

PSU DANCE PREMIER 2015
Somatic Techniques for Class
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Goal: The goal of this workshop is to provide participants with background information regarding the origins and philosophy of somatics, discuss somatic techniques, and to explore and provide practical uses for teachers to take back to the classroom and/or studio.

Origins/Definition:

- The codified practice of Somatics was created by Thomas Hanna.
- Hanna's definition: "*soma*" greek for "living body", view of the whole body from the "inside out". Hanna's Somatic practice uses exercises that increase bodily awareness and mind-body connections in order to re-train the body for healthy, balanced movement and living.
- General definition: practices that allow for efficiency and ease of movement
- Basic Somatic Principles: ***breath, sensing, connectivity, and initiation***

Philosophy: Why use somatics principles in exploration and dance?

- Emphasizes process over product
- Increased awareness brings forth change
- Allows for inclusivity and diversity in teaching
- Helps to create an atmosphere of non-judgment
- Holistic way to approach movement patterning and training
- Provides tools for injury prevention

Somatic Techniques: Kleenex Analogy

- Laban Movement Analysis / Bartenieff Fundamentals
- Feldenkrais Method
- Alexander Technique
- Body-Mind Centering
- Ideokinesis
- Yoga, Pilates, and Martial Arts are also somatic in nature.

Practical Applications:

- Conditioning – Ex: strengthen muscles of the back for arabesque
- Technique training – Ex: pressing back of pelvis to the floor translates to alignment when standing
- Performance – Training of the visual kinesthetic sense can improve internal/external focus, awareness, and "being in the moment"

References:

Brodie, J. A., & Lobel, E. E. (2012). *Dance and somatics: Mind-body principles of teaching and performance*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

Hanna, T. (1988). *Somatics: Reawakening the mind's control of movement, flexibility, and health*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Resources List:

Brodie, J. A., & Lobel, E. E. (2012). *Dance and somatics: Mind-body principles of teaching and performance*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

Cohen, B. B. (2008). *Sensing, feeling, and action: The experiential anatomy of body-mind centering: The collected articles from Contact Quarterly dance journal 1980-2007 00* (2nd ed.). Northhampton, MA: Contact Editions.

Dowd, I. (1995). *Taking root to fly: Articles on functional anatomy* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: I. Dowd.

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Kaparo, R., PhD. (2011). *Awakening somatic intelligence: The art and practice of embodied mindfulness*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.