



## **Meditations in Movement**

**a talk on researching with movement by Gawri Ina Pape**

At the summer Zenith Camp in the Ticino Alps in 2022, we put Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan's nature meditations not only on the breath, but also into a gentle, steady way of moving. Gawri Ina Pape, who shared this with us, is a trainer in Spacial Dynamics®.

When we first practiced Spacial Dynamics® together at camp in the summer of 2014 - during a retreat with Pir Zia, which was appropriately about the sacredness of the body, I (Khair-un-Nisa) was amazed at how these simple movements led me into a wonderful body awareness. I felt simultaneously completely centered and connected to the vastness. Since then I always enjoy it when Gawri Ina offers Spacial Dynamics® in Inayatiyya contexts and find her research into bringing movement and nature meditations together exciting.

After our beautiful practice together at the camp in the Alps, we agree that it is hard to put into words. And right after that we decided to just give it a try - with this conversation in January 2023.

**K** - Khair-un-Nisa Kerstin Veigt

**I** - Gawri Ina Pape

**K:** Space - Space is an important concept in the way of moving that you offer: What does "space" mean to you personally, and how do you experience it? So space, which occurs in Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan's and now also Pir Zia Inayat Khan's teachings, how does it touch you? And what is space at all, if you were to explain this now to a person who has not yet explored this topic?

**I:** A person is asked how he/she lives in space. And answers: Which space? Just as a fish, if it were asked how life is in water, would answer: what water? So it is not easy to describe. I suggest that we take your question about space into our conversation and look at it from different perspectives.

**K:** Oh yes! First, would you like to tell us how you came to know Spacial Dynamics®?

**I:** What I was looking for is an approach to movement in general. I used to be very, very fond of movement as a child and also pretty good at gymnastics and lost that through various circumstances. And then, in my late 30s, I saw a performance of Bothmer® - Gymnastics on a stage and had the feeling that there was lightness, there was enthusiasm for movement, there was something "magic" that appealed to me completely. So all in all, this lightness and this power that didn't look like effort. As a result, I quit my job and did the Bothmer-Gymnastics training. And during that training I learned about Spacial Dynamics®, developed by Jaimen McMillan, one of the two training directors.



What I was also looking for...for example, when I had a massage appointment or a treatment appointment - I had migraines and headaches all the time for years - this person would do something to me and send me back home. I didn't feel like there was anything I could do myself. That's something that excites me about working with Spacial Dynamics®: I can show someone a way that he/she can move in a way that there is perceived lightness and space. And I can give the person something to take with him/her, how he/she can change his/her everyday movements in a beneficial and healthy way.

If we have an image of ourselves that includes only the functionality of our movement, then that is correct and important, but that is only part of the whole. If I manage to move with the forces of space as well, not only that there is space, but in space there are forces. When I can connect to these forces, then there is lightness, a giving into forces that are already there. That's how I would describe it. And Jaimen McMillan puts it this way,

*'Space is not emptiness, space is alive.'*

*Jaimen McMillan, Still moving, Schuylerville 2015*

**K:** So also an overcoming of this pattern of effort?

**I:** Yes.

**K:** And also a self-empowerment, self-determination? So you have everything in you as a human being to move, to move out of illness as well?

**I:** Exactly. We talk about how certain habits of movement are followed by certain diseases. We don't say "cause", we say: certain diseases have certain movement patterns that are observable. And if we can find a way out of an unfavorable habitual movement and connect with vastness and with space, then that is helpful in any case for the development out of diseases or ailments. Jaimen McMillan developed Spacial Dynamics® as a

*'sequence of exercises and therapeutic techniques that train the fluidity of movement between the person in motion and the space that surrounds him or her through movement, step by step, in order to promote a sense of one's own movement through the experiences thus gained.'*

*Jaimen McMillan, Still moving, Schuylerville 2015*

He states as a working hypothesis "that humans are not limited to being exclusively in the body. In the healthy we use the body as an essential foundation, thus living on the one hand within the boundaries of our skin and on the other hand also in widening circles outside.

*Jaimen McMillan.in: Der Merkurstab/The Mercury Staff,  
Dornach May-June 2022, translation I.Pape.*



I would like to let someone else speak, Pir Zia Inayat Khan quoted Shah Nizamuddin at the Camp in the summer:

*'Think that the universe is an ocean of light. And you are a fish swimming in this ocean. But the fish is also the ocean in miniature, swimming in itself, sucking the ocean into itself as a spiral, and flowing out again in the same way.'*

*Camp Zenith 2022 not verbatim transcript, I.Pape.*

**K:** How beautiful! Yes, the spiral is, after all, a central, underlying form for movement in Spacial Dynamics®.

**I:** Yes exactly, we work with curves, spirals, vortices, lemniscates (curve in the shape of an 8) and inverting spheres. A movement that appears linear turns out to be a spiral or a lemniscate. Thus as a movement from nature, in nature.

**K:** Oh yes. Getting back to our nature is so important. Our cultural socialization often goes strongly into this strenuousness. I, at least, have that quite "in", this "doing". And if this is not about "doing" now - can you describe what alternatives there are to that?

**I:** We teach 5 different kinds of movement.

1. One is that a movement is physically correct, architecturally correct, functionally correct. That's quite a lot.
2. The second form is to move from one point to the next. There we are still in the "doing". I'm at a point A and I want to go to the other, to B, I'm striving there. I move and I make my way. I'm straining, putting one foot in front of the next, pointing there with my arm, I'm moving from A to B.

**K:** directed to an aim?

**I:** (nods)

3. The third form of movement is rhythm, e.g. couple dance, one of the two gives an impulse and the other follows this impulse. I send a wave ahead and put my movement on that wave, my movement rides on that wave.
4. And then we come to an inversion of space, into another kind of movement. Let's take the picture that's hanging here in the background, I like it very much, I'm delighted by these trees, by these cherry blossoms that are there. I'm already there. And I pull myself from there. I pull myself from where I am already. This is a completely different kind of movement. It's being sucked in from there, being invited in, being attracted like magnetically, an attraction. As a result, it's an easy, flowing movement.
5. Then we come to the 5th kind. There I am here and I am there at the same time. I'm attracting from there, and I'm also giving something there, I have both



directions at the same time. We know this from really special encounters with other people, where there really is a conversation of mutual listening, understanding, speaking. An example is also this famous painting by Michelangelo, "The Creation of Adam," where God and Adam meet, with their hands. Adam is clothed and God gives life, but it's not one-sided. There is a yearning from both sides and the current is flowing.

**K:** Like that Sufi saying, *'When you take one step toward God, God takes a hundred steps toward you.'*

**I:** That's wonderful about it.

**K:** That's how I imagine it now with this last step, that I'm so fully present and basically fully in contact with the life forces. Or for these forces in space?

Oh! And that's what you call an inversion?! Towards the end of my retreat, my retreat guide suddenly fiddled with his wool cap, one of those from the Andes. Then he said, "I like this bobble so much - oh, and here's another bobble!" And then he pulled on the inner pom-pom, and poof: a new cap pattern turned inside out, a llama appeared that had previously been inside. That's also when the term "upside down" came to my mind when I saw the new cap. It gave me an inkling of how it can now go back out into the world after the inner space of experience in the retreat.

**I:** Maybe this would be a moment to look at some of Hazrat Inayat Khan's Nature meditations (*Hazrat Inayat Khan, Nature Meditations, New Lebanon NY 1991 - Naturmeditationen, Heilbronn 2000*). There is much healing in these words, in these sentences.

**K:** *'Thou art present, everywhere in space.'*

**I:** *'Thou art present (breathe in), all through space (breathe out).'* In our current course we have been practicing "Just walking" to this. After all, there are these wonderful words by Al-Hujwiri from the 11th century:

*'The Sufi is the one whose thought  
Keeps pace with his foot.  
He is entirely present.  
His soul is where his body is  
and his body is where his soul is,  
and his soul is where his foot is  
and his foot is where his soul is.  
This is the sign of presence  
without absence.'*

*Transmitted by Sarida Brown, Suluk Academy 2009*



And this exercise, "Just Walking" - translated as "Simply Walking" or "Just Walking" - is about not pushing and shoving yourself forward with every step, as is common in our culture, and straining to take every step - but letting each step pull you in. This sounds simple at first, but it is not easy to implement because we are not used to it. The experience that exists in this exercise, when the front foot seeks its place and experiences itself attracted to that spot of the earth, is an experience of presence: "Thou art present, all through space."

**K:** Ah.

**I:** After all, we work in Inayatiyya as a very basic practice with elemental breath, baptism and purification with the 5 elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Breath is a movement. I associate with these elemental breaths the 5 types of movement I described earlier. That is, if we are now with the 1st movement, with the earth breath, in and out through the nose. When it comes to "from A to B", with the water breath, in through the mouth and out through the nose. When it comes to rhythm, the fire breath in through the mouth and out through the nose. And then when it comes to inversion, turning around, "I'm already where I want to be," it's the air breath in through the mouth and out through the mouth. And where number 5 comes into play, being attracted and striving or flowing at the same time, it's the ether breath, the finest breath, through the nose and mouth at the same time. I find that very very exciting, how these two 5s go together.

**K:** So, that's so part of your research with movement, bringing this together?: Your meditation practice and your movement practice? That would be a big field, just the elemental breath alone, if you were to stay with that alone.

**I:** (nods). I would now choose one of the nature meditations again, we also worked with that in the summer at the Zenith Camp, words of experience from Hazrat Inayat Khan, which for me showed up completely naturally in movement: '*Unfold Thy secret through nature (breathe in) and reveal Thy mystery through my heart (breathe out).*'

Murshid always gives one part of the sentence to the in-breath and the other part to the out-breath - or vice versa. We then connected a Spacial Dynamics® exercise with this sentence: "The Wellspring" (well = good and also fountain, spring = source).

**I:** I would still like to share what Pir Zia said in his teachings about space:

*(non-literal transcript of parts of the teachings on Nature Meditations, Pir Zia Inayat Khan June 6, 2021, via Zoom).*

Something that surrounds us, always, which we hardly notice. Our task now is to notice it, to tend to it, this mysterious...presence. We cleanse and revivify our house, we use different ways to magnetize it, every space needs its care.



Each space has a magnetic center, a Kutub, a pole. And in every space there is a Genius loci, the spirit of that place, that has a particular responsibility for that place, magnetizing and keeping it in order. The memory-keeper.

According to the indian philosophy Pir Zia speaks of 3 different spaces:

Bhut-Akash, outer space, planets, atoms, contains all physical manifestation.

Mah-Akash, inner space, when we turn within, in which ideas swim, as vast as outer space.

Chid-Akash, a vaster space, still most ancient, space, that has always been, the universal ground, contains everything, space of all space, outer, inner, physical, mental, spiritual.

Hazrat Inayat Khan: *'The secret of the whole creation can be traced in the understanding of what is meant by capacity. Capacity is so to speak the egg of creation. All of this manifestation which is known to us, as well as that which is unknown to us is formed in some capacity. The sky is a capacity, capacity is that which makes a hollow, in which the action of the all-perovading existence may produce a substance...'*

*Hazrat Inayat Khan - Volume XI - Philosophy,  
Psychology and Mysticism Part I: Philosophy Chapter II CAPACITY*

These many Akashas, these many Asmans (= skys), each is a capacity. And as the Sufis of ancient times would say: *'The water, the color of the water is the color of the cup.'*

All the stars and planets which we have discovered and those which are not yet discovered, what are they? They are all capacities. And what do they contain? They contain each one according to its capacity whatever that capacity is able to preserve in it and give birth to.

Each capacity, each Akash, each Asman is a part and a whole. Each part is host to parts within itself. Each part is a whole and part of a larger whole. We find capacities within capacities and none is separable from the other. Each depends upon the capacity within it, involves and makes room for that which it can host, which it can sustain within itself, all within the Chid-Akash...

Murshid (Inayat Khan) has described the subtle organs of perception as spaces, like the space inside an apple... Each subtle center is tuned to a certain frequency, and this frequency is discovered there. To experience this, one must let these Lataif become voids, empty them. ...*'And that is the true task of the body, of the heart. That is the true aspiration of our inner being, to be a vessel for the divine presence, a shrine for the indwelling of God.'*



**I:** In relation to movement, one can say: We are responsible for the different spaces, for our body space, for our personal space that surrounds us - at about arm's length; for the space of the encounter with someone else, for the social space and for the supra-personal space (again an inversion).

**K:** That's not by chance 5 again now?

**I:** No, not by chance, in these 5 kinds of spaces we move.

**K:** I have experienced and found it so beautiful to hear that the migratory birds also fly at night. I realized that they are completely attracted by the magnetic. There they flew at night in the total darkness! Not even the star of Bethlehem was to be seen! Where would that be now? Is that the body space and at the same time the transpersonal space? Attracted. As we also feel, there is more, there is something in the air, the fragrance, the vastness, something betrays this aliveness, something that we all have, all beings.

**I:** Murshid (Inayat Khan) says about this in the book *'Spiritual development means God-consciousness... It is the faith and realization, 'not I exist, but God,' that gives the healer the power to heal at a distance; it is this realization that fills him with the confidence that he can transmit his thoughts at a distance, for the knowledge of the all-pervading God brings the realization that the Absolute is life itself, and that space, which to the ordinary man is nothing, is everything; in fact, space is even the very life of all things.'*

*Hazrat Inayat Khan - Healing and the Mindworld  
(Omega Publications 2019, re-translated from the german issue)*

And Pir Zia said: *'What is it that we can give to the One? Space.'* (On the Zenith Camp 2022 transcript).

**K:** And this very centeredness, so ultimately this embeddedness ... yes really like the fish in the ocean, so ocean and fish at the same time. That quote is so beautiful, and I can really relate that to how that felt to me.

Oh, there's also such a beautiful statement where the ocean appears again, in Volume 4: When the healers inside try to heal on their own, their healing power is like a drop, and when they step aside and know that it's God that heals, it's the healing power of a whole ocean. Yes, it can feel so different!

**I:** I've heard over and over again that after a treatment with Spacial Dynamics®, people say (something like) *'I now have the experience that I'm really fully human.'* And that's an experience where I'm not just identifying through my physical body, but where I'm in connection.

**K:** I find it exciting that this is also a healing event like you described in the beginning from your own life. You've lost the joy of movement and aliveness that you had



as a child. It's so nice to find that again then, isn't it? Can you also say an alienation that then turns back around - like the wild geese flying towards home?

**I:** Those are beautiful words for it, yes.

**K:** It appeals to me a lot that it's this encouragement to heal myself, so that with a simple exercise that I learned from you, I can now go on my own like that, and by doing that I realize that I'm taking it into other kinds of movement, for example dancing, and that something is transforming. Murshid (Inayat Khan) also said that nothing is as strong as self-healing, and he emphasized that ultimately these self-healing processes have a very special power.

**I:** Also as an attitude, he says: *'You should think that every ray of sunlight heals me, the air heals me, the food I eat has an effect on me. With every breath I breathe in something that purifies, heals, and brings me perfect health.'* *Healing and the mindworld'* (Omega Publications 2019, re-translated from the German issue). That would be a nice ending to our conversation, wouldn't it?

**K:** Yes, thank you!

### Ina Pape

In social work I have worked with children, the elderly and people with assistance needs.

For several years I taught physical education at a Waldorf school. I teach meditation and lead a healing circle at the Dar-al-Aman (Inayatiyya) center in the north of Germany.

With Spacial Dynamics® and Bothmer® Gymnastics I offer:

- Individual sessions (movement counseling) and group courses for people who would like to improve their physical and mental well-being.
- Group courses with the Nature Meditations with Spacial Dynamics® exercise (via Zoom, also in person e.g. at the Easter Seminar or as a workshop).
- Group courses in which prayer gestures can be experienced more clearly.
- Group courses on ergonomics at the workplace, e.g. in the office and in agriculture.
- Offerings to accompany a conference, in order to experience a theme of the day in movement.

#### Contact information:

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