

# **Script for the Video**

## **“Moving into Agelessness, with Roger Tolle”**

### **Introduction**

Hi. I'm Roger Tolle, a Trager Instructor, teaching both the personal and professional practices that help people free themselves from painful, restrictive movement habits.

I was privileged to study with the originator of this work, Dr. Milton Trager, after he had spent an entire lifetime exploring the art of movement in rehabilitation, in health maintenance, and as a way to ageless living.

This 4 part video series illustrates the benefits of integrating easy, playful, and mindful movement in your everyday life.

### **Part 1: The meaning of movement**

#### **Movement is aliveness.**

- If we are alive we are in movement. And we can choose to observe and explore our own movement, expanding our movement potentials with no additional effort.
- Breathing is movement. From the moment we took our first breath at birth, throughout all our life experiences, and continuing till we die, our unique patterns of breathing are always with us. In any moment, we can notice whether our breathing feels easy, or labored, big and full, or thin and weak.
- We are designed to be in movement.
- Shifting weight and playing a subtle balancing act in gravity is part of our upright lives.
- Our skeleton moves, bringing articulation and clarity to gestures, and helping us choose direction. We can explore many ways of giving our skeleton more room to move freely
- The movement of muscles and connective tissue allows the alternation between action and support, between release and receptivity. From them we reap the benefit of a continually shifting dynamic of connection and freedom.

- Emotion is movement too. Expressing our desires, hopes, dreams, and emotional states happens in and through our bodies in many visible and invisible ways. And in contrast, repressing emotion requires a shift in tone in our bodies and freezes our movement and our potential for all other emotional states.
- Movement, no matter how small, creates sensation, and sensation increases our awareness of our aliveness. Sensation and awareness are the cues that trigger consciousness of being alive.

### **Movement defines us.**

- Our movement reveals our history, our learned patterns, our current state of being, our emotional flow.
- Stresses and traumas in our lives caused us to momentarily freeze our movement.
- When stresses were repeated or became constant, our frozen movement hardened our body structures (leaving us less and less room for the joyfulness of unlimited human expression) and compromised all of the processes that would repair us.
- This is the root of the conditions we associate with aging.
- Whoever we are, in whatever condition, with whatever personal history, we can always learn to improve the quality of what we do.
- It is wonderful to find out that being held back by embedded, often unconscious movement patterns is optional...And that we can choose at any time to begin to practice and integrate easier and freer movement patterns.
- Beginning to embody patterns of free-flowing movement expands our movement potentials and with them, potentials of feeling, expressing, relating and sustaining health.
- The return of these potentials is what we associate with staying young...with feeling and appearing ageless.
- Embodying patterns of fluid, omni-directional, responsive, and dynamic movement expands our movement potentials and builds a sense of hope for our future...a future that moves toward ageless joy.

## **Part 2: Choosing to Feel**

### **Arriving in Sensation**

- Anytime we want to interrupt the trajectory of our growing, our aging, the evolving of our structure, we can make a choice to pay attention to what is going on inside our feeling experience. This will mean becoming less occupied with thoughts, and more interested in sensations.
- As we start this process, we might first notice feeling the resonance of what preceded, what we just did, what it took for us to make the choice to investigate ourselves and possibly revise our habits.
- Arriving in a respectful and innocent awareness of the movement sensations in the body brings us into direct contact with the living present.
- Arriving is a conscious body-mind activity that happens over and over. Each new experience is the perfect moment to start fresh. Beginning again and again to pay fresh attention to the inner experience deepens the practice of acceptance.
- We can learn to come home to ourselves...
- And we benefit by pausing to savor the moment of re-connection... honoring the body we live in as the home for and embodiment of our personal life force

## **Developing a Practice of Inner Movement Dialogue.**

- A practice of movement inquiry can start from wherever we are, from the sensations we have become aware of, from the movement that is already happening.
- From this starting place, we ask, “What movement does my body want, right now?” ...And then become the observer of our own movement in the same delighted way a parent watches a child at play.
- Moving the way we feel brings us into authentic contact with our inner desires, desires that are organic to our soft animal bodies, but that we may have been masking from ourselves in order to meet the needs of work, relationships, or life situations.
- Dialoging with our inner movement gives us choice, empowering us to live and respond in more and more authentic ways.
- We can learn to exercise our uniquely human capacity to observe and consciously explore the tiniest details of our movement experience.
- We can ask ourselves about positive qualities of movement and experience, try them on, and listen to the subtle ways our body responds to those inner questions.
- We learn to watch with delight how creative the body is...how many new ways it can discover to fit any situation...how resourceful it is.
- We learn to trust our body; trust it to take care of itself, trust it to be available and supportive for what we might want to accomplish in the world.

## Staying in inquiry

- Inwardly directed questions, rather than demands, guide and animate the process.
- And by not jumping to conclusions, not resolving movement conundrums too quickly, we become instead, richly satisfied with the joys of exploration itself.
- Sustaining curiosity and exploration, especially later in life, fills our life with positive experiences we can own and identify with.
- Eventually, new and more pleasurable feeling experiences, and the open-ended, un-fixed behaviors they give rise to, can become so dominant that we are no longer run by the less functional and uncomfortable patterns that have held us in ruts of behavior or expression.
- Repeating over and over that which feels easy to us teaches us, for example, the broad and subtle language of ease, and lets us both fine tune and integrate ease into an expanding sense of self.
- We are re-imagining and re-learning our vast capacity to innovate new solutions to movement concerns and not be stuck with how we have always done things.
- Steeping ourselves in movement inquiry also floods our body with pleasure chemicals, stimulates the pleasure centers in the brain, and keeps brain cells growing new neural connections.
- A growing and malleable nervous system is the opposite of an aging nervous system.

### **Part 3: Improving Movement Quality**

- Exploring new movement options and learning new feeling possibilities happens best in a field of pleasurable play.
- Gently and innocently we can give ourselves freedom to explore and play with each of our body parts.
- Using internal questions...what could be lighter, what could be freer...and observing how our bodies respond in movement, we discover the potential to free our body structures.
- Simple repeated oscillations stimulate the fluid articulations of the joints, and warm the body's tissue for further freedom.
- By *allowing* rather than *trying to do* movement, we can let the weight of the bones free themselves.
- Decompressing and de-contracting one leg by simply shifting weight off of it, lets it move more freely in many subtle ways and brings delight in the momentary sense of freedom our playing reveals. And we can allow echoes of easy, free leg movement to ripple up into the hips and spread subtle sensations of release into the whole torso.
- Focusing on the passive aspect of any movement, rather than the active effort involved, increases the sense of release from the grip of tight patterns of work.
- Practicing freedom and joy in all my daily movement keeps me young in body, mind, and spirit.
- Can my body become a delight to be in?
- Can I become so fascinated with the pleasures to be found in my free movement play that I discover I am living inside my favorite toy?
- **How can I infuse my newly discovered childlike joy into all the ordinary moments of the day?**
- **Can I begin to identify with the freer sensations, and integrate them into the way I relate to people and activities in my daily life?**
- **Quicker movement quickens the sense of aliveness in us.**
- From inside and from outside, from small structures to large ones, vibrations of varying tempos address various layers of tissue.
- Awakening at all levels...surface to depth...renews the all important sensory experience of evenness through and through, in movement flow and in tissue quality
- Fluffing up compressed tissue returns compacted and stuck tissues to their rightful state as support and motivation for

vigorous action, while at the same time bringing new lightness and spaciousness into mind and body.

- Enlivening body tissues stimulates inner support for a sagging structure, and awakens a sluggish body-mind. We learn that we can feel more alert and ready for whatever comes next in our lives.
- Playing with what is just a little livelier...owning speed and tempo changes and discovering that they are easy and delightful... we break through any old mindset that would resign us to a life of gradual slowing down till we stop.
- Softening after effort, quieting after excitement, lets our body tissues have a chance to renew themselves.
- We discover that softening our hold on ourselves nourishes us with pleasurable sensation. And exploring softness in detail using sweet movement and innocent curiosity, we can flood the body with sensations of pleasure and ease, significantly altering the flavor of our inner neuro-chemical soup,.
- Touching myself with softness allows me to develop some tenderness...toward myself, toward others in my life, toward the world I inhabit.
- Softening ourselves when in contact with others allows us to be received while we receive them. Softening opens the doorway of communication and increases trust at deep, unconscious body-mind levels
- We learn we can explore painful, tight or restricted areas of our bodies without developing an adversarial relationship with ourselves.
- Softening when we meet resistance is the beginning of discovering ways around the resistance. And the beginning of finding new options that let movement become a dance, and life a song. We can learn this way.

#### **Part 4: Playing in Gravity**

- Grounding our sensory experience by releasing the inner sense of weight into the floor, we learn to channel excess tension and find our way to stillness and rest.
- We renew our trusting relationship with the earth.
- Resting on the ground, we cannot fall. Our inner sense of security returns and anxiety dissolves.
- Settling brings relief from the common stresses of everyday life, allows the mind to clear, and allows the body to recover renewed vitality.
- Regaining deep connection with the ground, we regain the sense of intricate connection with all life.
- Releasing held tensions, repeatedly letting go of blocks in movement, our natural life energy can flow more freely, and we can experience and nurture the vitality waiting within.
- No matter what movement we are doing, ordinary and functional in the everyday sense or extraordinary and set apart for its own purposes, gravity is always there as our faithful friend.
- Letting go into gravity we can discover ways to rebound up out of the earth, to stimulate different support for our body from reflexive neuro-muscular responses.
- Letting go, we enjoy the natural swings and bounces of weight, and reap the benefits of a buoyant joy as our movement finds its natural rhythms
- Letting up on ourselves, we release self-inflicted pressure and coiled tensions
- And discover that easy suspension in gravity facilitates all other movement, reduces muscle tension, and removes compression from weight bearing joints.
- Tail sinking down balances the head floating up, bringing a natural graceful length to the spine, and effectiveness and beauty to our gestures.
- This does not need to be effortful. It is the opposite of rigid. It is fluid and creative.
- We can learn to reduce muscle effort, and discover ways to sustain inner length no matter what we are doing.
- We learn to feel for an even and easy suspension in gravity – and then practice re-distributing the effort of whatever we do

throughout our body so that no one place gets worn out from taking too much responsibility.

- This even distribution of effort top to bottom, inside to outside, front to back, and right to left is the defining experience of ageless ease.

***Copyright: Roger Tolle, 2010. All rights reserved.***