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# THE BODY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

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## 2. INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

I began seeing Donald 14 months ago with the clear intention of working through some specific and major life issues. Knowing that he was a "Somatic" Therapist, and having done several "body based" courses with People Know-how (Zoeros), I was ready for anything. Not surprisingly what I got was:

- a) What I needed
- b) Not quite as hard as I thought it would be
- c) Nothing like what I expected.

Almost every week over the past 14 months I have been involved in a profoundly gentle process that has carried me through the major issues I needed to resolve.

There is a subtlety about Donald and his way of working. He has told me he approaches therapy with the intention of helping a person find their own answers, and this is certainly true. I have talked hour after hour with Donald (needing to be heard being a key issue with me), and every so often he will feed back an observation giving me a handle on what otherwise was a continuous juggling act. Example?

I talked one session about depression, fear of the end of the world, external problems that distract me from my path, etc. Half way through the hour Donald speaks for the first time. "What I'm hearing is that you're feeling discouraged." Bingo! The lights go on, and all the vague anxieties and desperate fears fall into alignment with the simple truth of discouragement.

Donald has a way of letting me see and feel the natural rhythmic rise and fall of life's passing. Once you can see your life's ups and downs from a light, safe distance, you can experience the euphorias and the depressions as valuable steps on life's journey. Even at the worst moments of my life this year, I was able to see with Donald's observations and encouragement that the darkness was easier to deal with when it was accepted for what it was. This acceptance in fact enabled me to move through the darkness more easily and to reach lighter times more quickly. Key word: Acceptance.

I have heard a lot about "accepting your shadow" but always equated this with "search and destroy" my shadow. Donald has a way of showing or sharing, a knowledge of polarities that clearly leaves aside the moralism of good vs. evil. I have seen that seeing and accepting the light and dark side of myself, I am faced with the awe-inspiring opportunity of choice. Simple really.

Donald's form of therapy seems to be a process of knowing in the feeling sense. Meaning? This is where the subtle "Somatic" work comes to play. I "knew" so much from the many books I have read (new age, psychological, esoteric) about the "keys to freedom". so why did I still suffer from symptoms of entrapment? Because it was small "k" knowledge, intellectual at best.

With Donald's help I am learning to Know how I feel. The incessant question "How are you feeling right now?" that Donald asks just at the right moment, opens the way to reaching the core of experience. I feel fear. "How does it feel?" Hot prickles in my back and a feeling of faintness. "Breathe". Ah, now I know what fear feels like. Now when I am in the wide world outside the security of the therapy session and these fears come upon me, I can feel fear, but not be overwhelmed and struck by it. Accept fear without fear. Now I can choose to continue to act in my best interest. You could substitute any emotion for fear, the process is the same.

Thank you Donald for helping me know and name my dreams. Thank you for giving me the authority to allow myself the increasingly joyous experience of feeling ALIVE. What more could I ask for.

M.M.  
St. Kilda,