

The Characteristics of Corrective Movement

Movement in a positive or corrective manner is quite recognizable and has 4 characteristics which are:

Effortless

Softening

Surprise

Warmth

Learning to recognize these characteristics in your own movement will be vital to resolving your pain. Let's take a closer look at them with some examples you can relate to.

Effortless

Do you remember the close talker episode of *Seinfeld*? Think of how it feels when you might have to speak with one. Your immediate response is probably to back away. This however, in some circumstances, may be considered rude. So, often we stay still and endure the uncomfortable invasion of personal space. It takes *more effort* to stay still than it does to move. Similarly, allowing your corrective movement to happen will take *less effort* than it takes to suppress it.

Softening

Movement that is corrective causes a general reduction in muscular tension. Think about what happens to your muscles when you are scared or startled; maybe you've been cut off by a reckless driver. What happens to your muscles? They tighten and become tense. As you get away from the reckless driver, a potential threat, you take a breath, notice the state of your muscles (maybe you're gripping the steering wheel very tightly), and then you let the muscles relax. *Softening* is the result.

Surprise

Again consider a driving scenario. Say you have to drive to a location across town, you needed to be there 5 minutes ago, and you've just heard that traffic is bad in certain parts of town. What route would you take? You might drive purposely, carefully

planning your route to avoid heavy traffic. It would be a *planned* route.

Now, if you were to drive to the same place but had neither the urgency to arrive by a certain time, nor any need to plan your route, you'd likely use a different strategy. Your trip would be spontaneous; you could say the driving would just happen. You'd take the turns you felt compelled to make, and deal with traffic as you encountered it. This is a spontaneous or unplanned route.

Think now about a movement you might do that you know is going to hurt. Will you move in a *spontaneous* or a *planned* way? The odds are good that you have been *planning* your movement to limit or avoid pain. This is what *protective movement* is like. *Corrective movement* happens in a different way. It is spontaneous and unplanned, so we call it surprising.

Warmth

The last characteristic is warming. This describes an effect from changes in your physiology. You probably know that your body automatically moves blood to where it is needed. For example, after you eat, blood is directed towards the gut to help with digestion. Blood also moves toward your muscles when you have to act quickly in order to protect yourself.

When you move in a corrective way, as you learn to become less protective, blood will be *directed to the skin*. This is the body's way of efficiently getting rid of excess heat. The effect creates a sensation of *pleasant warmth* and it could possibly be felt *anywhere* in the body despite the location of your symptoms.

Look for the presence of each of these characteristics when practicing your corrective movements.