . and the improviser’s willful struggle and relationship to the divine impulse” (p. 27). “The term

'divine impulse' attempts to signify that which defies the frozen closure of signification" (p. 1).

From Bateson's (1994) perspective "the quality of improvisation characterizes more and more lives today, lived in uncertainty, full of the inklings of alternatives," (p. 8) and she warns that risks accompany combining multiple models as well as blindly following tradition. Living our lives as creations,

adaptation comes out of encounters with novelty that may seem chaotic. In trying to adapt, we may need to deviate from cherished values, behaving in ways we have barely glimpsed, seizing on fragmentary clues. The improvisatory artist cannot be sure whether a given improvisation will stand as a work of art or be rejected as an aberration. (p. 8)

The excitement of improvisation includes new ideas which "seem to come from nowhere" (Bateson, 1994, p. 9). And valuing peripheral vision to notice changes which aren't directly visible, Bateson calls for "exploring different translations of the familiar . . . to improvise responsibly and with love" (p. 6):

Men and women confronting change are never fully prepared for the demands of the moment, but they are strengthened to meet uncertainty if they can claim a history of improvisation and a habit of reflection. (p. 6)

Living and learning which is “everywhere founded on an improvisational base” (Bateson, 1994, p. 9) may be intentionally engaged and developed in an educational context. The research of Baker-Sennett and Matusov (in press; also see Baker-Sennett, Matusov, & Rogoff, 1992) explores “the relationships between improvisation, performance, and developmental process in schools and during everyday sociocultural activities and practices.” They posit connections between development and improvisational activities and observe that a lack of educational opportunities for improvisation to learn and develop limits children. Developmental declines that Baker-Sennett and Ceci (in press) identify concern “ideational fluency, flexibility, and improvisational problem solving during the middle elementary school years.”

Particular emphasis on the “contextualized nature of improvisation and pre-planned activities as they unfold in the classroom” (Baker-Sennett & Matusov, in press) revealed that when children’s plays were produced under the direction of first- and second-grade student volunteers, the “resulting playcrafting sessions were filled with instances of spontaneous planning and improvisation”--a sharp contrast to the adult-directed sessions. (See also Borko & Livingstone, 1989, cited in Baker-Sennett and Matusov, in press.)

Extensive literature exists about improvisation, particularly through drama or theatre games, in the classroom. However, still true today, is Donmoyer's (1983) observation of the "dearth of theorizing about improvisation in education" (p. 42) as pedagogy. He turns to Spolin's orientation to improvisation in the arts as a basis for analysis. Narrating his two days in an "exemplary improvisational classroom," Donmoyer emphasizes how the teacher gets students to think, to experiment, and overall to participate in a realm more like the skills of basketball than math. In other words, the teacher's goal "is not the sort that can be translated into a behavioral objective. The rules in basketball do not prescribe specific player moves; similarly a point of concentration cannot dictate specific student behavior" (p. 43).

The pedagogical version of Spolin's point of concentration is [a] problem-solving method, which is the "ball" Diemo [the teacher] carries from group to group. He continually throws "the ball" to his students, expecting them to carry it in their individual work and to pass it back and forth as they work together in groups. (p. 43)

Compare that orientation to *skill* with Schrag's notion of "the virtue of being thoughtful":

The thoughtful person avoids both impulsive and stereotyped responses because he or she is wont to do so. Thoughtfulness becomes instinctive,

but it is not blind or mechanical since it derives from an appreciation of its own value. . . . [and] is *not* learning to perform a particular action nor is it acquiring a method of obtaining a particular result. (quoted in Rosario, 1991, p. 179)

Yes, “ordinary living requires constant improvisation, yet schools seldom provide opportunities to develop this ability” (Donmoyer, 1983, p. 43). And, as arts educator Joan Erikson (1988) adds, “The great danger in putting heavy emphasis on [traditional] skills without having first developed sensitivity, playfulness, and imagination is that the end product may be mere virtuosity” (pp. 92-93).

Mirroring my frontispiece to Mettler’s book (mentioned above), Donmoyer (1983) also quotes Spolin’s insight:

Authoritarianism is more difficult to recognize in approval than in disapproval--particularly when a student begs for approval. It gives him a sense of himself, for a teacher’s approval usually indicates progress has been made, but it remains progress in the teacher’s terms, not his own. (p. 42)

Lining “up two disparate, often mutually exclusive fields” (p. 21), Diamond and Lefkoff (1992) combine Spolin’s practices and negotiation, or conflict resolution to prevent litigation. Sharing “common philosophies

about problem solving, learning by experience, and group dynamics" (p. 22), both

improvisation and negotiation fall under the larger heading of creative problem solving, . . . linked to experiential learning: the organic acquisition of knowledge (as opposed to learning by rote). Direct experience is a major factor in the release of creativity so vital to both situations. . . . For negotiation, experiencing the process translates into a higher receptiveness to the solutions proposed, since the negotiators suggested the solutions in the first place. (p. 24)

Developing improvisational skills through drama, as a tool for education with high school students, Martin (1994) notes these are not measurable by standard tests, "they show themselves through increased confidence, a willingness to express ideas without shame, an ability to listen to others, to share the spotlight, to cooperate in the act of artistic creation" (p. 170). At the same time, students come to know other sides of one another, increase awareness of the feelings of others to become a tighter-knit group.

Both Donmoyer (1983) and Wassermann (1992) refer to echoes of Dewey in the pedagogy of experiential learning, sharing and solving problems, and playing games. Wassermann's appreciation for play extends to her (accurate) subtitle: "How Messing Around Can Win You the Nobel Prize." Awareness and self-direction reside in "Serious Play in the Classroom." "I believe," states

Wassermann, "that with play, we teachers can have it all: the development of knowledge, of a spirit of inquiry, of creativity, of conceptual understanding." How many times has this been said and worth reiterating: "The creation of new ideas does not come from minds trained to follow doggedly what is already known" (p. 133)? A discussion of how play works to produce results elaborates experiential learning and resonates with improvisation:

Play is generative. . . . Play allows for risks to be taken, and the taking of risks is a normal part of play. . . . In play, there is no fear of failure, because there is no failure. . . . Play builds autonomy. Through play, self-initiating behaviors are developed. . . . Play gives the hands something to do . . . [although some of us] were taught that children should not "fiddle." (p. 135)

The comfort zone of the teacher matters and Wassermann (1992) gives guidance for assessing fit between methodology, educational goals, and teacher implementation in "developing curriculum experiences." Koren (1994) works with teachers, exploring their movement experience, especially "the link between body experience and personal practical knowledge, leading to a deeper understanding of their learning/teaching situation" (p. 21). And Cummins and Lee (Owen, 1995) report on "Moving Meanings," describing their movement project with government office workers.

Transgression With Resistance

Resistance amplifies transgression; what's in motion practices questioning what's missing. Joining disciplined expression along the way, transgression with resistance advocates for the uncomfortable and the unlovely. Meaning poses difficulty; the neglected and rejected taken-in-for-granted throw fits. (I am not the least to be surprised--"to be moved."³⁵)

One slight of hand holds my reluctance in attaching to thoughtful words of others travelling on paved conceptual roads. In other words, I prefer nomadic possibilities without an itinerary, sometimes with companions.

(Yo, Mary, I'm identifying with Freud's noticing the artists arrive first. Me arriving after the philosophers! After my varied improvisations I bump into writings always already articulating more intricately. Or--being respectful of my particularity--articulating differently.)

Body

Connie: Okay, I have stopped. You have my attention--

~~Body~~: At last! You see me written by others--not crossed out--and continue to research texts devoted to me. And here we are only now!

Connie: What I began saying was “You have my attention because those writings which concern you are compelling.” I find myself going back to others’ attempts to redress *mind/body, bodymind, psychobiology*, and so on.

Body: At the same time, crossing me out! Now here you are contending with me.

Connie: I don’t miss the humor, or perplexity.

Body: Oh!

Connie: You “exist” for others. I am not denying that. I respect efforts to valorize your “representations,” attempts to esteem your unnamed integrity. I notice the significant and fashionable discourses, and accept that others honor you as a theoretical construct.

Body: And you don’t?

Connie: I don’t. I notice others’ ideas about **body** attract me as intriguing and daring activity of inscription. Yes, some take new directions away from objectification to exit the Cartesian Theatre.³⁶ Noticing living awareness, noticing what’s to notice and what’s in motion, interests me: alive human organismic functioning--candid, animated.

Body: (silent)

Connie: (silent)

Body: Elaboration?

Connie: I am weary considering acknowledgement in terms of **body**/(fill in the blank) that perpetuates the illusory dilemma. Whether I speak or not I

live influenced by versions of your existence--in that way I am culturally given to you! Here, I'll let a colleague³⁷ speak for me: "Connie, you speak many languages of the body. And none of them is generated by a desire to wrestle with the mind/body split, because you, it seems to me, confront that split only in the way people keep presenting it to you. You don't confront it in your own living. You're own language of the body is not a language that has anything to do with separation or split or connection between the mind or the body. They are, they simply are."

~~Body:~~ (indignantly) You're forgetting, too! What about Barasch's vivid language you copied: "The body is our very presence in this world, the space only we can occupy, the place where the self's private story is given breath, tongue, visible limb. It is the body which often speaks most loudly for authentic being, confronting us not with how we *should* feel, but how we actually do. When we say we feel 'self-conscious,' we mean those very moments when our mouths parch, our voices choke, our faces flare hot with embarrassment."³⁸ And, you must like this from Merleau-Ponty: "It is not to the physical object that the body may be compared, but rather to the work of art"³⁹

Connie: Again, you've got me! Recall Barasch also quoting Nietzsche: "Your body and its great reason: that does not say, 'I,' but does 'I.'"⁴⁰ Inseparable! We share the last word.

~~Body:~~ Inseparable.⁴¹

(Connie: I am not going to provoke ~~Body~~ by asking, "How does one ~~body~~ know another?" Nor will I emphasize Hanna: "To say that the soma has an element of timing is the same as saying that the soma is not a thing or objective body, but rather, *is a process*. That is another reason for holding to the word *soma* rather than the word *body*. The latter suggests something that is static and solid. A soma is neither static nor solid; it is changeable and supple and is constantly adapting to its environment."⁴²)

(~~Body~~: She obscures her difficulty deleting practices of *embodiment* discourse from this text, beginning, "D. Johnson cites a 'movement of resistance [that] can be discerned as early as the middle of the last century.'⁴³ Writings about and by innovators--'muffled by the din of dominant voices'--compose an array of 'strategies for recovering the wisdom and creativity present in breathing, sensing, moving, and touching.'⁴⁴")

Validity Pounces

Shocking myself, hearing: "There's more than one way to skin a cat." (A dead cat?) "No, not necessarily brutal," I hear. (I am not working with dead cats, nor skinning cats--am I?) Yes, I notice necromancy among bodies of knowledge, but what's this: There's more than one way to skin a cat?

Oh, *that* cat--alive to me--may pounce for validity!

Staying with dead cat: *Deadness*--lessening liveliness, not necessity.

Deadness as nonrecognition; others may be "dead to the world" I present.

While threatened, I validate my ability to play cat--to be skinned; I have other "lives." (Nakedness in public withstands the perspectival; the emperor survives in more ways than one.) I am stretching, a pliant cat, leaving validity to retrospection--may be "me--ow"!

Suspending Resistance

Doubtfully: You are not wise to forget that resistance is neither faceless nor stupid.

Connie: Okay, I am listening.

Doubtfully: Involved deeply--the way you ask--is *not to know*. You are onto something with structure, but get off track with topic.

Connie: I feel a resonance to what you say. How about if I ask for someone who has resonance with not knowing?

Doubtfully: Clever.

Connie: Anyone?

Emptiness: Time for me.

Connie: How have you been occupied along my way?

Emptiness: Holding space.

Connie: I do that for moving others.

Emptiness: And I can comment.

Connie: I am listening.

Emptiness: Avoid issues of content. These continue to come in new forms.

Engage in distinguishing between form which requires continual examination and forming which evolves in writing.

Connie: Are you recommending I delete much of what I've written?

Emptiness: How does it feel to focus your felt sense of distinguishing between form which requires your continual examination and forming which evolves in writing?

Connie: Now I realize you aren't implying what to do. I can allow the two to coexist. (I think of Heidegger's "calculative thinking" and "meditative thinking.") Both are distinguished means. You're meaning to distinguish them. Am I getting to the heart of your suggestion?

Emptiness: Yes. Felt sense then of form which requires your continual examination.

Connie: I immediately respond "extant discourses" and recall Hanh's declaration that "if we cling to a certain number of concepts and consider them as being reality, we lose reality."⁴⁵ With "forming which evolves in writing," I acknowledge being in motion, on the move--like now. Content

isn't bound; meanings evolve--and dissolve! Emptiness, the invisible is palpable, eh?

Later eruption, remembering Emptiness:

Connie: It's not that I know what to avoid; I recoil while participating. I puzzle through the Cartesian aftermath in writing and risk deadening hoping enlivening. And I honor my difficulties.⁴⁶

(Mary, poet Garrett Kaoru Hongo in "The Legend" appears to be living difficulty: "Tonight, I read about Descartes . . . and I feel so distinct from the wounded man lying on the concrete / I am ashamed."⁴⁷)

I drop the following:

Doubly Validated

Neurologist Antonio Damasio's *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* exposes scientific facility with poetic liveliness. And he favors Faulkner's exhortation: "The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail."⁴⁸

In Damasio's words, "One *can* die of a broken heart."⁴⁹ Nonetheless, "neither anguish nor the elation that love or art can bring about are devalued by understanding some of the myriad biological processes that make them what they are. . . . Our sense of wonder should increase before the intricate mechanisms that make such magic possible."⁵⁰

Considering moving through life:

Experience shapes the design of [neuron] circuits. Moreover, in some systems . . . synaptic strengths can change throughout the life span, to reflect different organism experiences, and as a result, the design of brain circuits continues to change. The circuits are not only receptive to the results of first experience, but repeatedly liable and modifiable to continued experiences.⁵¹

From the proposal that "the strengthening of rationality probably requires that greater consideration be given to the vulnerability of the world within,"⁵² Damasio moves forward to Descartes' error--"or better still, *which* error of Descartes' do I mean to single out?"⁵³ He answers, using Descartes' words:

From that I knew that I was a substance, the whole essence or nature of which is to think, and that for its existence there is no need of any place, nor does it depend on any material thing; so that this "me," that is to say, the soul by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from body, and is

even more easy to know than the latter; and even if body were not, the soul would not cease to be what it is.⁵⁴

Actually Descartes' expressiveness stirs me, *and* I suffer distinctions
Damasio cites of a Cartesian aftermath of

separation between body and mind, between the sizable, dimensioned, mechanically operated, infinitely divisible body stuff, on the one hand, and the unsizable, undimensioned, un-pushpullable [sic], nondivisible mind stuff; the suggestion that reasoning, and moral judgment, and the suffering that comes from physical pain or emotional upheaval might exist separately from the body. Specifically: the separation of the most refined operation of mind from the structure and operation of a biological organism.⁵⁵

Before Damasio's benediction, notice Descartes' self-chosen epitaph, translatable as "He who hid well, lived well."⁵⁶ What--Descartes' secrets, too?

Damasio's revelation:

Perhaps the most indispensable thing we can do as human beings, every day of our lives, is remind ourselves and others of our complexity, fragility, finiteness, and uniqueness. And this is of course the difficult job, is it not: to move the spirit from its nowhere pedestal to a somewhere place, while preserving its dignity and importance; to recognize its humble origin and vulnerability, yet still call upon its guidance. A difficult and

indispensable job indeed, but one without which we will be far better off leaving Descartes' Error uncorrect.⁵⁷

Thinking as Burping

Thinking, reflexive like a burp, allows thinking about thinking. I keep moving, thinking my thoughts about thinking, giving opportunity for *thoughtfulness* to explode *thinking*, unpack characters, dumping poor cousins from the bag in questionable costumes.

"Go for the jugular"--thank you, Goldberg⁵⁸--welcomes loosening thinking motionally--not rote regurgitation, only occasional burping. I am writing thinking: Are we thinking when ruminating courses of given meanings? (Rolling the barrel, am I tasting the brew?) And, am I thinking when I let what comes out of my mouth speak for thinking? I am thinking moving, discrediting Cartesian dispersion of somatic wisdom's instances.

I think I think in ways unknown to me and as dreaming. Not of dreamtime, I have time to dream. *I think therefore can I not think?*

Thinking as viscera-specific locations generates commotions. A notion: Stop grabbing thoughts to punish thinking's motional manoeuvres! Like Simone Weil's God, is thinking waiting for our notice?

Thinking as an activity: Is thinking about thinking different than thinking about cats? Whose philosophy would pose: "Yes, indeed, distinctly different than thinking about cats"? Dogs, zebras, muscats--or amazed rats? Yes, different than animal thoughts! Definitely--instinctively--different from animal thoughts! Our thoughts-of-culture being variously digestible in the human tract.

Concepts

Connie: Ho, Emptiness! Not to pursue knowledge or demand understanding, is that your perspective? (long pause) Does your silence favor indivisibility? How to escape the dualism at hand--two hands? Yes, I have one head, one heart, one womb, and what about them together? An exciting combo--yes, of disparate concepts. Let there be words!

Head: I'm first.

Womb: I'm not last.

Heart: I'm pulsing and you?

Connie: I'm listening

Womb: We are usually not so close.

Connie: We are usually not talking

Heart: While we're together, let's create something to remember.

Head: To remember--simple enough.

Heart: Remember and cherish.

Womb: A child.

Head: Oh!

Heart: A child of love.

Head: And understanding.

Connie: And passion.

Womb: Conceiving our meanings together to create a child of understanding, love, and passion.

Connie: What is understanding, Womb?

Womb: That embrace which allows for difference.

Connie: What is understanding, Head?

Head: That embrace which allows for similarities.

Connie: Heart?

Heart: That embrace which allows for multitudes.

Connie: Do you have any questions for me?

Heart: What does it mean to you to be honest?

Connie: Earnestness and wavering awareness of my partial perspective--and my dishonesty.

Womb: What is holding still?

Connie: Ah, that I feel!

Head: When you say that you don't understand and you come to us and you let us speak, what happens to you in the process?

Connie: (smiling) I am speechless!

Head, Womb, Heart: Do you understand?

Connie: Yes, I am understanding that speaking and writing are means of understanding--process not thing. Thank you.

Eruption days later:

Connie: Head, are you alias Brain?

Brain: Oh, yes, knowing me as organ means acknowledging my connection with heart and womb! We're inseparable, one organism.

Connie: Excuse my cultural handicap. I still walk baby steps--stumble, fall, and relentlessly "right" myself--connecting articulation and living awareness.⁵⁹

What?

In the middle of me, next to my felt sense of refusal an umbilical cord comes into focus. Yes! Vulnerable in substance and powerful in existence, pulsing life, connecting organism to organism. An image of a fetus superimposes the cord. What is a child in the amniotic fluid connected by a cord to another life? My first philosophical question!

Around me the smell of dye. My eyes sting from the intensity.
I am surrounded by books of Knowledge. My body-of-knowledge recognizes
affinities, moments of experience captured here and there in still,
mute metaphors of materialized ideas. I say I know
the difference between living and contemplation, pulsing
and speculation, but here the boundaries are blurred.

I feel overcome. My breathing shallow, I fear the alluring grasp. I feel
hesitance turning away, wanting distance, though
already twice removed from the creators of ideas stilled. What
were they other than breathing once?

Walking away, I wonder what becomes me? Can I weave interlocking
experience and meaning in my printed bodies? Write my
questions on nerve fibre? Wanting to connect our bodies-of-knowledge
sometime, to notice what we bring to bodies of knowledge.

You may guess that I feel alert in the room of Knowledge. Though the air
is stuffy from reason, passion in still life steadily embraces me.

In experience meanings leap from perch to perch,
shifting shapes, stretching space, flexing language.

Moving Knowing

It is not we who play with words, but the nature of language plays with us. . . . It likes to let our speech drift away in the more obvious meanings of words. It is as though we have to make an effort to live properly in language.

Martin Heidegger

I:⁶⁰ Make an effort to express living properly, where “properly” grows out of “*L. proprius*: ‘one’s own’”⁶¹ responsibility to awareness.

Passion: And the sensuousness of language!⁶²

I speak first not as mover or writer, but as living awareness. In my actions I experience, offer, and observe improvisation. I engage passionately with experiential offerings which others fill with their values and meanings. Expression and meaning constitute the play of improvisation. Learning in this territory grows through experiencing.

With improvisation how does *knowing* stand? Very capably--with endless positions and motional qualities; knowing considers itself in motion. In

articulating language, knowing moves meaning. And, at this site, interplaying with textually (and contextually) expressive scholars, I know awareness differently--leaving signs behind.

Knowing is also to notice. First, recall Gendlin's distinction between *experience* and *experiencing*, and next follow his move with Heidegger's notion of *Befindlichkeit* which Gendlin (1978/1979) translates as "how-are-you-ness" and "self-finding" (p. 44). (Not a once-and-for-all kind!) Gendlin distinguishes *Befindlichkeit* from usual views of feelings, affects, and moods:

1. Heidegger's concept refers to something both inward and outward, but before a split between the inside and outside has been made.
2. *Befindlichkeit* always already has *its own understanding*. . . . We may not know what the mood is about, we may not even be specifically aware of our mood, nevertheless there is an understanding of our living in that mood. . . . in some intricate way. How we are faring in these intricacies is in our mood. We may not know that in a cognitive way at all; it is in the mood nevertheless, implicitly.
3. This understanding is *implicit*, not cognitive in the usual sense. . . . It is sensed or felt, rather than thought--and it may not even be sensed or felt directly with attention. It is not made of separable cognitive units or any definable units. When you are asked, "How are you?" you don't find only recognizable, but always also an implicit complexity. *Certainly one can*

reflect and interpret, but that will be another, further step [italics added].
(pp. 44-45)

(A gift of conception! Having considered--without realizing till now--
living-awareness as a fused idea, Shift surprised me, shouting, "*Living*
awareness." Mary, I have a more vivid sense how experiencing and
knowing conjoin!)

I situate moving knowing "in the middle" between unarticulated living
awareness and articulated experiencing, to esteem self-as-medium. This
articulator of shifting matters and proliferating "I's" already sides with
human experiencing, irreducible to imposed or derived forms whether from
society, history, or politics (Gendlin, 1989, 1992b, 1992c, in press). From
modernism to postmodernism, Gendlin (1989) notices

There has been no change in this assumption that experience is derived
from imposed forms. But the loss of the human subject did become more
apparent, when it was replaced in its formal role as a source of imposed
order. (p. 201)

However, the "now rejected subject [is actually] Descartes' and Kant's"
(Gendlin, 1989, p. 201). Thus Gendlin's theorizing resonates what I perceive as
circumscription of *lived experience*: "Reflection on lived experience is always
recollective; it is reflection on experience that is already passed or lived

through" (van Manen, 1990, p. 10). In addition to reflection, where is lived--particularly, bodily--experience, calling for yet-to-be-articulated experiential vocabularies?

I have similar concerns about nothing-but-language perspectives and notice Gendlin (1992a) also taking exception to "nothing human is *without* language, or *prior to*, or *outside* language" (p. 341) and counterpoising "that something prior to language *continues to function . . . after language*" (p. 342). (While my perspective is partial differently, I imagine a common earnestness to attune and be with/in the difficulty and play of articulating living matters through other discourses.)

To phenomenology and existential philosophers, Gendlin (1969), aware that description is never assumption-free, offers another "relationship between formulations and the experiencing (phenomenon) on which we try to 'base' them" (p. 197), that is, his version of explication:

What an "explication" statement says cannot be equated with experience; yet it is not just *arbitrarily* imposed on experience. We are working with a relationship between formulation and direct experience which is neither one of correspondence (which would assume that our schematic patterns are already in, read in, posited into experience), nor are our formulations just arbitrary. (p. 197)

(Mary, literature! Isn't that one realm which awakens awareness and redirects our attention? Possibly we confound felt life with fiction. I ask you, "When the book is closed what happens to living awareness?")

Not bound to text:

Meaning is formed in the interaction of experiencing and something that functions as a symbol. This fact has been viewed as a troublesome chaos instead of as the basic source of order in human behavior. For, when unsymbolized meanings occur in interaction with experiencing, they change. And when one employs symbols to attend to a felt meaning, it changes. (Gendlin, 1962, p. 8)

Carrying Forward

Can improvisation be conceived as a particular version of focusing? I like the association. Gendlin's (1978/1979; see also 1996) descriptor *content mutation*, pertaining to verbal problem-solving, resonates with the articulations of shaping expression :

In retrospect the steps can make a chain of thought, but moving forward each step comes by contradicting the previous one. What does this contradicting? It is the "sensing" that happens during the silences between. She has the "feel" of it, and this feel is each time different than what she has said [before]. (p. 51)

To valorize *carrying forward* requires a decisive shift. Gendlin (1989) declares: "I reject the theoretical assumption of imposed order, both in therapy and in philosophy, in favour [sic] of a more complex relation and source of novelty I call 'carrying forward'" (p. 202; see also 1992b).

How can I conceive my practice belonging to articulation
of both my original language of movement
and my inherited vernacularity? Attention and
awareness, the rush of life,
quiet corners of inquiry, and pulsing
actions and exclamations.
Keep inquiring: "How to stay in play
with people in motion--
careening meanings between us?"

(Gendlin claims Heidegger insists the only way to "do ontology" is experientially!⁶³ And here's an evocative experiential symbol, ".....,"⁶⁴ to toss into the mix, Mary. That's Gendlin's signifier--akin for me to Mettler's *creative pause*, out of which the next moves occur.)

Gendlin (1989) locates in living situations the of our bodily implying, related to “‘carrying forward’ as a pre-separated multiplicity” (p. 211). That kind of “functioning-in (with, from)” (p. 211) for me is “where” improvisational arts and expressive meanings cohere. No predetermined or arbitrary course for shaping expression supersedes living awareness. In other words, “The steps are not already there. . . . The previous step functions in producing the next, but not by denying it, not by imposing its form on what follows” (p. 208).

And our bodily interactional intentionality--here Gendlin (1992a) reads Merleau-Ponty “forward”--is not latent:

It is not merely a philosophically-inferred role only of a *pre-linguistic, pre-cultural* body. Rather, the body’s interactional intentionality must be understood as always still with us, now. In sensing itself the body functions as our sense of each situation. It would be a gigantic omission to miss this role of the body’s self-sentience, and to try to constitute the world out of percepts of the five senses. (p. 345)

Familiar examples would be our everyday moments of forgetting “that” which was not there in words--yet: “It was a felt sense of *being about to speak*, a felt sense of being about to say something”(Gendlin, 1965, p. 247). In the following lengthy explication, Gendlin, referring to speaking, reading, and thinking, points out

We employ only a few words, and perhaps a few gestures, but our sense of the context, of what we are reading, hearing, and what we are about to say, is a feeling, a felt sense. Every thought or action implicitly involves a thousand prethematized aspects: your knowledge of the situation, your training, your use of words, your sense of the relevance of what you say and think, the reasons for being about to say what you are about to say, the preceding conversation and its points which you implicitly retain, the discussion at *this* juncture, the characteristics of others in the room, and a thousand other things. If you have to express explicitly any of these very numerous implicit aspects of what you are about to say, obviously you won't get to say what you *are* about to say. But none of this is in words. Even this which you *are* about to say, is itself not yet in words, not yet formed in the kinds of patterns it will have when you express it verbally. As yet, it is only a "this," something you feel you are about to say. (pp. 248-249)

(Mary, I just realized my pleasure in moving knowing is enjoying my way with thinking! And, I want a plaque of this: "More can happen, than follows from formed forms alone."⁶⁵ Or this: "Forms never work alone, always only within a wider and more intricate order."⁶⁶)

In his later work, Gendlin (see especially 1992b, 1992c, in press) thinks about language as exceeding logical forms and distinctions and as more than a conceptual system:

Language is implicit in the body. The body knows language. But language is not a closed system. The body can always give the words more feedback than can possibly be derived just from concepts or forms or distinctions. . . . It is the physical body that you enter to get to the *intricacy* that I am talking about. (1992c, p. 193)

I improvise allowing knowing its liberty in living perspectives. . . . I trust the writing, like a dance that continues working through the medium of myself. . . . My intention is not to lead; I prefer words moving beyond conception, not steadied for still life and acquisition--rather felt for their shifting motion, changeling thoughts.

Language Escapades

Jacques's Quotas

Rereading notes taken from Jacques Daignault⁶⁷--beginning "Why not connect language and feelings?"--carried me back to earlier writing. Below, Daignault's words are mingled with mine for what happens. Daignault in quotas, that is, "quotes." I retain the typo in acknowledgement of Jacques's play with letters and motional meanings.⁶⁸

I relate with language in particular ways, ways that position me and design me. "Why not connect language and feelings?" While positioning is seldom considered unintended action, opposition often lies in camouflage.

"Understanding what we do and what we feel is more than just to express what we feel." In my innerloguing meanings have surprisingly congealed before my responsive eyes. "Writing brings us something out of our control." Dialogue has suffused my works with discourse. "A dialogue with the language itself, the many ways we can picture ourselves." Other improvisational writing has fashioned unimagined presentations and playfully tailored language, words slipping from disguise. "Speaking [as opposed to writing] can be clear, feeling we are honest."

Are familiar sites and perfidious sightings--either or in union--going to carry me through Deceptive Pass where complicity questions itself? With value and truth left to make amends, can I escape defending and engage questioning? What difference does risking propulsion--sliding along my self-reflexive mobius strip--create? "Not under control of the self--a play between self and language! A lot of meanings are coming out of words themselves, not self and intention."

In bringing myself to the critical mass of deciding how residing in academia affects my own course, reflection no longer allows me to linger with

ascribing or describing relationships with critical discourses (even counter-discourses), nor associating myself with detectable heritage or lineage as evidence, nor even constructing (or deconstructing) redemptive dreams of merit. None of these tug at the veil--all one-does-not-speak-of. "Must be aware of why we say something is good or bad. . . . Broach a topic--without making rules or following conventions of logic."

I motion that we do not adjourn: When then and now mingle beyond recognition I write and write and write, responding and creating. I write in motion to open the option to be duplicitous and complicitous on my way to allowing the reign of multiplicity legitimacy in my eyes. "Relate to what you feel; the question of truth is always an issue, not an answer; so to subjectivity, the self, ego." It is a delectable flaw that multiplicity invites its enemies for lunch. So multiplicity stands for self-importance, savoring option, and strength of resolve to be so very open to possibility. Like hors d'oeuvres served as meals, but creating an illusion of sustainment. "How can we get rid of ego in the western thought? Get rid of or build the ego not as answers--as an issue--is to say we cannot get rid of, but ego is a problem."

Sustainable discourse: What is it? "Our current education is just rationalizing (knowing things), but not understanding. Need the connection between knowledge and feelings." Who is willing to tackle that one in the

name of self-disclosure--maybe complicity cops? "Truth is expressed locally very differently."

Inquiry: That you wring your hands of discourse is rather a high-brow affectation. Aren't you detecting the discourse in this course?

Connie: Yes. But with a difference. I have nothing to make.

Inquiry: Interpretation, please. You "have nothing to make"?

Connie: Yes. Making in the sense of restitution, redemption, or emancipation.

Inquiry: Which leaves you?

Connie: Awkward.

Inquiry: And?

Connie: Amused.

Inquiry: That sounds like self-disclosure. No one may be interested. Recall: "Not allowed feelings in education."

Connie: Interest isn't required. Presents are required.

Inquiry: Do you mean presence?

Connie: No, presents. That is what is given in return. Presence is an illusion. No evidence. In the exchange of presents then something occurs that transacts, joins, sustains, carries forward.

Inquiry: You're sounding rather absolute! Anyway, complicity isn't accounted for.

Connie: There is complicity, but when it exists “between,” something may be carried forward. The complicity that is problematic for me has to do with not taking action, or motion being truncated and channelled, because of what I am not allowed to do--by myself even if in the disguise of “them.” No free flow, only insinuations of what is not-quite too much, only a little bit of puff.

Inquiry: Your vocabulary is rather unusual.

Connie: My vocabulary is a translation.

Inquiry: Of what from where?

Connie: Of felt meaning from events which affect me. I say “puff” because there is a particular exertion that accrues from partial imitation, like keeping up with those we mimic, on the spot and at sufficient speed. To prevent puffing, personal rhythm and impulse reign.

Inquiry: Any risk of self-complicity?

Connie: I won't ask you if you know what you mean by that? For me this self you speak of exists (in various forms) in relationship to context. Without division of abstraction, I can hardly sit in my own lap.

Inquiry: Cute metaphor--and is it hard to sit in your own lap?

Connie: You are the one for this occupation. “Autobiography to not just talk about self, but to give language the opportunity to speak to you and tell you a few things you forgot.”

Inquiry: You are now the one to lead with this inquiry. “Expertise is not the only foundation for meaning.”

Connie: Glad we could meet and part. "What about ongoing dialogue without fixing goals--not caring to come to consensus? We try to write, use language, to help us to find concepts--concepts which is to think, to be a philosopher."

Inquiry: You might have said you relate with language in particular ways, ways that position you and design you. What about that?

Connie: Yes, I relate with language in particular ways, ways that position me and design me. While positioning is seldom considered unintended action, opposition often lies in camouflage.⁶⁹

Knowledge in Question

Connie: Knowing, you are being celebrated nowadays for your multiple forms and multiplicity, displaced from metanarratives. I turn to you as awareness, while others speak of revaluing feeling and remedying dualism and foundational claims. I engage more than explicate thee and wonder what happens to knowledge. Not offering knowledge is that what characterizes the arts, distinguishing them from other disciplines? Aren't you, Knowing, constantly in motion?

Knowing: Both more of the same, not more of the same.

Connie: And knowledge doesn't necessarily stand still. Yet, I realize it isn't knowledge that I animate in improvisational knowing. Nor is it knowledge I valorize in writing. I engage improvisation, knowing meanings move

knowing. As now, I converse with you as a means of bringing forth, of noticing what's to notice.

Knowing: And in relating to knowledge, notice you are courting definitive stances regarding knowledge and myself?

Connie: I wonder about knowing and knowledge as tangential, noticing you are given--verbally--to multiple activities while knowledge is immaculately conceived, "noured." Yet, I believe you are *for* knowledge!⁷⁰

(Moments ago I read Mary Catherine Bateson discussing "distractions as a counterpoint to the working day" and thought of you, Mary. She goes on: "This is one of many styles of working, a common style for women who have spent years with one ear open for the cry of an awakened child, the knock of someone making a delivery, the smell of burning that warns that a soup left to simmer slowly has somehow boiled dry."⁷¹

As I happen to be simmering soup a chain of connections began and I paused the action for awhile to attend the soup and other things. Returning now to you--with a sense of difficulty--I'm striving rather awkwardly to disclose something of my ambivalence and relationship to knowledge. Saying that helps! I'm ambivalent *and* constantly in relationship with knowledge--my own moving meanings and others' more or less digestible versions.

Back again, I postponed carrying forward. So, Mary, Bateson's noticing opened my awareness to how obscure my sense of knowing how I move through life, especially in relationship to knowledge, is. I'm lost. What I mean is that I'm ill-defined. My relationship with knowledge--and language, more later--has been silenced. Oh, the difficulty with words! I say silenced, and I don't mean not lived. I mean I have not entered or cultivated knowledge as given, or given knowledge value for that matter! Oh, here, I feel the tension, wanting epiphany: I do not recognize *how* I live with knowledge!)

Knowing: Yes, not necessarily distinguished, you are dictating a dualism here, myself for and against knowledge--both verb and noun. Will you consider that I serve as means by which living matters are described? Do you embrace description?

Connie: Ambivalently. I question describing rather than experiencing, where the former attempts to pass as counterfeit for the latter.

Knowing: Isn't that your same dilemma in other words?

Connie: Yes, I know I value knowing experience over knowledge.

Knowing: Not a problem for me!

Connie: Yes, and you know it has been a course for me to "come alive" through disciplined freedom of improvisation, slowly resuming kinesthetic

and proprioceptive sensitivity. Do you notice any analogy with the shifts my dissertational course has taken through a multitude of theme-prompted improvisations?

Knowing: We aren't conventional in all our manifestations.

Connie: I know and moving happens without explanation or permission.

Later eruption:

Connie: Hey, Knowing, I get it! I am *not separate* from knowledge in knowing!⁷²

Moving Knowing

I write as I dance--not for performance--for experiencing what occurs. Not to produce a product, to live. Do I become writing by writing as I become dancing? While something becomes possible, something moves aside. Language embodies contradiction and conjunction (thank you), does not embody me. Language does not embody me; language embodies signs and concepts. But does it embody meanings? (I drop this question on the avenue.)

Coming to others through meanings, I occupy my second language which ingeniously recalls me to its limitations. Gratefully engaging language saying,

“Play!”⁷³ My facility—courage and playfulness—with improvised sentient motion has transferred to research writing, I say.

Feeling encumbrance of conceptualization, I do not articulate verbally with the agility I move, nor revel as much in subtlety and nuance. So what to associate with my expectation that I be satisfied with words? Is it the improvisational nature of language? I enjoy moving, but language is neither sustainable nor satisfying in being felt. Not yet! I believe that’s a move from here, my newest discipline.

In the Dark

I wait, aware of my notion that knowing moves me—as motion does in dance. I wait—a creative pause.

I am moved by a question asked of me: “Do you think we can unlock body knowledge without language?”⁷⁴

Connie: Language, my dear companion. I welcome you! I am surprised and relieved to know that.

Language: (silent)

Connie: (silent)

Language: Ask your questions.

Connie: I wonder what makes liveliness of language?

Language: (smiling) And?

Connie: I wonder how to stay alive and in my organismic awareness and with you?

Language: More?

Connie: I appreciate you and wonder whether having to separate in this way--our manner of "dualing"--holds promise. I know with you I discern. Is that your function?

Language: My functions are various.

Connie: Multifarious!

Language: (smiling) You speak of the organism's function and form.

Connie: Yes. Are you hinting at something?

Language: Carry on!

Connie: You demand a lot, which I knew when I began. My mood right now is not celebratory, and I expect to celebrate. Not for imprinting you on these pages, rather for carrying you forward. Already I attend differently in conversing, thoughtfully sensing situations and shaping expression. Ursula Le Guin⁷⁵ claims writing robs language of inspiration, living breath. I'll speak aloud as I write! A lively challenge, and I notice I tense my tongue.

Hello, Language, we are--I am cheating, not having said anything aloud since "hello." "Hello" is fundamental. We're on a very basic level aren't we,

as far as *felt* intimacy. One of my colleagues discerns that in recent centuries language “instead of being the continuum of the experience has become a means of actually holding experience.” Oh, no, that isn’t what she said. She said that “instead of being the continuum of experience [language] has become a means of actually hiding experience.” Fumble!

I hold my tongue still--still! Isn’t there a word I am willing to say as I move my fingers? I remember months ago, when I desired to bring sound to this work, I found it hard to do anything but hum and type. (This is beginning to sound like a self-styled intelligence test!) Okay, the question: How am I hiding behind you?

Language: (silent)

Connie: First response, I am not vocalizing! Above I used the term *speech* for *writing*, claiming I was not speechless, because I was writing. Rather with you I have a silent voice. Does that cause my annoyance--some of the tension? I like the movement of typing but do I like the silence of words? Too simple, that inquiry. Are you willing to voice yourself?

Language: I know the difficulties.

Connie: Yes, we are in this together. I’d like to try to say something besides “hello” aloud. Any prompts?

Language: Breathe.

Connie: That suggestion prompts a yawn. I certainly am embodying what a colleague identified as my “ambivalence with language.”⁷⁶ I breath and yawn

again, pleased to hear the sounds. (silent) Two sides of the brain, I am thinking. We are prone to discussion, you and I. Articulation leads me back to a passionate realm of togetherness.

I've got an idea: I'll move and come back to you. Moving might get me moving. (moving)

Language: (smiling)

Connie: I do feel more relaxed. Now elocution through baby steps, the numbers aloud:

One.

Two.

Three.

Four.

Five.

Six.

I stop numbers and begin to write out loud. (long pause) Lost the flow and stop, and again speak aloud. How absurd! Is this a corrective learning experience? (laughing) I feel excited and ready!

Language: Go!

Connie: (big sigh, speaking aloud) We have come this far and the edge is near. (laughing) Your printed body dances with meaning, wrestles with difficulty, bounds, stops.

Language: Yes, and opens possibilities, questions differences.

Connie: Yes, I like your voice, being surprised and amused.

Language: Wondering.

Connie: Tripping and fitting.

Language: Embracing--no! (long pause)

Connie: Not embracing?

Language: Do-si-do-ing in the dark.

Connie: In the dark.⁷⁷

In Touch

A tape-recorded innerlogue:

Connie: I'm in a quandary.

?: Your soul singing?

Connie: I don't know where to express gratitude, missing a metaphysical object, or precise direction.

?: How do you hold the question?

Connie: I smile with your question and answer with tingling through me-- and wonder can my gratitude be expressed as joy! (long pause) The vibration and my felt sense of joy is what I experience now. Before in my questioning and longing for a direction--away, out, beyond--I lost my felt sense. Feeling the life I am is different than wondering who to thank.

?: When questioning is alive, joy is one response.

Connie: I'm thrilled. I'm thrilled, I'm thrilled, I'm thrilled, I'm thrilled. I'm thrilled. And I have no explanation for being thrilled. I have no rationale for being thrilled and no cause to identify. I wobble with how to *be*--without creating an explanation to understand a cause. Oh, I remember a message from Grace about exuberance. The daring that was suggested was to "allow the exuberance in living" that I allow in dancing. I smile, because I enjoy feeling trust.

?: With you all the way, wondering about dialogue, the desire for contact.

Connie: Talking aloud has its own comfort, too. Most of the time I have innerlogues at the keyboard in silence. This is the first vocal conversation in a long time.

?: Yes, contact has many meanings.

Connie: Thank you. Will I share this with others? Any reactions?

?: Your passion to honor expression as an activity of living moves. Writing means to share existence, to touch and be touched.

Connie: To touch and be touched.⁷⁸

Nearing the Edge

Fifteen minutes. We don't know what is about to happen though possibly I have enjoined you to my improvisation. I breathe, sense my belly expand

and hear my exhale, note the tilt of my head and shifting spine. I yawn honestly. My eyes close--still riding words. Imagine.

I hear the keyboard and sounds about me. I feel the tilt of my torso and sensation of pressure against the chair, weight through my feet. No, actually only my right foot makes firm contact; let's take off on the left:

You have accepted my invitation to join. Are your eyes closing? And your breath? What are you offering inspiration? We breathe together in different times.

Waiting, my breathing deepens. Being a sample of text (another time), I open my eyes and say aloud, "Five more minutes." That's longer than a flashback autobiography of near-drowning that changes perspective on living.

Notice your breath's volume, weight on your hunches, feet understanding.

One minute to go, I recycle an ending:

A living dance constitutes my text. I remember Schick's rule of thumb:
"As an event, knowledge never ceases to change and unfold with time."⁷⁴ Or,
fluxfully, with Caputo, I know a period is no definitive mark:

In the end . . . after "owning up" to the elusiveness which envelops us all,
. . . openness to the mystery must be understood as the willingness to stay
in play with the play. The question always is whether and how, hearing
the movements of that play, we are able to join in it. The play is all. And
what is playing in that play?⁸⁰

(Many moving pens write experience, Mary, surpassing understood
influences. Theories fly outside bound texts. Validity searches in play.
Integrities multiply. Thank you.)

I no longer throw my hands up in an act of submission to *flux*. I know
playing carries forward, again and again, differently. And, in spreading a loose
weave, our association in knowing moves us.

Notes

Rather than interrupt particular portions of this text, "Notes" include missing citations.

1. Mary Ramsay is a colleague and educator associated with my authentic movement practice and training. With Daphne Lowell and Alton Wasson, Ramsay developed and offers Contemplative Dance, an authentic movement practice.
2. Various definitions of *witness* exist. I offer the familiar association with our judiciary system as well as how the witness is oriented in authentic movement practice. First, there is the witness who "objectively" recounts what has been observed and recalled; and, additionally, the witness who, while beholding another, notices self-responses, immediate experiencing in tandem. That is, in Adler's (1987) words, "The witness is having her own active internal experience: image, sound, feeling, idea, memory, kinesthetic sensation. . . . When the witness is fully alive to the mover, she is, paradoxically . . . in relation to her own 'movement'" (p. 22; see also Crow, 1994; Koltai, 1994; Olsen 1993).
3. Not only is movement our first language of expression, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (1993), originator of the corrective developmental process of Body-Mind Centering, reports that movement is our original perceptual mode: "The perceptual and the motor process are not two separate things in the beginning. In the beginning, movement is perception. The first of the cranial nerves to myelinate (which is a sign of the importance of that pathway for survival) is the vestibular/cochlear nerve, which is the one that registers movement and position in space (as well as vibration, velocity and tone--muscle tone and sound)" (p. 106).
4. At the same time I have practiced creative and expressive movement activities, another site where I have revived my organismic sensitivity and fuller functioning has been the field of somatic education. "Somatic education," the term coined by Hanna (1980), designates "practices of embodiment" (D. Johnson, 1995) and is derived from "a more ancient and appropriate word for life's body: That word is soma. . . . In Greek, the word *soma* evolved to mean 'the living body in its wholeness.' It is also a term used by biologists to distinguish the full living body of an animal from its chromosomes" (Hanna, 1980, pp. 5-6). And Bainbridge Cohen (1993) recognizes that "when the body is experienced from within, the body and mind are not separated but are experienced as a whole" (p. 1).

5. While one among diverse approaches to creative dance, Mettler comments that the fewest words usable to signify her approach are *free creative movement expression*. This term needs to be taken as a whole, where each aspect is indispensable in defining the others. In Mettler's (1983) words:

This kind of dancing needs a name but it is difficult to find one because words mean different things to different people. It could be called PURE DANCE because it is dance for its own sake, undiluted, unmixed with non-dance elements, underived and unapplied . . . [and] it could be called FREE DANCE because the dancer is free to make up his or her own movements . . . NATURAL DANCE because it aims to reveal the beauty of natural human movement . . . BASIC DANCE because it can open the doors to all forms of creative activity . . . LIVING DANCE because it grows organically out of itself. (p. 7)

6. Gendlin, 1992c, p. 206.

7. Quoted in Moyers, 1995, p. 195.

8. Focusing was identified through Gendlin's early research work with colleagues, evaluating what makes psychotherapy successful: "It is not the therapist technique and it's not what the patient talks about. The difference is in how they talk and how they talk is only an outward sign of what the patients do inside themselves. This uncommon skill, this internal act is a way of approaching any problem or situation. This skill is called focusing" (1990, side #1). And he emphasizes that focusing is the next development *after* getting in touch with feelings: "It concerns a different kind of inward attention, an attention to what is *sensed*--physically sensed--but at first only unclearly. Then it comes into focus and changes in a bodily way" (side #1; see also 1981, 1989, 1996).

9. Within my Intensive Journal practice, I term dialogue *innerlogue*, designating conversation between two or more entities or concepts.

10. Innerlogue, Winter 1985.

11. Judith Koltai (1994) has inspired me to surpass conditioned and distorted use of language, to be carefully articulate while speaking experience and experiencing speaking.

12. Robert Hass describes haiku "as a form of poetry that takes some absolutely traditional image of Japanese life . . . and then adds one other image to it, to bear down on a sense of reality: 'Bright autumn moon / pond snails crying /

in the saucepan” (quoted in Moyers, 1995, p. 193). The form was developed out of *hokku*, early Japanese poets “playing around with something like a call-and-response form. . . . [Thus haiku] came out of improvisatory play with language that depended on acute observation and a live sense of reality. . . . [and] enacted a fundamental Buddhist way of looking at reality as endlessly in motion. . . . There’s nothing exactly like it--people getting together and improvising endlessly on a theme as a form of play--in the Western literary tradition” (pp. 193-194).

13. Innerlogue, Fall 1996.

14. Dr. Oberg is my doctoral supervisor, Antoinette Oberg.

15. I began practicing Progoff’s (1977) Intensive Journal process in 1984, particularly the dialogue structure which “establishes a point of meeting. . . . We do not need to analyze that process nor to try to understand it. We need simply to establish an ongoing relationship with it, like two persons who are friends” (Progoff, 1980, p. 48).

16. Innerlogue, Fall 1994.

17. Beginning in 1993, my colleague Dianne de Champlain and I have recorded conversations annually. This excerpt is from the transcription of our conversation, November 21, 1995.

18. As an example, *becomes* instantiates ambiguity of meaning in this text, where ambiguity is privileged for its alacrity.

19. See Bertherat’s (1976) *The Body Has Its Reasons* as one invitation to listening to the organism.

20. Innerlogue, Winter 1994.

21. Gendlin defines *felt sense* as “one’s feel of a wholistic texture” (1978/1979, p. 71; see also 1981, 1992a, 1992c, 1996.)

22. Inquiry from Antoinette Oberg.

23. Is articulation through art forms borne of innate need? Dissanayake (1992) elaborates her premises for the biologically selected trait of “making special.” Another angle on the innate comes from Hall (1992) who perceives “Improvisation as an Acquired, Multilevel Process” and takes a phylogenetic look at improvisation as arising through the limbic system, describing “a highly creative, adaptive process of human evolution” (p. 224).

24. One feminist teacher warns Maher and Thompson Tetreault (1994) to beware to not “end up with a false ‘we’ from which some people’s subjectivity is absolutely excluded” (pp. 109-110). For me an equally cogent reminder, from a participating student, tells of resistance to authority--“no matter who happens to present the more authoritative position, be it from more experience or better command of the language or understanding of the idea” (p. 161).

25. For experiential anatomy, see Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, and Olsen, 1991, and, because it overlaps with practices of embodiment, see also D. Johnson, 1995.

26. Caputo, 1987, p. 270.

27. Arendt (1977) also tells a tale:

All the elaborate modern arguments against positivism are anticipated by the unsurpassed simplicity of Democritus’ little dialogue between the mind, the organ for the suprasensory, and the senses. Sense perceptions are illusions, says the mind; they change according to the conditions of our body; sweet, bitter, color, and so on exist only *nomos*, by convention among men, and not *phuseis*, according to true nature behind the appearances. Whereupon the senses answer: “Wretched mind! Do you overthrow us while you take from us your evidence (*pisteis*, everything you can trust)? Our overthrow will be your downfall.” (p. 11)

28. Hanh, 1974.

29. Heidegger, 1968.

30. Lorde, 1984, p. 113.

31. Frye, 1992, p. 59.

32. Also making use of the metaphor *constellation*, Oliver (1993/1994) articulates a model of musical improvisation: “As the stars are made intelligible through being seen as forming a constellation, so are the conditions of an improvisation organized by intuition to form its identity. Isolated these conditions and aspects of improvisation mean very little” (p. 1). The “stars” in Oliver’s improvisation constellation are curiosity, memory, surprise, musical history, personal history, reason, performance environment, emotion, accident, suspended animation, new territory, psychological space.

33. Written response from Antoinette Oberg.
34. Lather, 1993, p. 683.
35. The expression *to be moved* comes from Mary Whitehouse (1995) who says of her movement work (later developed by others as authentic movement): "The core of the movement experience is the sensation of moving and being moved, . . . the coming together of what I am doing and what is happening to me. *It cannot be anticipated, explained, specifically worked for, nor repeated exactly* [italics added]" (p. 3).
36. Dennett, 1991.
37. On many occasions I have recorded conversations with Antoinette Oberg. This quotation is from the transcription of our conversation, January 3, 1996.
38. Barasch, 1993, p. 317.
39. Quoted in Benthall & Polhemus, 1975, p. 5.
40. Quoted in Barasch, 1993, p. 317.
41. Innerlogue, Winter 1996/Spring 1997.
42. Hanna, 1980, p. 6.
43. D. Johnson, 1995, p. x.
44. Ibid, p. ix.
45. Hanh, 1974, p. 50.
46. Innerlogue, Winter 1995.
47. Quoted in Moyers, 1995, p. 212.
48. Damasio, 1994, p. 252.
49. Ibid, p. 120.
50. Ibid, p. xvi.
51. Ibid, p. 112.

52. Ibid, p. 247.

53. Ibid, p. 248.

54. Ibid, p. 249.

55. Ibid, pp. 249-250.

56. Ibid, p. 249.

57. Ibid, p. 252.

58. Goldberg, 1986.

59. Innerlogue, Spring 1997.

60. I am moved by Bateson's (1994) expression:

I am in defiance of scientific convention and much of literary history when I claim the freedom to begin many of my sentences with the word *I*. Yet it rescues me from the temptation to be categorical. . . . Impersonal writing often claims a timeless authority: this is so. Personal writing affirms relationship, for it includes these implied warnings: this is what I think at this moment, this is what I remember now, continuing to grow and change. This finally is contingent on being understood and responded to. (pp. 75-76)

61. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 1993.

62. Innerlogue, Winter 1996/Spring 1997.

63. Gendlin, 1978/1979, p. 55.

64. Discussion of Gendlin's ".....," 1989; see also 1992a, 1992b, 1992c.

65. Gendlin, 1989, p. 208.

66. Gendlin, 1992b, p. 21.

67. Quotations of Jacques Daignault are from my class notes, 1993.

68. For examples of Daignault's play, see Daignault, 1992.

69. Innerlogue, Spring 1995.
70. Innerlogue, Spring 1997.
71. Bateson, 1994, p. 96.
72. Innerlogue, Winter 1996/Spring 1997.
73. Considering *play*, Hall (1992) notes our cultural compartmentalization with built-in assumptions:

When considering play, we need to free ourselves from the artificial and entirely arbitrary distinction between "serious business" and "play." . . . This distinction is a relatively recent one, and is certainly not a part of our biological makeup--for . . . play is serious business provided that you know how to look at it. (p. 224)

74. Inquiry from Dianne de Champlain.
75. See "Text, Silence, Performance," Le Guin, 1989.
76. During a presentation to colleagues of my initial "Armature for Jello" structure, Daniel Scott remarked upon his perception of my "ambivalence with language."
77. Innerlogue, Winter 1996/Spring 1997.
78. Innerlogue, Winter 1996.
79. Schick, 1994, p. 5.
80. Caputo, 1987, p. 293.

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Because this listing is neither restricted to references nor a standard bibliography of background texts, I have taken liberty to name it.

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