

Workshop/Playshop:

Motion-Sensing Phenomenology in Diverse Contexts



FACILITATORS

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Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada



WELCOME

A decorative graphic in the top-left corner consisting of overlapping teal and purple geometric shapes with wavy lines.

Motion-Sensing Phenomenology (MSP) invites us to become increasingly sensitized to **living as well as lived experiences** through heightened awareness of motile sensations, feelings, and moods. Rather than stepping back to reflect upon these experiences in postures and positions of repose, we will stay motile, or at least as motionally consciousness as possible, to remain in the sensitivities and sensibilities of the actions, interactions, and communal activities at hand.

A helpful heuristic we have developed for taking up the MSP invitation is the Function2Flow model of movement education. Throughout the workshop, we will explore how motional sense-making emerges through the interconnected dimensions of **Function, Form, Feeling, and Flow**.

A decorative graphic in the bottom-right corner consisting of a grid of small blue dots on a teal and purple background.

Activity One

ENTERING THE ROOM



First Writing Moment

Take **three minutes**.

Think about entering this room today.

Write descriptively about how you felt when entering the room. Give sufficient detail so that, reading your description, someone else might similarly enter the room.

Simply write what happened. The purpose is to begin with an ordinary account before movement itself becomes the focus of attention.

Creative Attunement to Entering

Metaphor

Arriving As If...

Complete one or more:

- Entering the room felt like...
- My arrival unfolded as...
- Walking into the room was as if...
- Crossing the threshold felt as though...



Creative Attunement to Entering

Draw the Arrival

Draw:

- pathways of attention
- moments of hesitation
- moments of openness
- rhythms of arrival

Do not draw the room.

Figure the movements and moment of arriving.



Creative Attunement to Entering

Action

Arrival Gesture

Create a gesture that expresses:

- the movement of arriving
- the feeling-tone of arrival
- the rhythm of entering



Movement-Rich Language Bank



Circle words that fit your experience.

Force

powerfully • vigorously • gently • softly • boldly • tentatively

Effort

flowing • striving • yielding • releasing • pushing

Tempo

quickly • rhythmically • gradually • slowly • lingeringly

Direction

toward • away • inward • outward • around • across

Expansion

opening • widening • unfolding • reaching • growing

Contraction

tightening • narrowing • withdrawing • retreating

Flow

fluidly • responsively • collaboratively • harmoniously • synchronously • playfully

Introducing Function2Flow.ca

Let’s revisit our experience of entering the room through four interconnected dimensions:

Function	Form	Feeling	Flow
What am I actually doing?	What does it look like I am doing?	How am I moving e/motionally?	How am I connecting:
• Walking • Entering • Greeting • Listening • Speaking • Waiting	• Posture • Gesture • Gait • Orientation • Openness • Hesitation • Movement style	• Expanding • Tightening • Surging • Settling • Energizing • Lingeri	• To myself? • To others? • To the environment? • To the present moment? • To future possibilities?

Second Writing Moment

ARRIVAL ANALOGY



Take **five minutes**

Write a short piece (paragraph) describing, analogously or metaphorically, what entering the room felt and seemed like.

Be as imaginative as you want. Anchor the description in some aspect of function, form, feeling and flow that you were sensing when entering the room.

Allow movement, animation, and relationship to appear within the writing.

Activity Two

MAKING THE FAMILIAR STRANGE



Inspired by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone's invitation to make the familiar strange, participants walk throughout the room while attending carefully to movement ordinarily taken for granted. Notice:

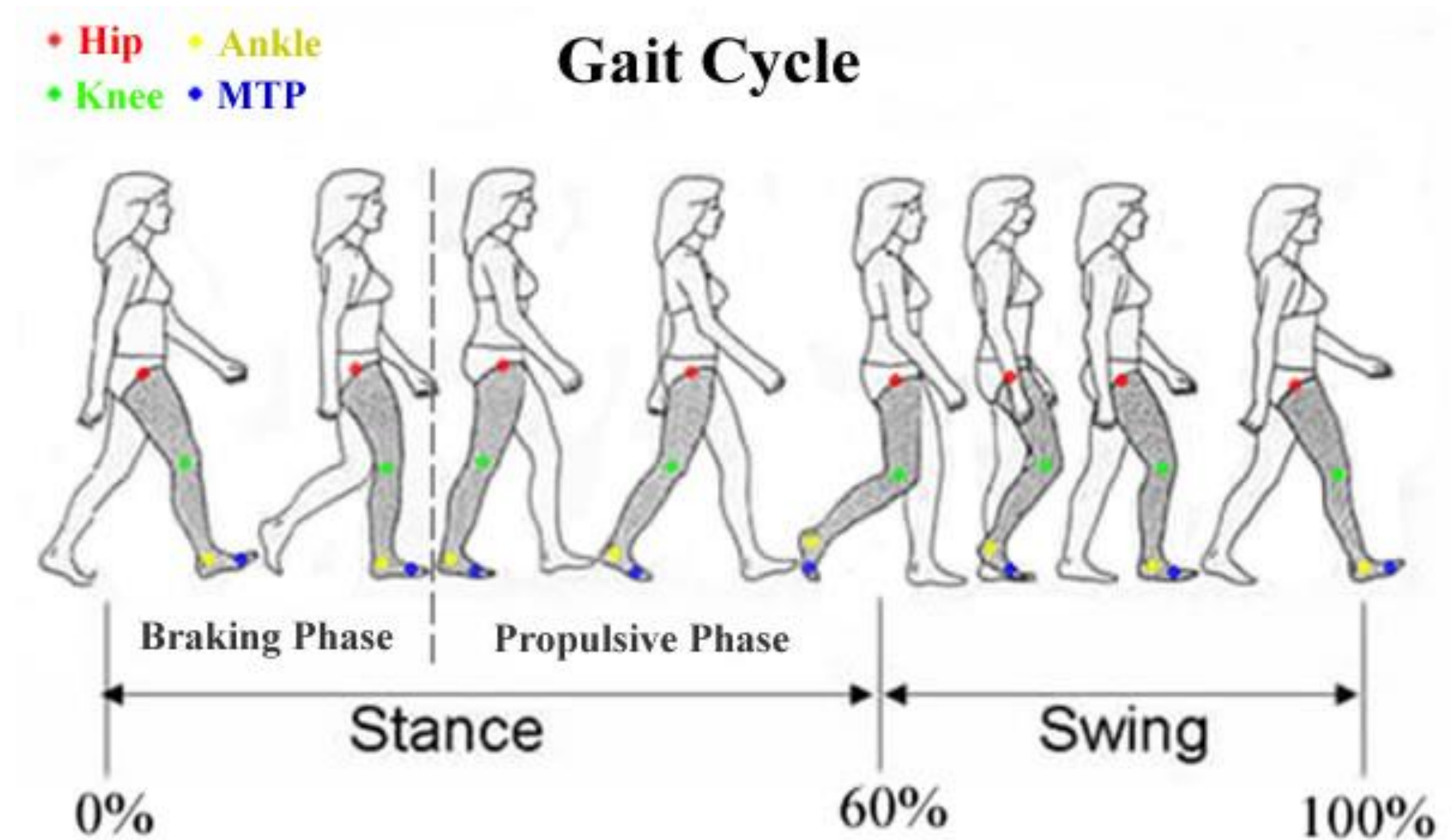
- gait
- hip tightness/ looseness
- posture
- rhythm
- weight shifting
- timing
- pace
- balance
- effort
- moments of openness
- moments of tightness

Allow walking itself to become newly interesting.

Allow movement to awaken your attention

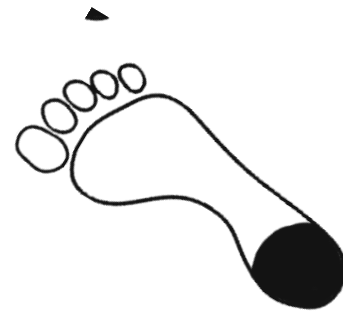
The Human Gait Cycle: Anatomical & Neurological Lens

- Walking is controlled falling (O'Connor & Kuo 2009).
- Automatic, rhythmic movement generated unconsciously by spinal central pattern generators (CPGs) and adjusted through continuous sensory feedback



The Human Gait Cycle: Anatomical & Neurological Lens

Basic Gait Cycle



- **Heel Strike** – Foot contacts ground; absorbs impact.



- **Midstance** – Body weight passes over a stable limb.

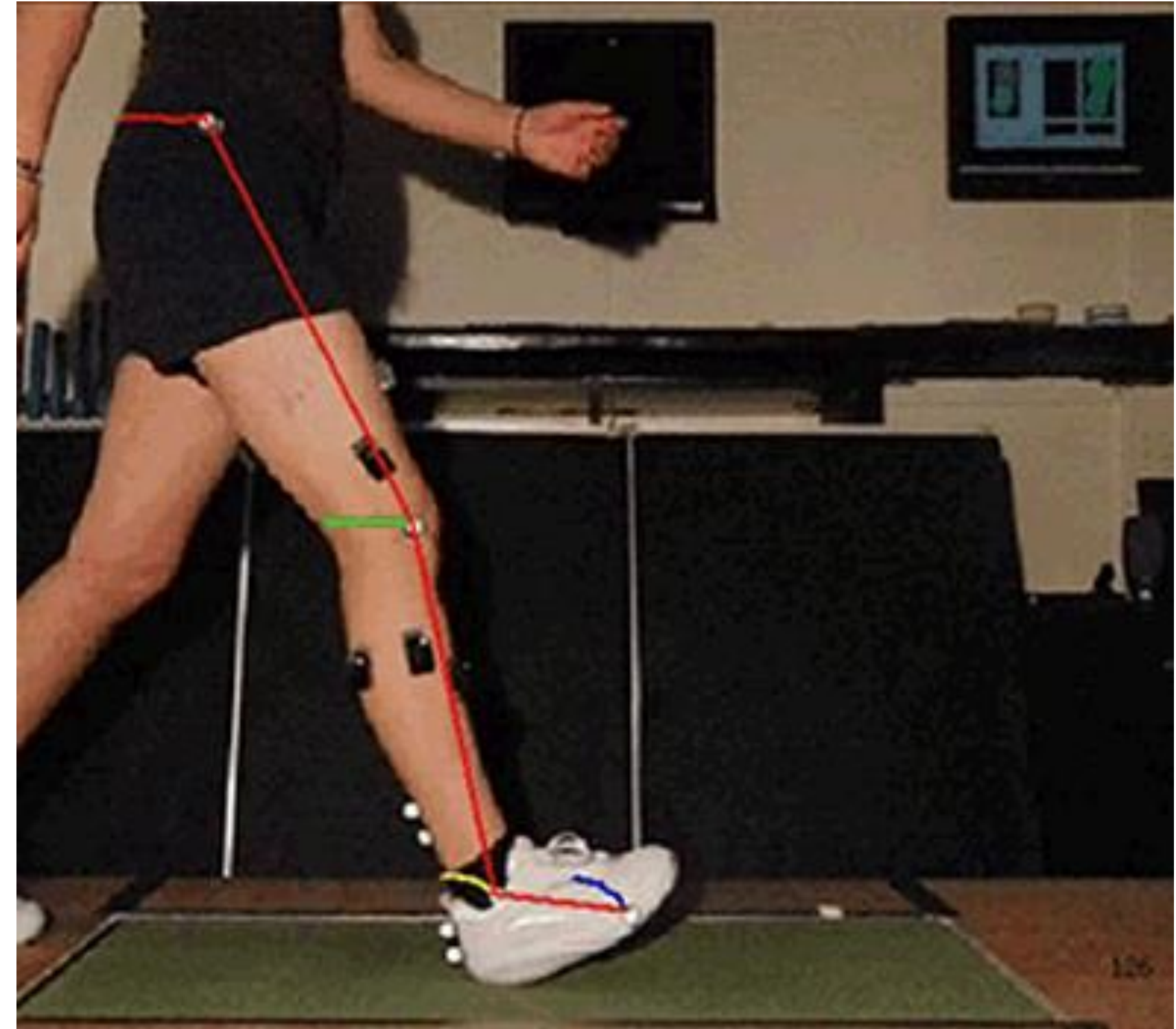


- **Push-Off** – Plantarflexors propel the body forward.



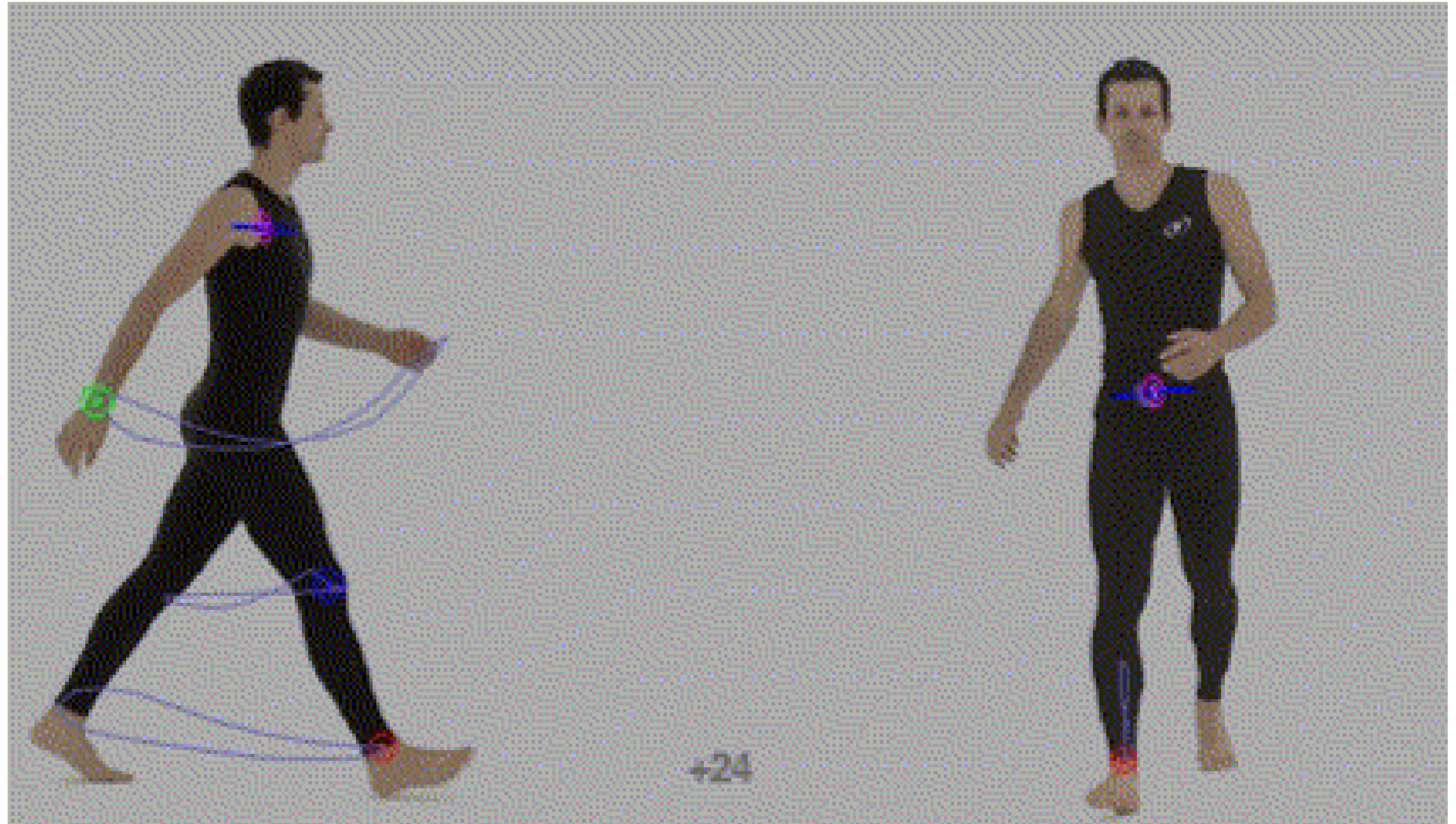
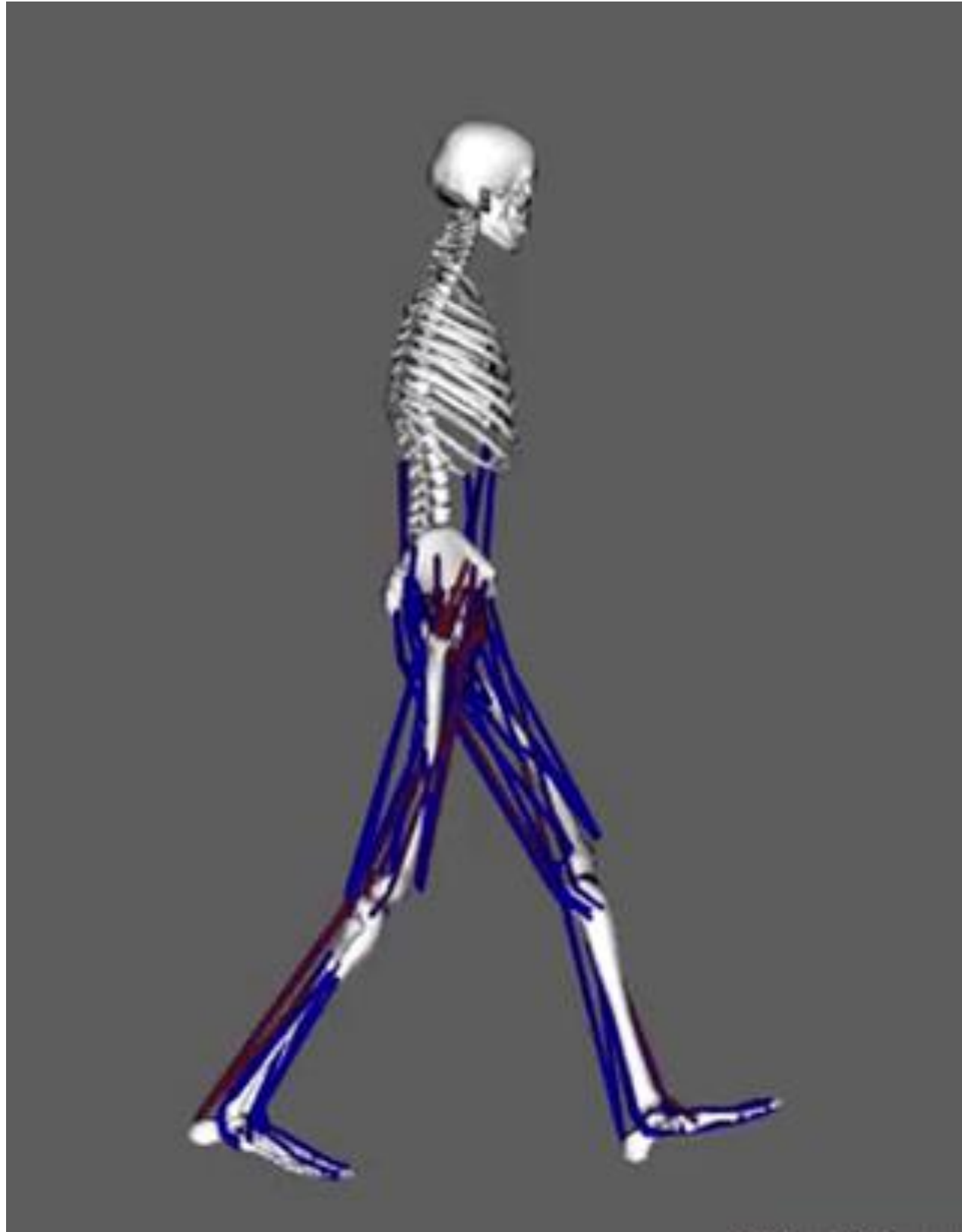
- **Swing** – Limb advances while clearing the ground.

Cycle repeats on the opposite limb.



(Quintic Consultancy Ltd., n.d.)

The Human Gait Cycle: Anatomical & Neurological Lens



(Animator Notebook, 2024)

Activity Three

WALKING IN SOMEONE'S SHOES

InterAction

Let's **work in pairs**.

One participant becomes the **Leader**.

One participant becomes the **Follower**.

The follower's task is initially to mimic the functions and form of the walk.

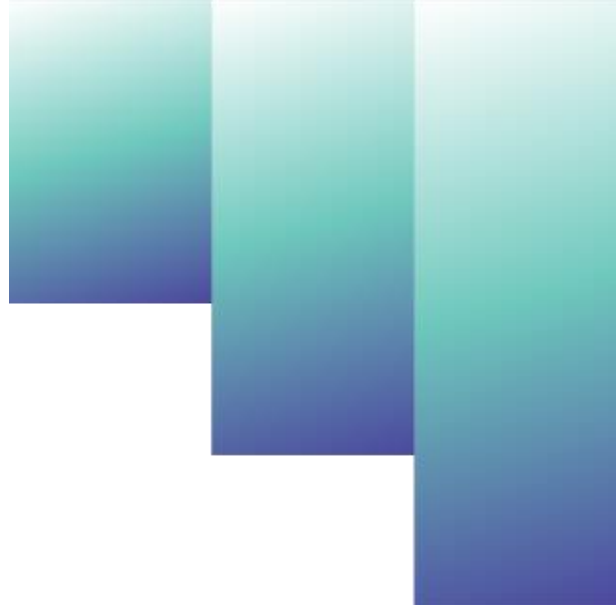
After leading and following for a few minutes, stop the activity and then invite the followers to think about how to not just mimic the walking motion but to:

- move with the leader
- enter the rhythm of the walking
- attend to its qualities
- follow its pacing
- feel into another person's movement world
- notice what animates the movement

Drawing upon Smith's notion of [riding in the skin of the movement](#), participants explore what becomes possible when we move with another person's walking rather than merely observing it.

Activity Four

MOTION-SENSING INTERVIEWING & INTERFEELING



Following in Someone's Footsteps

Interview Structure

After the walking activity:

- The **Leader** becomes the interviewer
- The **Follower** becomes the participant

The interviewer asks: “**What was it like to follow in my footsteps?**”

The purpose is to describe what becomes functionally, formally, feelingly and flowingly noticeable noticed when entering another person's motional lifeworld.

Motion-Sensing Interview

What Drew Your Attention?

- What first called your attention?
- What remained noticeable?
- What stayed with you?

Animation

- What seemed to animate the walking?
- What gave the movement its character?
- Its quality?
- Its rhythm?
- Its momentum?

Moving Consciousness

- How did your awareness move?
- What became increasingly noticeable?
- What faded into the background?
- Did you begin anticipating movement?

InterFeeling

- What did you begin sensing through the walking?
- What seemed shared?
- What remained distinct?
- How did you move toward another person's movement world?

Meaning

- What became more alive?
- What became newly noticeable?
- What meanings emerged through moving with another person?

Third Writing Moment

Interview Experience



Take **three minutes**

Write about your interview experience

Motion-Sensing Interview



- What is different about a motion-sensing interview?
- How is it different from asking for opinions or explanations?
- What happens when movement nuances and motional dynamics are the foci of inquiry?
- How does motional sensitivity enhance phenomenological sense-making?

Activity Five

MOTION-SENSING ANALYSIS

Together, we will explore a video example featuring Carmen.



Attend to:

- movement quality
- gesture
- rhythm
- affect
- tone
- joy
- relational presence
- changing flow of interaction

Let's discuss how movement reveals meanings that often remain hidden when attention focuses only on words.

An elderly woman with short white hair and glasses is the central figure. She is wearing a bright orange long-sleeved shirt and a decorative orange sash with gold-colored tassels around her waist. She is smiling and gesturing with both hands raised, palms facing forward. In the background, there are several dark wooden chairs with light-colored cushions. To the left, a silver metal cart holds several clear plastic water bottles and glasses. The room has light-colored wood flooring and large windows or glass doors in the background, through which other people can be seen. The overall atmosphere is bright and positive.

JOY in Active Aging

JOY in Active Aging



Motion-Sensing Inquiry



- What movement qualities stand out?
- What seems to animate the interaction?
- How is joy expressed?
- How are Function, Form, Feeling, and Flow visible?
- What is revealed through movement?

Returning to the Interview

After discussing motion-sensing interviewing and viewing the Carmen example, return to the interview experience we just had.

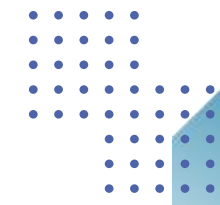
Consider:

- the creative sharing
- the conversation
- the moments of connection
- the moments of surprise
- the movement of awareness



Fourth Writing Moment

Writing Invitation



Write about your interview experience.

Attend to moments when:

- something became noticeable
- awareness shifted
- meaning emerged
- attention moved
- another person's words animated something for you
- you sensed a shift from viewing toward feeling

Writing Prompts

- What moved during our conversation?
- When did a feeling begin to emerge?
- What remained with you?
- What became more alive through the exchange?
- What did the interview reveal that following alone did not?

Activity Six

Collective Movement Dynamics

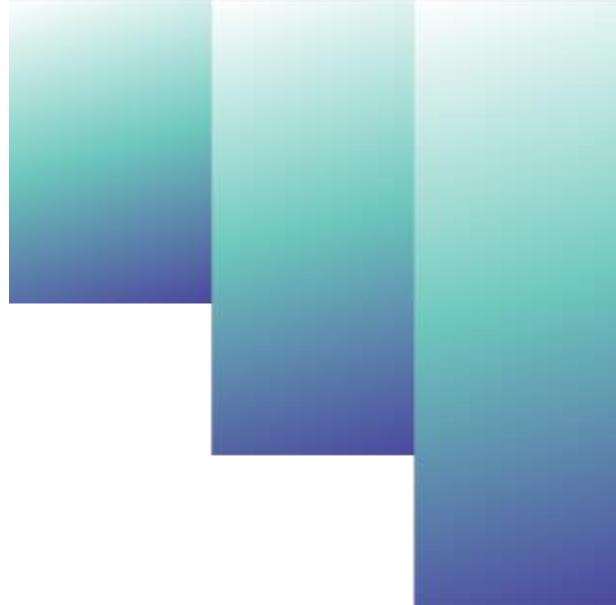
A) Triangle Activity

1. Each person secretly choose two people in the room.
2. Do not reveal your choices.
3. Move continuously and slowly throughout the space.
4. Position yourself in equidistant relation to the two people you selected.
5. As they move, continuously adjust your own position.
6. Remain silent.
7. Stop and discuss how the triangles were maintained.
8. Repeat the activity and ask participants to try to become aware of who has picked them.
9. At the conclusion, participants attempt to identify who selected them.
10. Ask if anyone thought they were not picked. If so, then have that person move and see who else moves in relation to them.

The activity invites spatial and temporal awareness, and enhanced motional sensitivity.

Activity Six

Collective Movement Dynamics



Beachball Rally

The collective challenge is to keep the beachball moving for as many contacts as possible before it touches the floor.

Additional cooperative possibilities may be introduced:

- remain seated
- pass to a neighbour before sending the ball across the circle
- ensure everyone touches the ball
- use a body part other than a hand
- alternate body parts
- invent new rules together

The purpose is not competition.

The purpose is collective responsiveness, cooperation, adaptation, and play.



One Word to Describe the Experience





Movement Mood Toolbox



CLOSING CONSIDERATIONS

Every phenomenon can be understood through the existential of motility.

Motion-Sensing Phenomenology invites us to:

- Notice movement.
- Attend to animation.
- Follow moving consciousness.
- Explore feeling as movement.
- Investigate relationship through flow.
- Stay close to living experience.
- Discover meaning through motility.

Motion-sensing practices can deepen:

- Writing
- Interviewing
- Analysis
- Teaching
- Learning
- Research
- Clinical practice
- Engagement with Life



CLOSING CONSIDERATIONS

Other Take-Aways?

Complete

- Today movement revealed...
- What remains moving in me is...
- I leave noticing...

Closing Gesture

Thank you for attending: Motion-Sensing Phenomenology in Diverse Contexts



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