

Linden's Intentional Scales

Summarised by Rosemary Faire from: Linden, Paul (1989) Being in Movement: Intention as a Somatic Meditation, Somatics, VII(1), 54-59

...“areas of unclear intention were also areas of unclear movement - movement that was tense, off-balance, imprecise or weak...”
Practising projecting intentions in the weak directions strengthens the projections and the movements that spring from them. Daily movements are assemblages of lines of intention.

Intentional Scales: systematic exercises in which to practise basic elements of intentional projection. Using breath as a more tangible image for intention helps focus and direct intentions more clearly.

Shape Projections

Exercise 1: Six cardinal directions

Sit quietly with eyes shut, inhale into the core of your body just below the navel, exhale outward in these directions: up; down; forward; backward; left; right; one breath for each direction; then experiment with other directions.

Exercise 2:

As for exercise 1, but focus on two opposite directions simultaneously;

- then try all six directions simultaneously;
- then fill in the gaps by practising with many different pairs and see how many you can hold in your awareness at one time;
- move the origin point of the projections to different areas of the body and radiate intention in all directions.

Exercise 3:

After a while of practising with linear directions, enlarge these to include volumes: practise expanding and contracting your intentional volume. By voluntarily expanding your intentional volume in intimidating situations, you may experience a feeling of confidence.

“The way to maximise the effectiveness of a given action is to ground it in a symmetrical state of being.”

“...Areas of the body are held small by an (unconscious) intention to be small...”

Quality Projections

"Quality elements have to do with the tone or feeling of an intentional or movement pattern" eg, emotions

"Projection of some quality is the action of committing yourself to create that quality in yourself."

Exercise 4: Feeling intentions

Imagine you are standing opposite:

- someone at work you are angry with;
- someone you love;
- someone you need;
- an attacker.

Sense the physical changes that take place: breath, muscular tensions, posture, balance.

"Learning to perceive and describe feelings in terms of primary, physical language instead of secondary non-physical mental language gives you a helpful means of clarifying your experience and assuming control of what goes on inside you."

As well as words denoting emotions, geometric forms, physical objects, colours, sounds and tactile elements can also form the basis of quality scales.

Exercise 5: Colour Scales: eg, try filling yourself with cobalt blue; or try canary yellow; (let your eyes look slightly downward rather than upward as you envision the colours). "Transparency is a interesting colour to work with... it begins to point toward a practice of nondoing."

"Being able to work with qualities is necessary because one quality projection organizes a whole complex of shape elements as an integrated Gestalt, because many quality elements cannot be reached directly as shape patterns, and also because the quality element is directly comprehensible in human terms of feeling and meaning."

"Intentional qualities have to do with the state of being assumed by the self... By changing patterns of movement and intention, I found that I could change my whole self."

Exercise 6: Projecting qualities in two "opposite" directions:

Embody the quality of power without compassion.

Then embody compassion without power.

Fuse power with compassion. Do you feel more "centered"?