



Jennifer McGrath: Using Movement and Dance to Overcome Trauma



Jenny is a mental-health counsellor, yoga and movement facilitator offering embodied story workshops internationally over Zoom. Find out how moving together creates ways for our nervous systems to heal from trauma, and why movement is crucial to restoring a feeling of safety to our bodies.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Let your whole body shake at least once a day, as a wonderful resource to come back to yourself.

Collective Body Trauma: Trauma is perpetuated by systems of oppression.

- Understanding that oppressive systems cause and lead to the perpetuation of trauma, and finding where we are in those systems, is vital to healing. Disembodiment is a trauma of white supremacy, caused by displacement of culture and heritage. Most of what we have learnt about embodiment and healing comes from indigenous cultures and it is important to honour that. Collective disembodiment causes personal body trauma.

Trauma is Not a Cognitive Experience: Trauma requires bodily forms of healing.

- Trauma is essentially a loss of connection from our own body and the collective, and it is proven that it demands bodily forms of healing like movement, dance, breath, yoga. White bodies approach dance in a performative manner, indigenous cultures approach it in a relational way.

The Vagus System, the Psoas Muscle and Breath: Why understanding their interconnectedness is crucial.

- Jenny makes a detailed description of each system; explaining their individual purpose and functioning. It is vital to use movement to keep this system agile and healthy. Movement allows us to get out of a state of fight/flight/freeze. When trauma is not stuck in our bodies, the systems flow.

Everything is Movement: “The universe is a symphony of vibrating strings.” (Stephon Alexander)

- Movement is our most natural impulse, even from before breath! We must be curious and notice what our bodies may be holding and what they want, with no judgement. We should develop more imagination about collective movement to benefit from synchronicity and limbic resonance, and put the body back into a state of safety.

Resources

- ❖ **Website:** indwellcounseling.com
- ❖ **Social:** [@indwell_seattle](https://www.instagram.com/indwell_seattle)
- ❖ **References:** Racial-Informed Therapeutic Model (Sam Lee and Melody Li), The Polyvagal System (Stephen Porges), The Psoas book and Core Awareness (Liz Koch), The Body Keeps the Score (Bessel Van Der Kolk), Pleasure Activism (Adrienne Maree brown), In an Unspoken Voice (Peter Levine), Sensus Knowledge (Minna Salami), among others: listed in the last slide of Jenny’s presentation.



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Steven Hoskinson is Founder and Chief Compassion Officer of Organic Intelligence®. For twenty-five years he has trained and mentored therapists and others at the intersection of trauma, embodiment and social responsibility. Organic Intelligence offers courses in its fully developed systems framework, including with CEs for professional post-graduate level training in trauma.

OI's Trauma Safe™ Trajectory features a carefully sequenced set of trainings, including the experiential 10-Week End of Trauma™ Course, the HEART@Home™ Coaching Certification, and the OI in-depth overview, PTSD: Post-Trauma System Development course. All courses are available online.

PTSD: Post-Trauma System Development emphasizes skills and theory relevant to personal resilience, as well as for professional therapeutic understanding and intervention. This course also includes demonstration sessions, debriefed by Steve Hoskinson, and monthly online group meetings with Steve through 2021.



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