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## Overview: Yield - Trust

Maybe everything so far is foundational to trust.

Learning to trust. Trusting that all will be well. Essentially that is one of the components of attachment theory. In the having a secure base we know we have a safe haven to return to in times of stress, distress. It's like the good parent who reassures the child who wakes scared from a nightmare, "its okay honey. It's just a dream. Everything is okay....."

The very first developmental "movement" is yielding. An infant doesn't have the muscle strength and movement articulation to do anything but yield and wiggle on their back. Then they learn to push, reach, grab, pull. For many people who have difficult histories these are hard to re-member.

Bonnie Bainbridge-Cohen writes,

Babies move toward experience but as you get older you withdraw more and more as a rule. Like when a baby is crying and you do something new, they're happier; whereas adults have the tendency to hold back more in a new situation than in the familiar one. In working with the babies change is a positive experience, depending on how you do it. What I feel strongly is that it's not to go against their will but to help them be successful in what they want. For example, if a baby sees something beyond its kinesphere perceptually, but its movement is retarded so that it cant' get to it, there's a frustration. When the baby realizes there's something out there, it means they almost have the ability to go after it. If they're limited in some way, inhibited, they you can help them. Often people tell me after I've worked with their baby that the next day the child does the thing on their own that I helped them do the day before. I try not to do anything that the child isn't ready to do. I know that from my experience and my nature. So I'm not teaching the child something; I'm really helping them manifest what it is that they would do if they weren't blocked, and to get what they want. That's hard to explain. (1993, p. 111)

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Yoga gives us an opening into the body, asking us to yield. As infants our bodies started out yielding. They didn't know how not to. Have you ever felt the body of an infant, or even a small child? Pressing into their arm or shoulder has no resistance, the muscles yield and allow your hand in. They haven't learned to be tight, armored, defended.

In the previous months we talked about the five developmental actions first articulated by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (1993) that form the building blocks of locomotion: yield, push, reach, grasp, and pull. We can map this onto attachment theory. Yielding is about allowing in, letting others affect us; pushing we keep away, we develop protective boundaries, appropriate separation when needed; reach is about that reaching for, asking, wanting, needing; grasp is about clinging, holding on; and pull is about bringing others to us, connecting in a physical, emotional way.

Yielding requires trust. In the reverse, re-learning to trust asks us to remember how to yield. To re-member before the holding. To yield we interact with something, making contact – and then we release into. It's different from collapsing. Take a moment and be with one of your arms. Let it collapse into your lap or onto a pillow. What is that like? For most of us it goes from 0-60 – some kind of holding to complete expulsion. Now see what it's like to yield your arm into your lap or a pillow. What's different? What's similar?

Vittorio Gallese, a neuroscientist in Italy was one of the team that discovered mirror neurons. In the last few years he's been studying motor neurons. One of the things they discovered that when twin fetus' move in the womb there is a slight slowing down as they encounter another. There's a consciousness of there being another there. This is different when we touch ourselves. We don't have that momentary delay or slowing down. This shows us that there is a primordial self/other distinction that we are instinctively aware of, a boundary between me and you. But it also speaks to contact and connection. In knowing that you are there there is an intuitive respect at crossing that boundary.

Okay let's go back to the arm collapsing and yielding. Collapsing doesn't acknowledge there's a thing or a person over there. Yielding we are present in ourselves and letting go into,

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trusting that the other (the pillow or another person or our lap) will receive us. In this sense collapsing is actually a bit, shall we say, aggressive and forceful but in a more passive way.

In the past months we've experimented with different practices to see what happened. It's been valuable to me to hear from some of you about how hard it is to "relax" – that clenching and being tight is the dominant experience. Presupposing relaxation is impossible. What if, however, the goal isn't to relax? What if the intention is to have contact yield around you?

What? You say to me.....

Think of an ice cube melting in your hand. What happens? Your hand starts getting too cold and you want to pull away, right? While this is happening the ice melts and water is flowing around you. Whether you stay with the experience or put the ice away the ice continues to melt, moving, flowing, around the resistance.

What if that's all it's about? Moving, flowing around resistance instead of reacting to it. Perhaps that's the basic element of trust – being with. Moving, flowing without resistance around resistance.