

K L E I N T E C H N I Q U E™
SUSAN KLEIN SCHOOL OF MOVEMENT AND DANCE



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A MOVEMENT TECHNIQUE — A HEALING TECHNIQUE
By Susan T. Klein

Klein Technique™ is not a release technique. Klein Technique™ is a movement technique; a technique of movement education, a healing technique. In Klein Technique™ we work to teach people to learn who they are in their bodies, how their bodies function in movement and stillness, and how to work as correctly as possible in accord with the laws of nature, as part of, rather than separate from, the greater system within which we are whole. Our focus is for each person to discover that which they already are, for each person to have an internal knowing, not a perceived outer look or inner sensation, of who they really are, and as a result be able to use that deep body felt understanding to transform movement into communication and technique into expression from the essence of their individual being. We hold the paradox of all that is possible, believing that everything is possible while recognizing the equal reality that we are bound to and by our individual structures. Klein Technique™ is a gradual unveiling of discovery. It is a process over time of deep exploration that goes to the core of the body, to the bone, to the deepest tissue where our essential selves are held so that we can discover a profound sense of who we are and what is right for us.

Klein Technique™ is not a release technique. Klein Technique™ is a technique of connection. Klein Technique™ is a technique of relationship. Release is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary as "to set free from confinement, restraint, or bondage: to free from something that binds, fastens, or holds back: to let go. Connection is defined by the same dictionary as "a link, an association or relationship: a coherence: a reference or relation to something else, a context". Our goal is not to set the body free but to connect it. Our goal is not to release the body but rather to bring it into relationship: all the parts relating to one another to form a greater whole; the greater whole relating to the greater system, the field of gravity formed by the flux between Heaven and Earth; and finally, and equally as important, each individual relating to the other. For any relationship to work, the flows, the flux, the communication, the movement between the parts must be clear. On a body level, the relationship of connection is determined through and by the bone. How the bones meet determines and controls the transfer of forces within the body and also serves to connect the body to the greater whole. Our work is at this level. Our work is here. Our work is not to release the body, even at the level of the muscles. Our work is proper use. Our work is to reeducate and activate the muscles to work with the bones to actively foster all connections.

As a performing art dance itself exists in relationship, it requires a receiver. Someone must be watching, the dance must be viewed. One cannot exist without the other — the audience cannot exist without the performer and the performer cannot exist without the audience. The new physics tells us that the receiver not only influences what is perceived but through the act of observing, the receiver actually influences the performance as well. A dancer must be in relationship with the audience, with the perceiver, in order to be truly present to what is happening. This requires connection

and the practice of being connected. To me release, to be set free, is antithetical to that phenomenon. We don't want to let go of the other, but rather to step forward toward them, to understand the dynamics, so we can play with it and be an active participant.

We are bound to each other as a community. We are bound to our bodies and to gravity. These are laws of reality and nature we must embrace and work with. We are bound to structure; both within our body and to the external structures we develop for our choreography and ourselves. These structures must be clearly studied and understood, analyzed, and then synthesized and put into active use. The character of the structure can change, but structure remains. Paradoxically it is the connections or relationships within the structure that bring movement to the system which in turn allow for its mutability and mobility. Connection and relationship bring life to our forms and structures. Our forms and structures provide a container or context for this movement.

One of my teachers, Fritz Smith, gave his definition of healing to be: "to experience belonging, connectedness, freedom from isolation, freedom from separateness, to be acknowledged, to feel oneness and unity, to reconnect to source, the feeling of being connected to others and to self". This is precisely what we are doing in Klein Technique™. We are working with the floor, with the space, and with our bodies. We are learning how to put the pelvis on top of the legs, so the life force, the energy of our field, can flow through us as purely and unobstructed as possible to produce the clearest, most efficient movement, all the while connecting us to ourselves and to the greater whole. We move with the floor, with the space, through our bodies, and with each other. All this is toward our ultimate goal: to help people become better dancers, to help people fulfill the maximum of their unique and individual potential as movers.

Post Script: I am fully aware, and understand, that the term "release technique" has become an umbrella term for all sorts of alternative dance training techniques, bodywork/movement techniques, and even choreography. In general these techniques believe in working more efficiently by using less muscle tension. In general these techniques take into account that there is more to dancing and dance training than the body, and for the most part they include some belief in the body/mind complex and even engage the spirit. In this sense Klein Technique™ surely falls into this umbrella category. However, as I have set forth in my article, this term is misleading, too narrow in scope, too flat and too linear.

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