



Maggie Sisson: Somatics - An Introduction for Every Body!



Maggie Sisson is a certified Clinical Somatic Educator, Advanced Clinical Massage Therapist and Aqua Yoga Instructor with a background in various movement modalities. She works with an holistic approach based on the biopsychosocial model of pain and modern neuroscience. In this offering, discover for yourself a gentle and relaxing somatic experience.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Presence - taking a pause to breathe, observe sensations, to just notice what you notice, and become present in this moment now.

Thomas Hanna: Somatics

- Maggie introduces us to the work of Thomas Hanna who drew ideas from the fields of movement awareness (such as Feldenkrais) together with elements of his own research and knowledge of neuroscience.
- Hanna's definition of somatics - **'This living being experienced from within.'**
- **Proprioception** - the awareness of where our body parts are relative to us/each other. It's not 'stretching', but working primarily with the central nervous system through **sensing** sensations as we move in a slow, mindful way.
- **Sensory-motor amnesia** - a habituated holding or contraction of certain muscles in the body when stressors occur.

Habituations: 3 Main Reflexes

Hanna defined some specific muscular reflexes:

- **Red light reflex** - a withdrawal reflex due to anxiety/apprehension/fear resulting in a front body contraction.
- **Green light reflex** - a positive-stress response due to action being demanded (a GO GO GO lifestyle) which results in the contraction of muscles in the back body.
- **Trauma reflex** - a protective response and involuntary tightening of muscles around a site of injury. These muscles can often remain tight long after the injury has healed.

Benefits: For Every Body

- Hanna says that the physical decline of the body is usually wrongly associated with a process of aging. However, **it's not our number of years on the planet that leads to our stiffness, poor posture, aches and pains. Rather, it's our life experiences** - what happens to us (stress, crises, accidents, poor working posture) affects our bodies.
- Physical decline is *not* inevitable and it is avoidable.
- Regardless of your age, issue or movement background, this work will improve your practice as you'll get more length through the muscles which gives you greater mobility, flexibility and strength.
- In somatics, the mere act of *enquiring* if there is sensation in the body engages that part of the brain. This is how changes can take place, through the brain controlling muscles through your nervous system.

Resources '

- ❖ **Website:** www.somagicsoma.com
- ❖ **References:** Thomas Hanna, founder of Hanna Somatic Education.



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Rafe's work has been featured in TEDx, the Journal of Ancestral Health, Paleo Fx, the Ancestral Health Symposium, The Embodiment Conference, multiple health and well-being podcasts, and he even organized the first international parkour events in the United States.



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