



Leading by Nature
by Giles Hutchins



Social Presencing Theatre: This is an improvisational embodiment activity where groups of people gently move together while bringing attention to the sensations in our bodies. This art-form or social technology has been co-created by Arawana Hyashi, Otto Scharmer and members of the Presencing Institute and is now being used to great effect in organizations of all shapes and sizes.

Either in pairs or small groups (utilizing the Social Presencing methods of Duets, Village, Field Dance, Stuck Dance, Case-Clinic, Seed Dance and 4-D Mapping) participants move together in improvisational, unplanned, spontaneous ways, or as Otto Scharmer would say, engaging with 'an open mind, open heart and open will'.

Through this practice, we learn to cultivate awareness of our body sensations (our 'somatic awareness') while also sensing the social field we are in as a group while moving together (our 'social awareness'). We simply experience what emerges for us as we explore our movements within this social sphere. This has the immediate impact of cultivating our attention, inner-listening and moment-to-moment mindfulness and general awareness which helps set the right ground work for unlocking fresh ideas, seeing things from a fresh perspective, while letting go of old mind-sets constraining us.

It helps us become more aware of others as we engage our embodied awareness in relation to the movements of others within our group. It helps enhance our connection and inter-dynamics, highlighting motives and needs as well as cultural and unconscious biases. It also helps us cultivate a sense of the social field of our group with any tensions or emotional reactions it may invoke within us.

Once the groups have become comfortable with relaxing into the bodywork and feeling into our gentle movements, the groups can then consciously start to frame certain themes or case-study situations we wish to explore. For instance, how we feel at work in different situations, or envisioning different future scenarios.

This felt experience and group learning affects the participants in subtle yet profound ways, fundamentally changing perspectives and relationship dynamics within teams and across stakeholder groups. It helps foster greater authenticity, connection, receptivity, stillness within movement, systemic awareness, sharing and trust in groups, while allowing the groups to be more open to the generative wisdom of the social field and our individual somatic awareness.

'When the body and mind stop fighting or going in different directions, then we can relax and feel less restricted. We appreciate and fully use all our senses. We can accurately perceive whatever situation we find ourselves in. We can pay attention to details and to the whole simultaneously. We develop a panoramic awareness that lessens the sense of separateness between our self and others.' Arawana Hyashi, Presencing Institute

Through these Social Presencing exercises we directly sense and embody how to open ourselves up to fresh thinking, innovation and co-creativity beyond the abstractions, habituations and ego-chatter of our thinking minds. It helps us shift our awareness from our individual perspectives or 'group-



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think' patterns into exploring new insights, opening up new fields of exploration while shifting perspectives through what is emerging freshly within the group.