

FROM THE BOOK

# AWAKEN TO YOUR TRUE SELF

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## THE EMBODIED-STORY EXERCISE

Earlier in this chapter, you learned all about embodiment and how our beliefs, worldviews, stories, perceptions, strategies, and blocks manifest in the body. How our inner-world reflects in our outer-world. Reading about movement and embodiment is one thing—moving and feeling it in your body is something totally different. What use is theory if we can't apply it and experience it for ourselves?

In this section, you will have a chance to take everything you've learned in this book and put it to use in a single exercise. You will get to experience the concepts you've been reading about *somatically*, meaning that you will be using your body to do so. This somatic approach will help you begin to embody the theory and concepts in ways words simply cannot offer.

*"Nothing ever becomes real 'til it is experienced."*

— John Keats

**This exercise provides the physical realization of the chapters you have read thus far.**

You will be able to experience for yourself how concepts such as reverse-wiring, "how you do one thing is how you do anything," embodiment, stories, and shadow show up in your body. Through the movements in this exercise, you will get to put everything you've learned into practice. It will give you a tangible, empirical experience to work with and physically see, rather than a nebulous mental concept in your head. What you'll be doing is a simplified version of our basic Cinesomatic movement work. It has been adapted to be done alone without any facilitation.

If you want a new result in your life, you need to make new choices; to do things in a new way. The best way to move through your stuck situations is to actually move in a new way! The internal resources you unlock by practicing movement patterns also unlock their corresponding patterns of neural activity and of seeing the world. If your pattern of seeing the world is not serving you any longer, perhaps finding a new way to move in your body can help you think differently. **This is the practical application of what we discussed in "A Universal Approach"; find what patterns are stuck in the body and then use the body to make a change in the patterns elsewhere in your life.**

The most confronting and liberating aspect of this approach is that by moving and being in our bodies, all the stuck and repressed feelings, memories, and stories begin to dislodge and arise for us to deal with. This is the physical layer of our shadow. For example, have you ever been in a deep stretch or yoga pose, and all of a sudden, a memory or emotion comes rushing up out of nowhere? This is why: unresolved stories and emotions get stuck in our body. Everything affects everything else; we are holographic. As you embark further on this journey, you will be presented with opportunities to face, feel, and heal things you don't even remember are in

there. They will often arise at the thresholds between your old way of being and a new way. I invite you to face them, as you learned to do so in the past chapters.

Each chapter in this book is a doorway, not a final destination. This exercise is a foot-in-the-door to a new way of living. There is more that awaits you once you walk through. As soon as you truly grasp the implications of this exercise and the philosophy behind it, everything will be different for you from that point on.

## THE EXERCISE: INTRODUCTION

First, you will explore being in your body and how conceptual ideas are represented symbolically within your body. You will get a reference point for feeling empowered and what it looks like to embody it through movement. You will then watch your video (if you chose to record it) and review some questions to reflect.

Second, you will do the same thing, but this time you will embody your ‘stucky story.’ You will get to experience how your idea of being stuck is represented symbolically in your body. You will be able to compare how an empowering movement and a disempowered ‘stuck’ movement differ in feeling and manifestation. You will then watch your video and review some questions to reflect.

Third and lastly, you will start back in the stucky story and then have a chance to experience reverse-wiring in your body (if that’s related to you being stuck). You will then explore a new way to move altogether. This new way of moving is to discover a way out of being stuck *through the body*, rather than by thought or ‘doing’ in the world. You will then watch your video, review some questions to reflect, and then conclude the exercise.

This exercise is an exploration of embodiment, not an assessment. There is no “answer” to be found at the end of this exercise. If done earnestly and with self-awareness, the movements and questions will give you new reference points, perspectives, and feedback about yourself in a way you’ve never done before. **This particular exercise is about *experiencing*, not *diagnosing*.**

### EXERCISE OUTLINE

#### **Part I: Reference Point for Empowerment**

Empowered Movement: Discover how concepts and archetypes appear in the body

Review Set A: Reflect upon questions

#### **Part II: Reference Point for Being Stuck**

Stucky Movement: Discover how your stucky story lives in your body

Review Set B: Reflect, shift, and have new awareness by answering questions

#### **Part III: A New Way to Move**

Stucky Movement (2nd): Move from the stucky story again

Opposite Movement: Discover a somatic way out of being stuck or reverse-wiring

New Movement: Find a way to move out of the stucky story

Review Set C: Reflect, shift, and have new awareness by answering questions

In total, there will be five (5) actual movements to perform, and three (3) sets of questions to review. The review sets are found at the end of the instruction section.

## EXERCISE OVERVIEW

### Objectives

- Experience the physical realization of the theories learned
- Discover how mental stories show up in the physical body
- Explore a new way to move through your sticky story

### What You'll Need

- Private, standing-space with room to move freely
- Something to record video of yourself, or if not, a full-length mirror (optional, but recommended)
- Pen and paper for answering questions (optional, but recommended)

### Physical Demand

- Low: Ability to stand and move the body (adaptable to sitting)

### Estimated Time

- Set aside 90 minutes; it may take less

# THE EXERCISE: PREPARATION

## PRELIMINARY NOTES

Follow the instructions. Read through all the instructions first before starting so you get an idea of what you'll be doing. This includes everything up until the end of "The Exercise: Instructions." Do not read the conclusion or review sets before starting.

Make sure to keep your eyes open and pay attention to what's going on internally and with your body. Be aware of how you're approaching the exercise and answering the questions.

There is no speaking during the exercise. Do not use words or sounds while moving.

If you are revisiting and repeating this exercise, Part I can be omitted, as its purpose is to introduce you to expressing stories, archetypes, and conceptual ideas through the body.

## SETTING UP

1. Find a private space for moving where you can stand and move.
2. Make sure you have your book and pen and paper if you wish to write down answers.
3. Get your camera (or any video recording device) set up to film your entire body. Make sure you have room above your head and feet in the video. Alternatively, find a mirror (that doesn't require you to hold it); a full-length one is preferred. You will stand in front of the mirror, facing it to see

yourself from head to toe. *(Neither are necessary to benefit from the exercise, but they are helpful in seeing what you're doing. A video recording can be especially powerful for review, as we do in the Cinematic workshops.)*

4. If using video: when you're ready to begin each Part (I, II, III), start recording. When you finish each part, stop the recording before going on to the review set. You will also want a way to watch and play back the videos after each part. At the end, you will wind up with three (3) videos, one for each part.

## DECIDING ON WHAT TO FOCUS ON

Before beginning, decide what you want to work on. You will need two (2) concepts: an empowering one and a sticky one. These will be referenced in the exercise instructions as we go with the labels used below.

**Empowered Concept:** Think of something that's working really well for you in life, a quality that's well cultivated, or one of your strong suits. This can be something abstract, such as 'problem-solving' or something literal like 'being a good mother.' Whatever you pick, make it simple and empowering for you.

Some examples are:

- Excelling at school
- Confidence in doing your job
- Being creative
- Performance in a sport or art
- Motherhood or fatherhood, caregiver, or partner
- Selling something

**Sticky Concept:** Think of something specific you're struggling with, ideally the 'sticky story' you've had in mind throughout this book. Make sure it's something you can put into a few words. Keep it simple. You don't need all the details of your story; pick one main thing.

Here are some examples:

- Being unappreciated at work
- Keep attracting the same kind of people
- Not being able to close sales
- Fear of approaching people
- Not feeling confident in your body
- Plateaued at a certain income level
- Nobody listens to you
- Feeling overwhelmed in business

Before getting into Part I, you should be all set up and ready to go with your space and equipment, and have both your "Empowered Concept" and "Sticky Concept" decided. For example, "being creative" and "unable to talk to new people" would be the two things selected to work on, respectively.

Let's begin!

# THE EXERCISE: INSTRUCTIONS

## PART I: REFERENCE POINT FOR EMPOWERMENT

### Step 1 — Stand & Center

**What to Do:** [Start recording] Stand up in your space and get situated, facing the mirror or camera (if applicable). Take 1-2 minutes to center yourself, become present, and aware of your body.

**Explanation:** This is to get settled into the exercise and tune-in to yourself. Bring awareness to your breath. Bring awareness to each part of your body. Bring awareness to how you feel. Relax and drop into your body. Keep your eyes open and be aware of any tics, fidgeting, swaying, anxiety, etc. Do not analyze, try to fix, or change anything you're doing. Just notice.

### Step 2 — Feeling the “Empowered Concept” in Your Body

**What to Do:** Bring to mind the “Empowered Concept” that you decided on before you began. Go into the *feeling* of this concept. Feel this in your body, rather than thinking about it. Take up to a minute (or as long as needed) to get this feeling.

**Explanation:** You are taking a mental concept that is empowering for you and bringing into your body. You do this by going into the *feeling* of it. You want to associate in the first-person perspective. If it's a literal behavior, imagine doing it, but feel the action rather than going into your head. If it's a concept, say 'creativity,' go into what it's like to feel or be creative.

### Step 3 — The “Empowered Movement”

**What to Do:** From this feeling, allow it to express itself through your body and movement silently. Through movement, convey your “Empowered Concept.” You want the feeling to move you, rather than thinking of logical ways to demonstrate it. Use the first thing that comes up. Take 1-3 minutes to explore the movement and pay attention to what you're doing. (If using a mirror, look at it to observe yourself.) [This will be referred to as the “Empowered Movement”]

**Explanation:** Now that you've got your “Empowered Concept” internalized as a feeling, you want to express it through the movement of the body. You are looking to take a concept and represent it symbolically

through gesture, movement, feeling within your body. It's similar to miming, or the game charades, when you convey an impression of an idea, concept, or feeling using gestures and movements without words. It's not about mimicking the behavior or acting out a memory. It's about letting the feeling move you, even if it doesn't make sense or look "right."

#### **Step 4 — Review**

**What to Do:** [Stop recording] You may stop, sit down, and take a moment to relax. If you're filming, be sure to stop your video recording and prepare it for review. Take some time to reflect with "Review Set A" located at the end of the instruction section. Once you have finished reflecting on the questions, come back to your space and proceed to Part II.

## **PART II: REFERENCE POINT FOR BEING STUCK**

#### **Step 5 — Stand & Center**

**What to Do:** [Start recording] Stand up in your space and get situated as before in Part I. See if you can stop any tics or movement you noticed from last time. Take up to 3 minutes to stop, get still, and center in the present moment.

#### **Step 6 — Feeling the "Stucky Concept" in Your Body**

**What to Do:** Bring to mind the "Stucky Concept" that you decided on before you began. Go into the *feeling* of this concept. Feel this in your body, rather than thinking about it. Take up to a minute (or as long as needed) in order to get this feeling.

**Explanation:** This is identical to Part I, except with the other 'concept' you decided to use. You are turning your "Stucky Concept" from an idea into a feeling. This brings it from the mental realm into the physical realm so you can express it through your body. The same suggestions apply as before. Notice how different this one feels compared to the first.

#### **Step 7 — Stucky Movement**

**What to Do:** From this feeling, allow it to express itself through your body and movement silently. Through movement, convey your "Stucky Concept." You want the feeling to move you, rather than thinking of logical ways to demonstrate it. Use the first thing that comes up. Take 1-3 minutes to explore the movement and pay attention to what you're doing. (If using a mirror, look at it to observe yourself.) [This will be referred to as the "Stucky Movement"]

**Explanation:** This is identical to Part I, except with the other ‘concept’ you decided to use. You are now getting a comparison between something that empowers you and something that disempowers you, and how you’ve internalized these symbolically and have embodied them. The same explanation of miming and charades applies here too. Let the feeling of the story move you.

## **Step 8 — Review**

**What to Do:** [Stop recording] You may stop, sit down, and take a moment to relax. If you’re filming, be sure to stop your video recording and prepare it for review. Take some time to reflect with “Review Set B” located at the end of the instruction section. Once you have finished reflecting on the questions, come back to your space and proceed to Part III.

## **PART III: A NEW WAY TO MOVE**

*Note: Steps 10 & 11 are done in tandem.*

## **Step 9 — Stand & Center**

**What to Do:** [Start recording] Stand up in your space and get situated as both times before. Take up to a minute to center.

## **Step 10 — Stucky Movement (2nd)**

**What to Do:** Take a minute to get back into the “Stucky Movement” you did from Part II. Feel into what this was again, and express the same “Stucky Concept” through movement from last time. DO NOT STOP the movement to transition to the next step (11).

**Explanation:** You want to get back to the same “Stucky Movement” from the previous part because, in the next step, you will transition to the next movement from this one.

## **Step 11 — Opposite Movement**

**What to Do:** While you are still doing the “Stucky Movement” from Step 10, *begin doing the opposite*. Whatever “do the opposite” means to you (as long as it’s still a movement), move the opposite way from how you were just moving. Once you’ve got it, keep doing this for 1-3 minutes and then stop. Pay attention to how this feels and looks. [This will be referred to as the “Opposite Movement”]

**Explanation:** While you are moving from the energy of your “Stucky Concept,” you do the opposite of what that movement is. People can interpret “opposite” in many ways, and it is purposely left vague and up to you because it needs to reflect how *you* perceive the world. It may feel weird, awkward, confusing, or uncertain—that’s normal. Notice what this looks like to you in the mirror or by feeling and observing yourself. Does it look more functional or better to you than the “Stucky Movement”? If so, you may be dealing with a reverse-wiring!

## Step 12 — New Movement

**What to Do:** You are going to find a new way to move that isn’t as ‘stuck.’ Go into the idea and feeling of your “Stucky Concept” as you have prior, and this time, rather than doing the movement as you would naturally do, find a *new* way to express it with your body. Find a way to “solve it” through a different movement—a gesture or movement which conveys this in the body—that you’ve never, ever done before. Give yourself up to 5 minutes to explore and experiment. [This will be referred to as the “New Movement”]

**Explanation:** If you found that the last step produced a movement (“Opposite Movement”) that looked less stuck than before (“Stucky Movement”), you are free to continue doing that here and explore deeper. If not, or if you would like to explore something new, you may use this step to play and experiment. This is an opportunity to move your body in a way that it’s never moved before. See if you can find a movement that would symbolically represent what it would be like to be unstuck compared to the “Stucky Concept.” Let your body move you into a movement that *feels* better. You are free to try multiple things until something ‘clicks.’ If nothing does, that is okay. Stop at the 5-minute mark.

**Example:** If your “Stucky Movement” was bashing yourself on the head, perhaps bringing your palms from your head to the sky instead would represent something different from being stuck and feel better than hitting yourself.

## Step 13 — Review

**What to Do:** [Stop recording] You may stop, sit down, and take a moment to relax. You are done with movement. If you’re filming, be sure to stop your video recording and prepare it for the final review. Take some time to reflect with “Review Set C” located at the end of the instruction section. Once you have finished reflecting on the questions, you are finished. There is no need to come back here. Continue right on from the last question to the chapter conclusion.

# THE EXERCISE: REVIEW SETS

If you recorded your movements, replay your video and watch for each review set. You may use the video to help you answer the questions. Questions that pertain only to video playback are labeled with [video].



## REVIEW SET A (PART I)

- a) How still were you when you started to stand and center? Were there any tics, anxiety, or unease that arose as you stood still? Did this anxiety continue into the other parts of the exercise?
- b) Did you feel embarrassed, silly, stupid, or shy in expressing yourself with your body?
- c) Were you really feeling, or were you in your head thinking about what it felt like?
- d) Were you analyzing yourself, or were you present in the now?
- e) Did you exaggerate, act it out, or turn it into a drama or performance?
- f) Did you do it halfheartedly or take it seriously?
- g) How much space did you take up with your body in the room?
- h) Were you worried about what people might think if they saw you doing this?
- i) Did the “Empowered Movement” feel familiar and natural, or foreign and difficult?
- j) Did any emotions arise? What were they, and how intense?
- k) If there were people there, how would they respond to the feeling you’re conveying?
- l) [video] What do you see as you watch yourself moving?
- m) [video] What judgments, stories, meanings, or feelings come up as you watch?
- n) [video] If you were a stranger looking at this movement and had to guess what it was trying to symbolize (like charades), what would you call it?
- o) [video] Notice your vision. Where is it? Down, forward, up? Did you follow the instructions to keep them open or not? Can you feel your future in your vision?

## REVIEW SET B (PART II)

- a) Did you notice any difference between the first time you stood to center and the second when you were invited to stop any tics? Was there any new anxiety or less compared to last time?
- b) Did the “Stucky Movement” feel familiar and natural, or foreign and difficult?
- c) Were you really feeling, or were you in your head thinking about what it felt like?
- d) Were you analyzing yourself, or were you present in the now?
- e) Did you exaggerate, act it out, or turn it into a drama or performance?
- f) What did you notice that was different from the “Empowered Movement” in Part I and your “Stucky Movement” in this part? Any of the below:
  - i. Emotions
  - ii. Thoughts
  - iii. Stories
  - iv. Feeling
  - v. Energy
  - vi. Attitude
  - vii. Body language
  - viii. Body movements
  - ix. Posture
  - x. Direction, scale, speed
  - xi. Breath
  - xii. Tension

- g) Imagine meeting someone who portrayed the same feeling as your “Stucky Movement.” What real-world results would a movement like this translate to? Would this show up in a business, factory, relationship, household, etc. as any of the following:
- i. Functional or dysfunctional
  - ii. Joy or suffering
  - iii. Productive or not productive
  - iv. Inviting or isolating
  - v. Generous or selfish
  - vi. Creative or rational
  - vii. Efficient or cumbersome
  - viii. Loving or fearful
  - ix. A lot of money or little wealth
  - x. Fun or serious
  - xi. Allows beauty or perverts it
  - xii. Easy or hard
  - xiii. Masculine, feminine, both, or neither
  - xiv. Large vision or no future
- h) What results are you getting in your own life that match any of those you listed in the previous question?
- i) Could you see any movements that remind you of your parents or caregivers?
- j) What did you learn about how you are in your everyday life from the way you moved your body so far?
- k) Could you notice any similarities or differences between your right and left sides while moving? Front and back of your body? The top and bottom of your body?
- l) [video] What do you see as you watch yourself moving?
- m) [video] Look at yourself on video. If this was a stranger, what kind of person would this be? Describe how much money they make, what their friends and family are like, what kind of house they live in, what career they have, what the sex is like, what clothes they might wear, etc. Just report the details.
- n) [video] What judgments, stories, meanings, or feelings come up as you watch? Do you see any shadow aspects of yourself running?
- o) [video] Where was your vision this time? Any differences between this and the prior?
- p) [video] Does this movement appear to be taking responsibility or not? Accountability or not? Is it powerful or powerless? Notice if you see any ‘victim mentality’ running.
- q) [video] Imagining this was another person, is the movement making it all about them, or are there ‘other people’ symbolically involved in the movement (giving, communicating, interacting, etc.)? Does this person seem caught up in their own world, or are they ‘plugged-in’ or ‘connected’ to the space around them?

## REVIEW SET C (PART III)

- a) Certain parts of the instructions were left open for interpretation *on purpose*. Did you struggle with any specific part of them?
- b) Were you trying to do any or all of the exercise “right”?
- c) Were you letting the feeling guide you to doing it “opposite,” or were you in your head thinking about what it should look like?
- d) Were you in your head, or were you present in your body?

- e) What did you notice that was different from the “Stucky Movement” when you began Part III and your “Opposite Movement”? Did anything get “reversed”? Any of the below:
- a) Emotions
  - b) Thoughts
  - c) Stories
  - d) Feeling
  - e) Energy
  - f) Attitude
  - g) Body language
  - h) Body movements
  - i) Posture
  - j) Direction, scale, speed
  - k) Breath
  - l) Tension
- f) Do any of these changes feel better or worse or indifferent?
- g) Which of the three movements did you find to be the most functional? (“Stucky Movement”, “Opposite Movement”, “New Movement”)
- h) Imagine meeting someone who portrayed the same feeling as your “Opposite Movement.” What real-world results would a movement like this translate to? Would this show up in a business, factory, relationship, household, etc. as any of the following:
- a) Functional or dysfunctional
  - b) Joy or suffering
  - c) Productive or not productive
  - d) Inviting or isolating
  - e) Generous or selfish
  - f) Creative or rational
  - g) Efficient or cumbersome
  - h) Loving or fearful
  - i) A lot of money or little wealth
  - j) Fun or serious
  - k) Allows beauty or perverts it
  - l) Easy or hard
  - m) Masculine, feminine, both, neither
  - n) Large vision or no future
- i) Are any of these you listed more functional than what you answered in the corresponding question for Part II, your “Stucky Movement”? (Review Set B, question ‘g’)
- j) When you did the “Opposite Movement,” did you find that it felt any better, lighter, or freer? Did you find it odd, uncomfortable, or wrong? Could this potentially be a reverse-wiring as discussed in the chapter, “When Wrong Works”?
- k) What did you discover in the “New Movement” compared to how you are stuck in real life with your “Stucky Concept”? Remember, this is all *symbolic*, not literal.

- l) [video] What differences do you see watching yourself between all the movements?
- m) [video] Look at yourself moving the “Opposite Movement” and/or “New Movement” on video. If this was a stranger, what kind of person would this be? Would they be more or less successful, happy, etc., than the person you identified in the last Review Set B, question ‘m’.
- n) [video] What judgments, stories, meanings, or feelings come up as you watch?
- o) [video] Look at yourself and your vision between the movements? Can you notice any differences or similarities?
- p) [video] Look at yourself in the context of the space. What is your relationship with it, and how does it change as your movement changes? How would someone else relate to these behaviors without knowing your intentions?
- q) Were you judging the instructions or yourself during the process?
- r) Did you approach this as you were playing or testing?
- s) Did you let yourself have fun, or did you make it hard?
- t) Were you looking to change anything, or were you looking to know the truth?
- u) Were you curious or skeptical?
- v) Did you like or dislike the exercise or any particular parts?
- w) Did you dismiss and skip the exercise altogether? What are you avoiding?

## CONCLUSION

You’ve completed the Embodied-Story Exercise! While it’s still fresh in your mind, write down your top three takeaways from this exercise.

This is an exercise that makes the mind-body-emotion connection tangible. You got to see firsthand how stories and archetypes are represented in the body, not only in thought. You were able to see how each of the chapters practically applied here, through the movements themselves or what was revealed by the review questions. Were you able to see how all the concepts like being present, stopping, feedback, embodiment, avoidance, and being in your head applied here?

Check in with how you’re feeling after completing the exercise.

There is no right or wrong, or value judgment about yourself to make from this. There is not a grade or diagnosis, pass or fail. What this means about you is found within the data of the movement and your answers. If you’re feeling let-down or discouraged, notice what attachments to specific outcomes you had. For example: Were you looking for this to save you or reveal the grand answer to your problems? Were you looking to do it right and get confirmation? Were you secretly hoping for some analysis that would enable you to stay stuck? What you were looking to get from this is how you set similar expectations in life.

Again, this was not an exercise—this was your life! How you do one thing is how you do anything. The way you approached this, or even judged and skipped it, is affecting other areas of your life. This book and the exercises within are not separate from you and your life. If you are honest with yourself in answering the questions and take a look at how you approached this and what happened, you will have everything you need to know about why you’re still stuck. It’s all here. Look at your “Stucky Movement” on video. Look at the answers from the review sets. Take the time to see how all of this relates to your life. Start to look for patterns and similarities in other things you do. For example: If someone arrived at this exercise with a victim mentality, they’d look to this to save them as they’ve looked to books or teachers or healers to save them prior.

You can revisit this exercise as often as you'd like with other sticky stories and archetypes. It's a great practice for exploring all the concepts of this book at once. I'd also recommend practicing your "New Movement" for a few weeks or months until that is the default you go to for your old "Sticky Concept." You're basically 'rewiring' your nervous system with a feeling and somatic interpretation that's more functional, writing over the old 'program.' Do not be concerned about doing it right or messing yourself up by doing it wrong. Get in your body, move, and have fun exploring embodiment!