

Welcome

Hi friends, welcome to Movement Monday of this, our first week of Abolition Advent: Freedom for all Bodies.

Today we're going to move together to help our exploration deepen around the living, intersectional site, of where the need for racial justice meets the need for reproductive justice.

And as we do so, I just want to invite us to acknowledge those who are already living at that intersectional site and those who have for generations.

I also want to give deep thanks before we move into our embodied practice, to the Women of African Descent for Reproductive Justice, who coined this term in their wisdom, their activation, and their culture-shifting thought back in 1994.

And I also want to give deep thanks to the organization SisterSong, who has been continuing to cultivate and share that wisdom ever since.

So thank you.

Now before we get into our bodies and move, I just want to lift up several themes that move and live and are dynamically inviting us into this intersectional site.

The first theme is the theme of personal agency or inner authority.

And the theme is, more deeply, the fact that our personal agency and our inner authority are sacred, God-given gifts to us as humans. So the gift, the blessing, the birthright, if you will, of inner agency and authority.

The second theme arising has to do with the fact that our inner authority needs no human overseer. That human oversight too often brings with it degradation, intrusiveness, the enacting of laws upon our inner agency, and the criminalization of our use of it.

So instead we claim that (rather than oversight) we need respect--spiritually, relationally, and materially--in the form of policy and practice, so that our inner, embodied agency can find its fullness of expression.

And third, the theme is that, when we invite our bodies into creating space for the felt agency of our humanity to meet the Divine or to be met by our Divine Creator, we engage and activate a site where we get to become co-creators, our agency with the will and the ways of our Maker.

So this is the site, the themes, the intersection that I invite us into now.

Themes

Now, let's move toward our movement practice.

First, a couple of notes:

This movement space that we're sharing this Advent has nothing to do with trying to look pretty or having to perform a certain quality or way of moving.

There is no right or wrong here.

And second, I just want to invite you to have the movement experience that suits your physicality and your reality.

So I'm going to be moving, standing most of the time and employing much of my own body.

However, if moving while sitting down suits you, or lying down, moving just parts of your body or your inner body, moving your cells, moving your tiniest muscles, moving your imagination--all those forms of physicality, of what we call the "body-spirit," are welcome and valued here.

So on that note, let's begin these three simple invitations into our movement practice today.

I want to invite you to find a way to move smooth and slow.

Just let your body find its way to that combination.

Good.

And now I want to invite you, as you move smooth and slow, to float, as if you're being carried through the air on the tail of a kite.

And so it is that, that is making your smooth and slow happen... and you're floating through the air.

So that's the first invitation, which is to float.

The second invitation is to continue with smooth and slow, but now we're going to engage our muscles in the enactment of pushing and pulling, however that makes sense to you.

So pushing, pulling, and also pausing. Pushing, pulling, and pausing. And pushing, pulling, and pausing.

Great.

Floating.

Push, pull, pause.

And the third is simply from that place of pause, following the aliveness of your own body: its nudges, its sensations, its desires or needs. And letting yourself become a holy follower of that place. Of engaged agency and pause.

Those are the three invitations we're playing with.

The difference between not feeling like there's much agency inwardly and then engaging our inner agency. Pausing with that, and then following the desires and the wisdom of that place of reengaged agency.

I'm going to put on a piece of music. I'll call the prompts out as we go, and this will be just a couple minutes long.

Go ahead and enter your own movement meditation now, around agency and the site where racial justice and reproductive justice are trying to show us something.

Here we go.

Movement

All right, friends. Now that we have those three movement invitations, I'm going to talk us through just having those for yourself, discovering what they show you about the blessing of personal agency and the liberation of inner authority for all.

I'm going to put on a piece of music and I'll talk us through this.

Do these prompts in ways that make best sense for you.

So starting with the life-giving breath as you now allow your body to float at the end of that kite.

No need to follow what I'm doing.

Have your own floating experience. Floating with that kite. How that kite makes you go. Good.

And now, staying with the smooth and slow, let's move to engaging our muscles for pushing, pulling, and pausing.

Playing with all the ways we can have that engaging, pushing, pulling, pausing.

Good.

Now we're going to alternate between floating and pushing and pulling and floating and pushing, pulling, and pausing.

And now, from this place of pause, we're going to follow the sensation and aliveness of our own bodies into however that invites us to move.

Good. I invite you, in this time of finding your ending, to take a breath into that.

Let it out with a sigh.

And if you have your pen and paper, your journal handy, I also invite you to simply make notes, make doodles, write phrases, name what you're noticing.

And perhaps what you leave on the paper can be a bit of a guiding body icon to accompany you through the rest of this week of Advent.

Closing Scripture, Poem, Prayer

In this final portion of our Movement Monday Practice, I'd like to share today's focus passage from our scripture.

This comes from Matthew 13:35-37.

So first I just invite you to rest your body and allow these words to encounter you however they will.

"Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come in the evening, or at midnight, or at cock crow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.

And what I say to you, I say to all, 'Keep awake.'"

Now, I invite you to your place of beginning your final movement meditation for today.

You don't have to learn anything new.

You're just going to be able to opt now between floating, pushing, pulling, pausing, and following that pause.

Your choice.

I'm not going to call out when to move from one to the other.

You may just stay with one of those this whole time.

But a poem arose out of contemplating today, and so I just want to share that poem with you, which is entitled "Keep Awake." I invite you to move to it, by way of this being our closing prayer for today.

All right, so take a breath.

Ah! Good.

Keep Awake

Once long and not so long ago they thought they were the boss of me.

Piracy of pen, unbending white collar, rubbings together of cross with law, of weighty coin and dollar.

They thought they were my sovereign, but my sovereign lives in me. In blood-born wisdom and birthright bones, and the coming One calling us free.

Amen.