

## **Why did you want to do a somatic based Movement Re-patterning session?**

I've been interested in a movement repatterning session for over a year now. With a strong connection to movement and the body, I'm always eager to explore practices that foster deeper self-awareness and facilitate more mindful ways of navigating life. Recently, I experienced a period of significant stress and physical discomfort, which heightened my anticipation of how this session might positively impact both my body and mind. I'd heard highly recommended feedback about Donna from other movement artists, who spoke of the transformative effects it had on their own practices. I was keen to discover how this experience could enhance not only my daily life but also my movement practice. Additionally, I've dealt with lower back pain and related injuries, and I was hopeful that the session would offer new insights into my recovery and overall well-being.

## **Could you briefly describe your session (ex. how did the session begin, progress, etc?)**

The session began with a gentle check-in, where Donna reviewed my intake form. We discussed the reasons for my visit and how my body was feeling, both generally and specifically on that day. I was encouraged to share any past or present injuries, as well as any other areas I wanted to focus on. Donna assured me that if I experienced any physical or emotional discomfort during the session, I should feel free to express it, and we could adjust or pause as needed.

We started with me walking around the room while Donna guided me to focus on my breath and bodily sensations. This helped heighten my awareness, and I was invited to share what I was noticing as I moved. After a few minutes of walking and becoming more attuned to my body, we transitioned to the floor, where Donna introduced exercises aimed at releasing tension, either identified by her or expressed by me while walking.

During the floor exercises, there was a dynamic flow between Donna demonstrating movements and my own practice, where I would share how each exercise felt. Based on my feedback, Donna would guide me verbally, offering suggestions to deepen the work, or she would use touch to encourage the emergence of new movement patterns.

We began by focusing on my upper body, specifically my shoulders. For instance, while lying on my back, I attempted to lift my arm using my scapula, with Donna applying gentle pressure to the area to facilitate more freedom of movement. This exercise revealed the differences between my two shoulders in both mobility and sensation. I also used a blow-up ball to explore how my body's weight interacted with gravity and the floor, further deepening my awareness. The inclusion of props, combined with her touch, allowed me to experience the movements from various perspectives.

We then explored different pathways of reaching my arm across my body, integrating breath, movement, and sensing. As I lay on the ball, Donna would sometimes press or pull gently on specific muscles or bones, encouraging new movements or releasing tension.

From there, we shifted focus to the pelvis and legs, examining how the entire body works as a connected system. Donna provided verbal guidance on where to release tension and which

muscles to engage or relax. One of the final exercises created a significant shift in my pelvis that resonated through my entire body. While this resulted in a greater sense of freedom and reduced pain, I also felt a degree of uncertainty and dizziness. After I shared this with Donna, she guided me through some gentle stretches and breathing exercises, reminding me to listen to my body's needs.

After taking time to stretch, roll gently, and slowly rise from the floor, we returned to walking to assess any changes. Both Donna and I noticed a marked difference in how I felt and moved. We concluded with a final check-in, reflecting on the key takeaways from the session, and discussed areas I could continue exploring. Donna's suggestions focused on embracing the new movement patterns and maintaining the release of tension. The benefits of the session extended into the following week, leaving a lasting impact.

### **How did your body feel at the end of the session? What changes did you notice?**

By the end of the session, my body felt entirely transformed compared to how it had at the beginning. It was as if my bones had shifted, and I had released tension in areas I hadn't even realized were tight until they surfaced during the session. I noticed a significant shift in my pelvis, which in turn realigned my entire body. This realignment alleviated areas of tightness in my back, shoulders, and hip flexors. Although I did experience some nausea and light-headedness, it was accompanied by a sense of greater freedom in my movements.

As I walked for the second time, I felt more grounded and weighted, yet there was a newfound ease in my hips. I could feel the kinetic energy flowing through my body, from top to tail, and was more aware of how everything was interconnected. My body felt so different, almost as if it needed to adjust further—like I needed to shake or pop something or relax in a hot tub to fully settle into this new state.

In the days that followed, I noticed an increased sense of connection to my body and heightened awareness of the areas we had focused on. I felt more attuned to my breath and gravity, and my mind was notably calmer. On a deeper, cellular level, I felt slower, more grounded, and my body moved with more fluidity. This experience left me eager to continue exploring movement repatterning, as it felt like I had only begun to uncover the first layer of a much deeper process.

### **What did you learn or gain from the session?**

I realized through the session that I had not been connected to my body. I had been moving through life without fully embodying my physical self, except during dance classes. This experience brought a deeper sense of presence and awareness to my body in space, highlighting how I can incorporate more breath and ease into my daily movements. I discovered that my right scapula is quite restricted, and I've since been gently working on increasing mobility in my back and shoulder through breath and some exercises Donna shared. Through this practice, I hope to encourage improved movement throughout my entire body. Donna also identified tension in my hip joint, likely linked to an incomplete activation of the kinetic chain in my leg. I've since incorporated some of the movement patterns Donna shared, allowing me to focus more

intentionally on these areas using breath and curiosity. While I feel significantly more aware and physically improved, this session feels like just the start of my journey in movement repatterning.

**Can you describe in one sentence (based on your experience) what Somatic Movement Repatterning is?**

Somatic Movement Repatterning is a guided practice that invites deeper connection with the body, fostering awareness of areas needing release, and promoting more functional, fluid movement that enhances overall kinetic flow.

**Would you recommend these somatic-based movement re-patterning sessions to others? if yes, why?**

Yes! Many of us are often unaware of how disconnected we are from our own bodies. Some people may not realize they're holding tension or moving in ways that contribute to their discomfort. These sessions provide an opportunity to pause, tune in, and become more aware of our bodies. With the guidance of a skilled practitioner, participants are led on a journey of self-awareness, discovering new movement pathways, and encouraged to release tension through touch, energy work, and suggested exercises. Since we inhabit our bodies every day, developing a deeper connection to how we move—even in simple actions like breathing and walking—can profoundly enhance our quality of life.

**Testimonial:**

Having a movement re-patterning session with Donna was a transformative experience that brought me fully into the present moment and encouraged me to truly listen to my body. I discovered things about my body that I never would have, had I not taken the time to deeply feel and sense it. Donna's expertise as a movement practitioner helped me identify areas of tension in muscles and joints that I hadn't previously considered. Her thoughtful guidance not only brought new awareness to these areas but also allowed me to release that tension, leading to more functional, fluid movement.

What made this session unique compared to seeing a physiotherapist or chiropractor was the collaborative approach. It felt like we were a team, with Donna acting as a skilled detective, offering insights and clues that helped me unlock my body's potential. The partnership and active participation made the experience incredibly engaging and empowering.

I truly believe a session like this would be beneficial for anyone, whether you have extensive experience with movement or are someone who doesn't typically connect with their body. Donna's ability to help you tune in and discover new movement patterns can make a lasting difference.