



Reawakening the Body— Finding Silence Within: The Power of Gentle Somatic Yoga®

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Via YogaUonline.com

The tools of yoga can be invaluable when it comes to dealing with unpleasant changes in our lives, our bodies, or situations we cannot control, such as living with chronic pain or the inevitable changes that come with aging.

We often think that a fast, sweaty Vinyasa practice is the best way to get the most out of yoga. There is an alternate path, says yoga teacher and Somatic Educator James Knight in this free download.

By taking an intuitive, interoceptive approach to practice, we can unwind and reset unhealthy patterns, that no longer serve us. This often offers a much more direct way to relieve chronic pain conditions, correct dysfunctional patterns, and restore awareness to areas of somatic amnesia.

The science behind Somatic movement is based on work of Dr. Thomas Hanna, the founding father of the Somatics Movement, who coined the term "Somatics." James had the great fortune to be mentored directly by Dr. Hanna's wife, Eleanor Criswell Hanna, the creator of Somatic Yoga.

Dr. Hanna identified a condition he called Sensory Motor Amnesia (SMA), in which the sensory-motor neurons of the voluntary cortex in the brain have lost the ability to control some of the muscles in the body. The result of this Sensory Motor Amnesia is a loss of freedom of movement and a sense of disconnection within the body.

In order to reactivate and strengthen the brain-to-muscle nervous system connection, James has developed a series of intuitive, flowing body movements to help us to explore and reconnect with different parts of our body otherwise trapped in sensory motor amnesia.

"Through these Gentle Somatic Yoga flows we reawaken and stimulate the whole self," James notes. "In my experience working with thousands of students, this can be a

powerful key to alleviate pain, remove postural imbalances, numbness, and re-establish natural alignment.”

Gentle Somatic Yoga is a process of discovery and exploration where a person can reconnect with parts of themselves that they may have disowned unconsciously through patterns of holding stress and tension from modern day life. Via a careful and methodical process, the movement flows allow the practitioner to discover for themselves from the inside out how the joints and bones stack.

“Like it or not, our bodies are a map to our whole entire life experience mentally, emotionally, physically,” he states. “We temporarily forget how to use our bodies because the muscles can become unconsciously contracted even in resting states due to a reflection of stress.”

“Somatic movement is a way of systematically going through the entire body and reawakening the possibility of regaining muscular control and resetting it through the brain to its most optimal length in a resting position,” says James.

“It comes from tuning inside and making choices for yourself, how to move your body. It's very empowering. It's not rigid, it's a fluid discovery, a fluid movement through interoception - you know, turning inward and going, ‘Oh yeah!’”