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THE ENCOUNTER: A STUDY ON INTIMACY IN THE SOMATIC TRANSITIONS PROCESSES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STANLEY KELEMAN'S FORMATIVE PSYCHOLOGY

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To my dear grandfather Filomeno Passos for dedicating himself to our meetings, which filled my heart with words, images and movements. The structures of our meetings founded my way of telling stories and researching human relationships, with a look full of feelings, languages and actions. It was with this gaze that I came across Stanley Keleman's legacy.

Abstract: The study that follows talks about how we can live a personal life and not be taken by our impulses and patterns of responses that no longer make sense to be repeated. **Somatic intimacy** is an organization, a structure, a form that organizes itself in the formative practice of micro movements, micro actions that confer the formation of a gradient of experiences on how we respond internally to events and how we communicate our feelings and thoughts and actions in our relationships within ourselves and with the world. To live a personal life is to learn, experience, and influence **organized responses**. Living process of forming between established and emerging structures that give the organism its continuous growth throughout a lifetime. We are always finishing something, gestating something or starting something new; these experiences and behaviors form our formative process. In order to grow, the organism organizes motor, emotional and cortical responses, which organize functions from swelling to extending and collecting, to compacting, conferring various degrees of malleability and firmness. Being close to our somatic responses gives us personhood by organizing the continuum of neural and motor connections. Self influence in the use of **EMCV – VOLUNTARY CORTICAL MUSCULAR EFFORT**, it allows us to organize micro variations in our experience, generating different degrees of tonus, micro actions in an elongated experience time, which produce new synapses, new cortical

registers about how we function and how we can respond to events.

A personal life is a creative, poetic, self-managed, self-influential life, where we learn from our ancestral and inherited experiences to build new futures. We are heirs to our family histories and our ancestral structures, continually building new forms.

Keywords: Somatic Intimacy, Somatic Transitions, EMCV-VOLUNTARY CORTICAL MUSCLE EFFORT.

INTRODUCTION

Life has its laws of organization and grows in relation to itself and the environment in which it forms. This growth takes place inside and outside the borders that limit the organism. A layered process of organization that gives the organism the ability to continue forming, from conception to death. Human life follows its order of complexities, expanding, pausing its expansion and organizing a return, the disorganization of expansion and withdrawal. Between surface and interiority, we form somatic responses, behaviors that contain cognitive, muscular and emotional responses. This complex network of relationships, focused on interiority and on relationships that we call our self, coordinates our personal way of being in the world. We imprint our personal tone with our rhythms, attitudes and bonds, we distance ourselves and approach ourselves and others with our own style, meeting our need to remain connected and pulsating.

When we lose our pulsating ability, due to excessive expansion or contraction, we can harden; compress; lose form or become overwhelmed with excitement, suppressing our sense of self.

We are always leaving something behind, gestating something or forming something throughout a lifetime. This is how life builds its spaces to grow and mature. The destabilization of what was formed generates new

connections inside and outside the organism, new somatic responses, new challenges to form. This continuous and incessant process moves between malleability and firmness, permeability and thickening, more instability and more stability, forming and disorganizing behaviors. At the same time that it organizes new synapses and neural maps, it organizes our somatic library, our motor memories of actions, emotions and images, giving meaning and meaning to our experiences.

Experiences and behaviors throughout a lifetime form our subjectivity, our ways of being that constitute our ways of feeling, thinking and acting in the world. The evolutionary response, with the emergence of the cortex, gave humans, in addition to the ability to record their experiences, the power to influence and modify their responses based on their will. In volitional action, the cortex and the body are intimately connected, they converse cognitively and muscularly. We can muscularly influence our responses, creating pressure and effort variations and, this way, generating new synapses, new connections, new responses. We can choose how to respond to events, saving new behaviors or re-editing those already organized.

The EMCV - Voluntary Cortical Muscular Effort is a modeler of our somatic responses, voluntarily creating this body function of self-regulation and organization of behaviors. The EMCV influences, with different degrees of pressure, the muscular model of organized behavior. New synapses happen and new neural connections build images, actions and tides of emotions, connecting us and giving meaning to the experience. It comes and goes in degrees of intensity; from macro acts, which organize general behavior, to micro acts, which organize small variations in intensities and fine and delicate approximations of our forms; small variations in organization that make us intimate with our process. Frame by

frame we go back and forth. Microacts make possible many distinctions between one form and another, between one degree and another, between responses from the surface of the body and its interiority, between the speech of the heart and that of the cortex, between the responses of the viscera and the images.

Somatic intimacy speaks of this experience of micro acts. By working slowly, experiencing every little variation in our form, taking time to experience and receive our responses, we become intimate with how we respond to ourselves and others.

In the next lines, we are going to organize an experiential knowledge that invites us to know our processes of change and how we can influence them, becoming intimate with our somatic responses. Somatic intimacy, as a master of the transition process, finds in the EMCV the way to build a personal life, of a formative person.

SOMATIC INTIMACY: ELONGATED EXPERIENCE TIME

Our journey, in our living process, speaks of our cellular structure organizations to the experiences that are organized in behaviors, and that set the tone of our presence in the world, within ourselves and in our relationships. We are a metastable process, which stabilizes behaviors, motor memories that shape our ways of thinking, acting and feeling, and new forms that are constituted from our experiences. Being sensitive to our organizational responses gives us a present attitude in our lives, enables us to take our process in hand and make it personal.

Adult intimacy is an approximation of our process, a way of getting to know each other and being able to manage our somatic transitions. We don't choose the river of life; we can form the boat to travel, with its rudder and its sails, which can converse with the winds and tides, which can slow down and

increase the speeds with which it travels the currents, which can berth at night or in storms and which can run freely in its clear waters. It can also slide on the surface and touch deep water with its bottom.

“Intimacy is a wet permeability of the body, experienced as a warm tide of sensation, feeling and intuition. This warm tide connects us with other people and with ourselves.”

(KELEMAN, 1999 – p.01)

Life expands and contracts in a continuous inherited pulse that organizes inward- and outward-facing experiences. The contractile properties of tissue extension and recoil organize the contractile function, swelling the organism and then collapsing; inflate to extend and collapse to compress. It is important that we can bring our embodied experience closer to the different qualities of these pulses, governing our pulsating tides and finding their congruences.

“[...] both functions swell to extend and collapse to compact there is a point where a reversal occurs, a transition zone where motility and density, porosity and rigidity exist at the same time and in the same place. This transition zone is a paused place of the pulse, a microbiosphere within the organism, a zone of concentrated motility where several events are taking place: expansion, inhibition (slowing down, gathering and pausing), and reversal.”

(KELEMAN, 2006 – p.1)

Making our process personal is being able to influence our responses and create, between our innate process of expansion and withdrawal, a place of transition that contains multiple realities. We form an inherited and personal embodied dimension and arrive at this transition point where we experience cellular, molecular, electrical and chemical waves of excitation. At this moment, we are dealing with what has not yet been formed, what is in the process of being formed, with a motile/porous stage, with the unknown

that will reveal itself in its metabolic process, where the organism forms itself. Being close to our transitions, accompanying ourselves influencing our responses, creating various degrees of tonic intensity and slowing down our responses, organize new synapses, new neuromotor organizations and new neural maps, new behaviors. The intimacy of our forming process brings us closer to our creation and allows us to follow our somatic responses.

““Voluntary Cortical-Muscular Effort - ECMV organizes emotional somatic patterns, alters our experiential Gestalt and grows a personal world.”

(KELEMAN, 2006 – p.03)

Becoming intimate with our living process and its somatic changes is a personal attitude, and depends on our willingness to act on our own inherited and learned/formed responses throughout our growth as adults. It is a commitment to our training process, it is a joy to be able to intensify and disorganize organized patterns. It's an evolutionary response that our cortex organizes: self-influence. The body talking to your brain and your brain talking to your body, somatic intimacy, the creation of a self-influential and self-determined personal life. The daily practice of self-influence strengthens relationships with already organized forms and with our past, our present responses and future forms, in direct relation with our ancestral and family heritages, with the planet and the biosphere and with love relationships. Living an intimate life requires a personal decision, a volitional action on the forming process. The effort is made to take the answers in hand and learn, with our own heritage and experiences, new ways of responding to internal and external events. Diving into the unknown universe of the organism and relationships invites us to slow down actions and organize an empathetic, warm receptivity

that welcomes, interests, encourages challenges and rejoices in the act of learning from one's own experience.

Knowing yourself from within. The architecture of the internal spaces involves a dynamic relationship with its own vitality.

- HOW can I live out the vitality that is available in me?
- HOW can I form something with her?
- How much do I want to share my vitality? When? With whom?

To experience intimacy with our training process in our macro and micro acts gives a personal dimension and the experience of being more masters of our training process. It is experiencing the freedom to exist in our own body and in our relationships. We can influence how we respond to our encounter with each other and with ourselves. Motile, porous, rigid and dense states accompany us in our process of forming. There are fast tissues in biochemical interactions (motels); lower velocity states and porous malleability, with a little more duration (porous); stiffness states with more firmness and more reliable shape (rigid); and compression, and the stabilization of habitual and reflex behaviors (densities).¹

So we have the usual in us, what was inherited and the possibilities. Intimacy as a master of the formative process guides us towards a personal life, a formative life. The process of somatic self-inquiry is anchored in our actions, in HOW we respond to our experiences in the action pattern and organized behaviors. The identity and the sense of personhood are directly organized in what we do and in what we are cultivating towards our future of training.

Being able to organize responses to the challenges of an embodied life, which go beyond our evolutionary impulses to make life grow, is being able to personalize and develop the life of the body. It implies being able to

know ourselves in our interiority, forming intimacy with our living process.

"Intimacy allows the soma to feel your rhythmic waves of arousal and your emotional responsiveness. Somatic intimacy is a formative agent of each person's ongoing evolution. It allows for recognition of the present moment, the elastic time of a created past and a present form being incubated with an unknown promise of tomorrow's future appearance."

(KELEMAN, 2014 – p.23)

Intimacy is an embodied form, a somatic experience that brings a knowing that emerges from our very fabrics. According to Stanley Keleman, it is an organized, porous-rigid anatomical structure. A knowledge of the body being within, contained by something greater than itself and also a knowledge of the body as container and generator of a personal self. (Keleman, 1999). Intimacy is the master of the formative process, it guides us perceptively and muscularly in our somatic responses. Receptive malleability speaks to the body's inherited ability to form and stabilize its boundaries, inside out and outside in, and respond to events with a choice, a personal tone. The body talks to its brain and the body's brain talks to its own neural maps and to its body, in a feedback and feedforward system, where information and impulses form excitatory currents and pulsating tides, which intimately shape our somatic process.

Stanley Keleman says:

"The human cortex has the unique ability to generate, receive and transmit excitatory patterns and reflect and re-enter them, to make maps within neural maps and behaviors. This ability for reflection and association is the weighting of experiences into a pulsating excitatory pattern of a back and forward, forward. It is an information and training process at a micro and macro level that generates intimacy between the body and itself in a formative drama of creating new

¹ Course lecture notes: Formative Psychology - RJ - Coordination: Leila Cohn - 2015)

behaviors, personal values and satisfaction”.
(KELEMAN, 2014 – p.23)

The embodied process, organized in its cognitive, emotional and action layers, is directly related to the internal dialogue, where the cortical muscular actions are self-formed and intimate with the formation itself. Thus we learn how to create new behaviors and memories and to form our own narrative, our personal embodied history and our autobiographical present. Somatic transitions speak to us of endings, of the soft and malleable consistencies of the transience of our forms and newly formed forms. The future waves of our forms are unpredictable and in a non-chronological and timeless time; future forms have a more palpable and sensitive embodied porosity, enough to move forward and seek to achieve stability. Somatic interiority contains the narrative of a personal inner existence and ancestry, and intimacy implies the ability to be contained and reflective. A turn towards one's own interiority, receiving its self-organized somatic states, providing a protective layer to form visceral, emotional and cortical responses that shape the connection between past, present and future.

According to Stanley Keleman, the dimension of adult intimacy brings the future and recognition of an internal somatic dynamic of a powerful neural and emotional excitatory pattern. Somatic events drive the body's intimacy with itself and are the source and nourishment to form a deep personal life. (Keleman, 1999).

A timeless experience, a layered pulsating pattern. An increase in deepening experience and a felt intimacy. Excitement and surprise about new somatic forms bring malleability and an immediate intimacy that calls for deeper responses, initiating a new formative process, informing new layers of embodiment towards the future. The pulsating wave that announces the future continues to form,

bringing anatomical changes, a powerful and dense pulse permeating the tissues, forming an extended instant.

The functional view proposed by Stanley Keleman brings the dimension of a cortical personal self and the instinctual unconditioned. A sacred and secular vision, a greater and deeper self with the function of fulfilling its destiny in the world.

“To be born is a promise, a chance to realize one's inner form in the best possible way in the here and now. These principles have guided my work and my teachings. I will place the highest value on being receptive to the waves of a deeper ancestral pulse in conversation with a younger self in the making, each contributing to the other about the soma's past, its extended present, and the matured forms beyond.”

(KELEMAN, 2014 p.26)

Stanley Keleman's formative work brings us an experience of pulsating waves that involve the organism as a whole, and generate feelings and memories. Past forms of somatic intimacies converse with present motor forms, informing and forming. At the same time, I organize new experiences of embodiment, an older form receiving new layers. The idea of the gastrulatory recess conceived by Stanley Keleman no Artigo: *Somatic Intimacy: Being and Knowing* (2014), speaks of this dialogue between past and present forms, connection of behavioral motor memories and emerging future forms.

“The pulsating pattern of intimacy - I was then, and am now, this familiar and unfamiliar wave, this inner intimacy of my present adult talking to himself about a changing structure.”.

(KELEMAN, 2014 – p.26)

Somatic intimacy requires states of containment and reflection, the self-organization of experiences to form in the visceral, emotional, and cortical interactions that shape interiority. The training body

weaves its own story between the past, present and future. The encounter between the inherited and formed body and the personally formed body organizes the recognition of an internal dynamic. The intimacy of the body with its experiences feeds the formation of a deeper person.

SELF INFLUENCE AS THE PATH TO A PERSONAL LIFE. THE EMCV: VOLUNTARY CORTICAL MUSCULAR EFFORT

Intimacy as a guide to the process of somatic transitions is a voluntary construction, an experience about your own somatic responses and being able to influence them to form new responses.

The EMCV, created by Stanley Keleman, is a function, related to how we use ourselves in our process of forming responses: cognitive, emotional and muscular, throughout our lives and on the way to somatic intimacy. It is a function in which the organism uses itself and responds to its experiences to continue forming.

The use of EMCV - voluntary cortical muscular effort implies a coming and going in our muscularly organized form, experiencing tonic variations, in an effort gradient that goes from low, medium to high degrees. The practice is organized in steps, in a dimension of intensification and de-intensification in the degrees of responses, a coming and going making more degrees of the form and less degrees in the same form, between dense, rigid, porous and mobile states. The development of the form implies its original act of forming an edge that contains the interiority, the feelings and sensations, and that outlines the actions.

The practice of EMCV affects the geometry and time of the form, its intracellular world. Each anatomical pattern goes from the macro to the microworld. They are transitions between macro and micro acts, in the

embodied coming and going of the effort to form, between voluntary and inherited acts.

"I can say: Hold your right hand with your left hand, one on top of the other. This experience of holding your hand from within, with intensity and pressure, forms a action geometry, this we call macro act, inherited and formed. So I tell you to make small variations in the degrees of pressure and intensity on the outside hand, see how the inside hand responds to these variations. Gently rotate the inside hand by small degrees. Make small variations and wait for your answers to each one. These are what we call microacts, slow voluntary actions of effort and intensity variations that organize different somatic geometries. The formation of interiority, feeling, imagining and thinking, happens from a motor pattern, it emerges from a locomotor pattern. A neuromuscular pattern that happens in the body and cortex at the same time. When we make muscular variations in our somatic form, we alter our neural maps, new circuitry, a set of small neural maps, which organize an entire motor map, begin to form in our brain, mapping new actions. Each differentiation I make through micro movements in the use of the EMCV alters the circuitry. What keeps the circuitry stable is motor repetition."

(KELEMAN, agosto - 2017)

Our stable actions have definite patterns of organization, but we are always trying to form the new. Using EMCV we slow down the pattern of undoing a shape; an incomplete pattern appears, I form variations of graduations in this incomplete pattern, which we seek to complete. We increase the complexity and multiplicity of our responses, we form more layers in our experience.

We are a continuous pattern of particle and wave. Wave and particle form a pulse. If we locate ourselves in the particle, we don't have the experience of path and velocity; if we focus on the wave, we have the route, but we don't have the specifics. The process of life operates in us, we contain something that is greater than ourselves. We are both

the experience we contain and are contained by it. Every little degree, which we arrange in our embodied experience, is a world in itself; all the time of our lives there is something growing in us, there is something forming in us. Differentiating and giving more body to what we are forming, forms our personality.

When we organize an action, like grabbing something, we have a macro act, an entire global action. Doing small actions of disorganizing tonic degrees in the grasping action, slowly undoing degrees of effort, less effort, we are doing micro acts, micro movements. Within this large pattern we have a chance to edit our pattern of tension, which requires cortical effort. We operate feelings, thoughts and intentions. We reassemble a pattern organized in micro steps, receiving in the cortex the answers that we organize, from the coming and going in the degrees of effort and tension. Edit what we've messed up and reshape behavior, uncovering levels and layers of experience and changing your responses. This way, we build a whole subjective world.

For Stanley Keleman, organizing something slowly is a muscular/neural event at the metabolic and action level. Doing it slow is not doing it slowly, it is influencing an intensity or lengthening connective tissue responses. By changing the intensity of responses by degrees, we have a spectrum of levels of actions, producing information that goes up through the nervous system to the cortex, and then back to the body as suggestions for actions. Slow means influence within the pattern of movement, within the experience that is taking place. Reflex mode actions are delayed, we have a series of graded events, slower gradient of behavior motility. We learn to influence different times, pressures and fabrics of our changes.

“Slow gradients are the foundation of micro states of arousal and experience. Voluntary effort using the different gestural possibilities

of the hand mobilizes body responses to form the intra-organismic quantum conversation between hand, heart, cortex, and experience to organize meaning and expression. The hands teach the cortex about pulsation and malleability by enhancing plasticity, containment, bending, twisting, and molding within the body and cortical hemispheres. ”

(KELEMAN, 2017 p.02)

To make a fist is a reflex act, making a fist in four steps is influencing degrees of intensity and effort, and then we have four different ways of making a fist, four different experiences. When we undo the degrees of intensity that we organize, we receive new responses and we can disorganize the previous one. This is different from control, which is a binary behavior between inhibiting and acting; self-influence is a gradient of possibilities with many degrees of contraction. We have two possibilities: the control response as a reflex behavior and self-influence as a personal construct.

“When the interior of my body extends itself to its surface, as in a dream or in the rush of intense experience, and especially in the voluntary practice of forming the self (EMCV), it brings to science felt qualities of permeability and malleability. These experiences of the body's ancestral Formative Process beckon to the creative possibilities of its cortex, calling on the soma to shape its behaviors. When we learn to cultivate these opportunities for somatic intimacy, we are able to participate in creating the flow of our own personal present-past-future time and tap into the mysteries of self-creation and evolution.”

(KELEMAN, 2014 - p.5)

THE FORMATIVE PRACTICE PROTOCOL - THE ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEER EFFORT AND THE FIVE STEPS

Formative practice organizes a powerful relationship between the prepersonal, postpersonal, and personal layers of our

existence. Here the hands enter as protagonists of the forming process. Voluntary effort when using the hands, in the practice of the five steps, offers us the possibility of different gestural gradients and triggers somatic responses in the whole body

The mime of the hands connects us directly with our interiority, it is the main mechanism for the organism to organize its somatic intimacy in the direction of a personal life. The hands develop like small buds from our body wall and converse directly with the cortex, which forms images from the dimensions and volumes of body shapes, organized in the mime of the hands. The cortex learns from the hands spatial relations, contact, pressure, intensity and movement; they inform the cortex about how we function.

“The hands teach the cortex about pulsation and malleability through plasticity, containment, bending, twisting, and molding within the body and cortical hemispheres.”

(KELEMAN, 2018 – p.02)

The use of voluntary effort in the five hand steps creates a series of muscular cortical asymmetries, lending dimension, volume and cohesiveness to the experience.

THE EMCV - VOLUNTARY CORTICAL MUSCULAR EFFORT - THE FIVE STEPS

The formative practice of the five steps can be applied in any situation of our lives, both in the resolution of problems and challenges, as well as in the resolution of internal conflicts. In formative practice, the brain is our conductor and the body, the orchestra.

Step one:

Organize a muscle model of your experience!

Step two:

How do I use myself muscularly to organize the action of this experience? Intensification of

action, of the organized muscular model.

Step three:

How do you disorganize this action organized in steps one and two? De-intensification of the action organized in the previous step.

Come and go in the pressure of the organized pattern.

Step four:

How do you get the involuntary responses?

How do you organize containment of your involuntary responses?

Step five:

How do I get the new shape?

How do I apply what I've learned about my somatic responses?

THE TIME OF AN INTIMATE STORY. THE DATE

My grandfather, a country man, who he knew from the coffee plantations, the moons and the winds that brought rain. The land under his feet and the vastness of the farms and their borders. For me my storyteller. The afternoons were warm, sitting in front of him, under the manacá tree brought from his place when he migrated to the city. He paraded his stories and my attentive eye sought to capture every detail, the sounds and words designed the scenarios.

The images filled me and I began to relate to them. Action sketches of cheerful, fearless and mysterious characters. The stories animated our bodies, a frenzy of movements, races, speeds, curves and straight lines. He told them, living the characters and plots at each passage, and invited him to enter that world of experiences, sensations and images.

Everything pulsed between affection and curiosity, a gentle encounter between her mature body and my childhood. Desire to find at the end of each afternoon, at the end of each

story waiting for the next one. The confidence of the reunion and the certainty of the look between us. There were many encounters, years of encounters, surely expected afternoons. A long pulse extends in me in the coming and going between my grandfather that exists in me and the stories that I hear and tell today... My weaving of encounters with myself and with people and their stories. A malleable and humid experience connects me to my heritage, a deep warmth in an elongated and continuous time animates my mature adult, where my child grew up before. It seems that, as I walk through my ages, images and memories of these initial moments, in which I learned from my grandfather about the power of encounters, strongly revive.

My formative person contains an old woman, a girl and her adult wife; a personal Gestalt that brings together the power of the earth, forests, moon, plantations, sun, songs and words.

“It is in this pulse of my life that I walk in my time, and in all the times already lived, towards those to come.”

INTIMACY

Actions open Restless clearings,
stir what was once known.
Turn inside! Right path to the uncertain
Diving into the warm ocean of change
Vibrant and flowing tides draw the paths
Deep, deep what I don't know. Of what
I don't know, I glimpse knowledge.
The flowing currents of me
seek to condense. Condensate
floats, seeking the surface.
Inside out, spin! Rotated, I let the emerging
waves draw the new. Where yesterday I
knew something of myself. (Denise Passos)

CONCLUSION

In the process of somatic transitions, we live mobile, porous, rigid and dense stages that need support and heat, to form, and interest and cooperation, to transit between

the known and the new of our forms, our behaviors and attitudes. Intimacy with our transition process is more than being close.

It is the gradient of small gestures with which we lengthen our pulse of presence and our responses. We are forming a formative environment, a Gestalt of micro movements that allows us to receive our actions, receive the different variations and, at the same time, design future forms. Our inheritances, what we form and our personal training choices contain past, present and future, in a quantum dynamic of small acts and macro acts. We become archaeologists of our lives, experiencing and researching our own process. Moving empathetically and smoothly in the formed experience, influencing the formed in different tonic graduations, until a long, porous and malleable pulse opens space to receive new looks, new touches, new images and new meanings. Firming what was conceived and giving it durability, based on its repetition, allows us to create and recreate our somatic responses throughout our lives.

The process of voluntary training is training practice, which, with its EMCV protocol – Voluntary Cortical Muscular Effort, influences our responses and creates variations, new synapses and new cortical and somatic connections. Slowing down allows us to take our new responses and make them personal. This is a process of micro movements, micro acts that support the adult we are forming. Somatic self-inquiry brings us closer to our anatomical connections that support the growth of our personal self. The coming and going at different muscle intensities organize, in a general action, micro movements that give intimacy to our somatic process.

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