

**IDEA WORLD 2022 SESSION #232**

**Thursday July 21, 2022**

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## **NIA® MOVING TO HEAL**

Movement As Medicine

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### **Workshop Summary**

Nia® Moving to Heal is a pioneering well-being fitness class that combines movement, music, and mindfulness to move, sense, and choose pleasure over pain. Nia® Moving to Heal features an empowering self-healing movement methodology that is accessible to anyone. Self-healing is simply defined as feeling better. Movement medicine is the result of using mind-body awareness and movement stimulation to feel better. This workshop focuses on how to listen to your body and use therapeutic movement techniques to feel better.

### **About Nia Technique**

Nia Technique Moving To Heal is a barefoot therapeutic movement class based on the wisdom of the body. Nia Moving To Heal classes integrate the mental discipline of martial arts, expressive movement of dance, and conscious awareness of therapeutic modalities. Nia Moving To Heal practice cultivates mindfulness and functional movement skills resulting in self-healing and holistic conditioning.

Nia classes and education programs are based on The Body's Way – Nia's comprehensive holistic health philosophy and well-being fitness practice.

Mind-body-spirit movement pioneer, Debbie Rosas, founded Nia Technique in 1983. Nia Technique is the original barefoot dance fusion workout. Nia is taught in 40+ countries by an international training and teaching faculty.

### **Workshop Objectives**

- Learn Nia's 7-Minute Therapeutic Workout
- Explore how *The Body's Way* enhances movement for self-healing *Your Body's Way*
- Experience Nia's 3-step movement medicine methodology

-AGENDA-

**Taking Care of Your Body** MOVEMENT

**The Body's Way Philosophy** TALK

**Self-Healing Rest + Digest** MEDITATION

**The Body's Way 5 Principles** MOVEMENT

**Nia Movement Medicine Methodology TALK**  
**Move-Sense-Choose MOVEMENT**

**NIA® 7-MINUTE THERAPEUTIC WORKOUT: *Taking Care Of Your Body***

**Begin BODY AWARENESS SENSORY IQ**

- A. Walk, sense your body noticing tight, blocked, rigid, bound.
- B. Measure sensation of volume and space in your body on a scale of 1 (least) to 10 (most).

**7 One-Minute Stages**

1. Embryonic: move in child's pose, fish-like.
2. Creeping: move lizard-like, belly down.
3. Crawling: move on all fours.
4. Standing: squat, move monkey-like.
5. Walking: natural walking.
6. Move down + up from the floor.
7. Laughing (15-second intervals) Belly down | Belly up | Sitting | Standing

**End BODY GRATITUDE**

- A. Sense your body. Notice changes. Vocalize what's different.  
"Thank you body, I sense..., (what you sense)".
- B. Sense changes in your body's internal volume and space. Vocalize,  
"Thank you body, I was a..., (first number), and now I'm a..., (second number)."

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**NIA® THE BODY'S WAY PHILOSOPHY**

Nia's philosophy and approach to movement based on the design of the body and listening to its voice – sensation. It is guided by five functional principles.

**1. The Body Thrives on Dynamic Ease**

Performing a movement with maximum efficiency and minimal effort.

**2. The Body Demands Balance**

Balancing movements left-to-right and top-to-bottom, balances musculoskeletal system, brain and nervous system.

**3. The Body Is Balanced in Yin + Yang**

Paying attention to dynamic energy polarities is necessary for managing health + fitness.

**4. The Body Demands Simultaneous Mobility + Stability**

Movement requires joint mobility and stability.

**5. The Body Itself Reveals The Body's Way**

The body's design, physically and energetically, reveals the map for optimal movement.

**Well Being Mindset**

In practice, The Body's Way philosophy supports and aligns with the innovative thinking of Israeli medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky and his concept of well-being, Salutogenesis is concerned with helping people move towards health rather than away from disease. Antonovsky's well-being theory, Sense of Coherence, articulates three key conditions people require to effectively move toward health. Nia's movement medicine methodology embraces this theory.

*1. Comprehend: I understand*

Applying The Body's Way philosophy empowers participants to understand unique needs. Participants learn interoceptive skills to sense anatomy and somatosensory signals. Mind-body awareness establishes comprehension.

*2. Manage: I feel confident I can move*

Participants learn how to effectively manage their self-healing process using sensation to personalize and adapt movement effectively for their body. In Nia® Moving to Heal classes, participants follow simple functional moves and practice therapeutic movement dynamics. Pattern repetition supports confidence and systemic stability – participants take their time to move according to their body's needs.

*3. Meaning: I know why I want to do this*

Participants move according to intrinsic motivation. They establish and assess their movement goals. This is key to body-centered fitness and movement medicine. Participants personalize according to what they need to feel better; feeling better is meaningful.

### **Body Awareness Sensory IQ: Healthy + Unhealthy**

Nia Moving To Heal practitioners learn to use a subjective sensory-based approach to measuring the qualities of healthy and unhealthy. Ascribing to Antonovsky's *Sense of Coherence*, Nia's definitions of healthy prioritize an individual's subjective sense of wholeness through four realms of the body: physical, mental, emotional, spirit.

Every individual is responsible for assessing what is healthy. Healthy is a psychological state of well-being that has subjective layers. Being healthy is about being present, feeling confident, safe, and connected to the world. Being healthy is a state of awareness that comes from sensing what is optimum in the moment based on how much energy is available and what one needs to feel good. Healthy sensations change over time across one's life span and day-to-day. Healthy is about making meaningful choices and how we adapt in the moment to optimize our vitality and sense of coherence. There are infinite variables that can affect one's sense of healthy.

Unhealthy sensations arise from actions and choices that are destructive to the nature of sustainability of life in a body. Because each person's body is unique, unhealthy sensations are subjective. Examples could be noticing joint or tissue pain (e.g., inflammation). Mental fog, the quality of having no focus and lacking clarity, trauma, PTSD, depression, lack of meaning, or sense of disconnection from others and the world are examples of unhealthy sensations.

Every individual needs to establish healthy and unhealthy sensations. It is utmost important to recognize that healthy and unhealthy are not judgments – these are well-being mindset tools to help make conscious choices in the present and over time.

*See Wikipedia: Aaron Antonovsky, Salutogenesis*

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### **Your Body's Way – Personalizing Movement for Self-Healing**

Personalization and movement adaptation is the core skill Nia Moving to Heal reinforces.

Your Body's Way refers to the current design and function of your body. Blending The Body's Way universal intelligence with Your Body's Way is how you support self-healing and increase ease and comfort. Responding to body messaging is something that occurs at unconscious and conscious levels of awareness. The unconscious brain is remarkable fast with a processing rate of 400 billion bits per second!\* The conscious brain, in contrast, processes 2,000 bits per second. Enhancing mindfulness helps individuals access more of their body's natural intelligence.

\*See Brain Rules by Dr. John Medina

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## **MOVEMENT MEDICINE METHODOLOGY: Move-Sense-Choose**

MOVE	Through movement, participants become aware of their bodies.
SENSE	They practice noticing (sensing) pain or discomfort.
CHOOSE	They choose adaptations, therapeutic movement dynamics, effectively guiding their body mindfully towards comfort and pleasure, i.e., self-healing.

### ***Therapeutic Movement Dynamics***

Repetition  
Speed  
Load (effort)  
Resistance  
Squeeze + Release

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## **SELF-HEALING Sensation Science Technique**

### **1 Awareness**

- Develop awareness by paying attention to sensation.
- Sense skin-joints-connective tissue.
- Sense your body. Listen to pleasure and pain signals. Seek pleasure as you move, sit, stand, or lie down. If you become distracted from sensing your body, inhale slowly and return to sensing your skin.

### **2 Stimulation**

- Sustain awareness (interoception).
- Stimulate movement to sense more pleasure. There is no need to think ahead of your next movement, nor do you need to have a logical reason for your movement.
- If the movement brings pleasure, continue. If not, change the movement to feel better.

### **3 Self-Healing**

- Use an imaginary pain thermometer to gauge slight-moderate-acute pain or discomfort. Using joint movement, stimulate new ways to move to reduce pain. Pay attention to what helps and what does not help. Without getting caught up in “why” or assuming anything, simply explore what brings the sensation of self-healing to your body.
- Recognize that a movement may bring pleasure one day but not the next. Similarly, a movement that did not bring pleasure yesterday may bring pleasure today.
- Acknowledge when self-healing occurs. Thank yourself for the small acts of kindness you are giving your body throughout the practice.

## NIA 5 SENSATIONS OF WELL BEING FITNESS

**FLEXIBILITY** is the ability to freely move joints. Flexibility is the maximum range of motion a joint can move. An individual's sense of flexibility is a subjective measure of joint range of motion. Dynamic flexibility is the perfect action between contraction and expansion where you can sense lengthening in your muscles and opening in your joints.

*The body says, "I feel extension. I feel space."*

**AGILITY** is the ability to move and quickly change direction or position of the body in space with accuracy and speed. Agility is a quality of *The Body's Way Principle 3* – skillful ability to shift dynamic tensions in the body, for example, move between pull and push, form, and freedom, start and stop, high and low, movement and stillness.

*The body says, "I respond skillfully. I am dynamic."*

**MOBILITY** is the ability to move the entire body freely and normally. Mobility is a systemic movement quality that combines muscle strength, range of motion, and cardiovascular capacity. *The Body's Way Principle 4* says that the body demands simultaneous mobility + stability. Dynamic mobility is supported by stability in tandem with flexibility and strength.

*The body says, "I am energy in motion. I feel free."*

**STRENGTH** is the ability to exert muscular force. As muscles contract, energy is contained inwardly towards the bones creating a powerful force. Dynamic strength, the action of squeeze and release, relaxes and conditions the body. Sense the dynamic of resistance, weighted force, or load, bringing muscular quality to movement and posture.

*The body says, "I feel capable. I feel vitality."*

**STABILITY** is the ability to maintain body position through neuromuscular action. Stability is a physical quality of relaxation combined with readiness for action. Dynamic stability, graceful integration of flexibility, agility, mobility, and strength, relaxes and conditions the body.

*The body says, "I feel relaxed and grounded. I am balancing."*