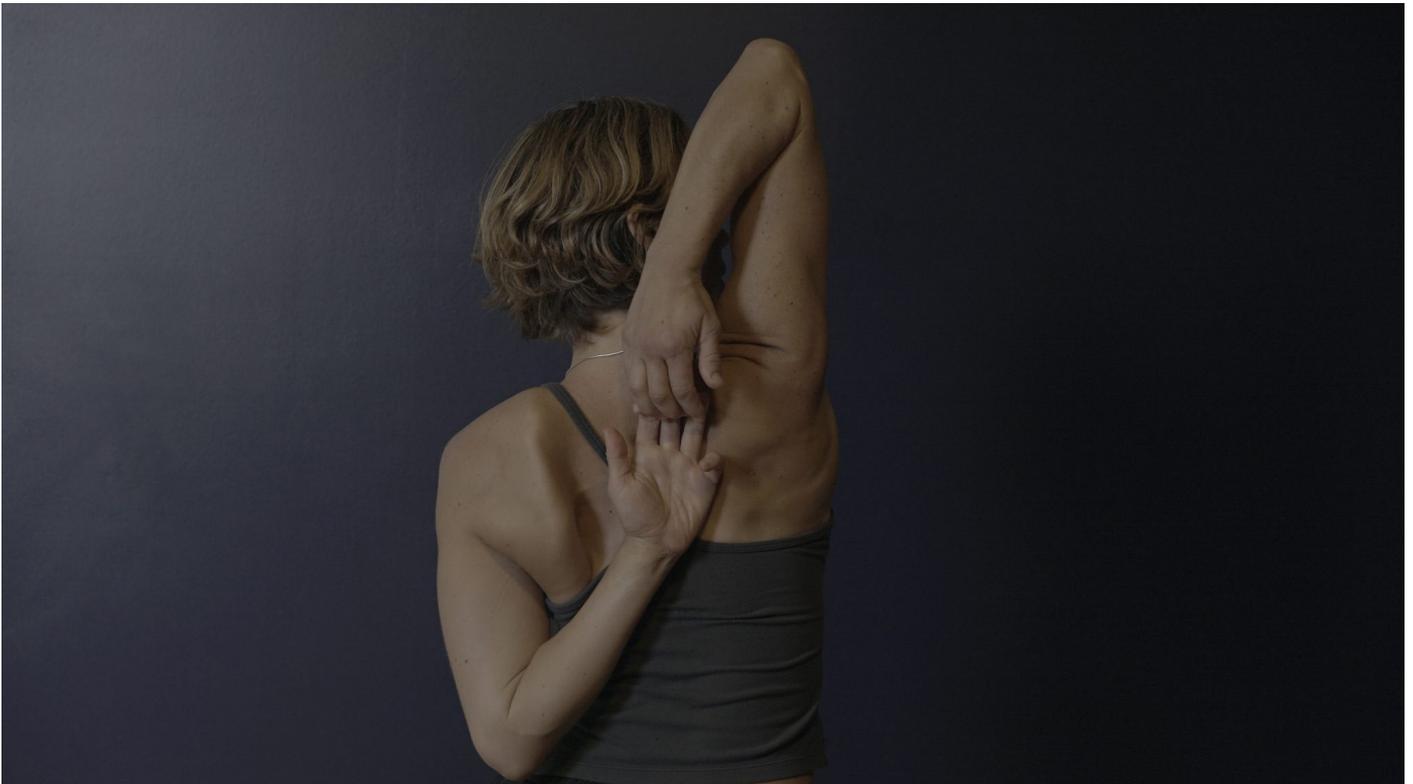


Wellbeing Writing with Frances Collier



This month we chatted with Bodyworker and Bodylistics® founder, Frances Collier, all about her professional practice with performers and endeavors in Movement Health.

HOW HAS YOUR CAREER AS A DANCER INFORMED YOUR PRACTICE?

During my thirty years of working in the creative industry, first as a professional dancer and since followed by a decade of coaching and providing treatment sessions for performers, I've always been moving living and breathing with the body. *A body who has been with me both as my work horse but also as my forever companion who needed looking after in a way that had to be so very bespoke and tailored to the demands of my life in the theatre.*

A solely conventional approach wasn't enough to fulfill my needs and enable a wholesome movement life whilst juggling the reality of a performer's rather unforgiving environment. *This urgency of ensuring that the longevity of my physical instrument was at the forefront of all treatments, I went on a quest to find a more compatible, and for me as a mover a more familiar way of understanding movement health.*

At the time I found that more often than not a traditional physio session was going for a quick fix, and not so much taking into account the manifold and rich ways that we as dancers have in our tool box when it comes to bodies and how to treat them. I was missing having the inner feeling and quality acknowledged as part of the nature of an injury and all that comes with it. And would have wished for more understanding around what it meant to me and my daily pressures at work, needing to find solutions that were realistic whilst I had to keep performing and in shape. *Naturally, I felt that choreographing a dance to health for every*

body bespoke would seem the more straight forward way in achieving a successful dancer's recovery and from there to stay well.

By creating space and spaces no matter the circumstance or severity of the challenge faced, to me finding a thoroughly matching movement language for body-mind-and-soul-as-one has to lie at the heart of my work and being. And so my own methodology of practicing health evolved over the years. What started out as Yoga For Performers and hands-on recovery sessions has now become Bodylistics®, an all-round injury prevention and movement coaching platform specifically created for performers, bringing all of the above mentioned into every session, both in-person and on-line. Based on much studying of movement anatomy and various styles of therapy with some of the best teachers I could have wished for, combined with my own experience as a dancer on stage and now as a more off-stage transitioned bodyworker and movement coach, I'm feeling so honoured to witness again and again how quickly a person can recover as a whole when we translate and engage with these precious acquired and skilled resources that come with a truly understood dancing mind and body.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM BODYWORK? CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR APPROACHES HERE IN YOUR WORK WITH DANCERS?

Ideally everyone who helps with injuries would be allowed to use the Greek word *physio* (in its origin *physios* means nature, natural, physical), a word and description that would lend itself perfectly to anyone who approaches the body in a natural and physical way. But there is quite a determined division about the word <physical therapy> being reserved for a certain type of approach of therapy, so I wanted to get away from doing my treatments under a label or a fixed terminology but instead was looking for an inclusive way of describing the wealth of possibilities that cover more than just the umbrella of the physical body approach. Hence I've chosen to practice under the broader term <bodywork>, which allows me and the bodies I work with to fully explore all realms of the person's needs in any one session- so not just the physical, but also the somatic, the visceral, the emotional, the mental and the soul body.

More than anything, being a bodyworker leaves space and exploration for tapping into the creative sense of movement experience which we all embody so deeply. Bodywork also stands for the workings of one's own body, meaning there is always a collaboration between the worker and the worked-with. Bringing listening and curiosity into each session often makes for the breakthrough to recovery and consistent well-being.

I love sharing and exploring the logistics, the mechanics, the linguistics and the artistics of the body, and let's just say there should always be a little bit of supercalifragilistics in there too... Encouraging dancers to understand their bodies in a more personal way again, I'm passionate about helping to prevent injuries in daily life as well as providing a realistic and enjoyable recovery and training programme that can be done wherever and whenever, anytime and anywhere. By honouring the foundations of movement health, we organically acquire more awareness around anatomy, biomechanics and kinaesthetic principles, and with it allow for training our wellbeing in a kind and body-intelligent way.

COULD YOU TALK MORE ABOUT THE VALUE OF HOLISTIC APPROACHES TO MOVEMENT FOR DANCERS?

A dancing body is trained and tuned into listening to its inner music, to the melody, the rhythm and the quality of the movement and so many other aspects that can help contribute

to a well-feeling entity. To me the key to longevity and wholesome injury prevention lies in including all of these aspects.

A creative person is used to thinking outside the box and to finding solutions through exploring and discovering the unknown within and around. I love helping and facilitating how to find and apply these personal key factors in a simple and therefore most effective way.

Putting the theory into practice, through imagery, tangible knowledge and somatic movement understanding, both in one's personal and professional life, tends to bring long-lasting improvement and quality of health for life.

WHAT IS BODYLISTICS®, AND HOW MIGHT THE DANCE COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM ENGAGING WITH THIS PLATFORM?

I have created Bodylistics® to give something back to the performer's community, wishing for it to be the platform I would have loved to have had existed at the time when I was a professional dancer. It's important to me that it becomes accessible and affordable to every one, and therefore I would like to offer a **50% discount to all One Dance UK members**, please click on the link here below to receive your discounted membership: <https://www.bodylistics.com/bodylistics-offer/>

Bodylistics® is all about guiding you to a pain-free, joy-filled movement life, whether you're a professional dancer, a movement lover or simply associated with the subject. Especially for times when hands-on treatments or sharing studio-space in person aren't necessarily available, you can learn, train, heal and recover with this unique self-assisted platform. With it also comes the option to book 1-2-1 bodywork sessions with me in the room or via zoom, offering *bespoke assistance and mentoring*. The 24/7 online access in combo with a personalised session as and when needed can help you find that very hand-picked solution to your individual issue and help you reach and explore your optimum health performance and beyond. Bodylistics® has the online Remedy Library and Movement Pharmacy® ready for you, it allows me to meet you where ever you and your body are- so that your show can always go on! EMBODY it, ENJOY it & Be BODYFUL with it!!

- Focus lies on industry-specific content for the professional mover and anyone who relates to working living and breathing in this field
- Integrating optimal movement practise into anything you do. Be it whilst undertaking mundane daily tasks or when actively studying and supporting your sports, dance and performance life.
- For whatever your body desires. No matter your age, ability or level of proficiency, whether you're a teacher, therapist or professional performer, there is tangible learning, knowledge, training and self-help movement support to be had
- Any Where, Any Time

To find out more about Frances, her work and Bodylistics®, please visit or www.bodylistics.com and www.francescollier.com.

Bodylistics® trailer: <https://vimeo.com/420609956>

15mins Interview: <https://vimeo.com/407589541>

