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**Mind + Body + Spirit + Environment + Interaction with all of these =**  
**Somatic**

This image is meant to help define and simplify the word “Somatic.” Because our science has advanced and the time is ripe, Somatics is essentially the field creating the language, understanding, and doing the in-field research to help redefine a new and evolved sense and understanding of our self. The old model of self as a brain or voice in the head is completely inadequate to accurately capture our experience as we live it. The word “Somatic” has its origins in Greek and refers to the body and the “live experience” as felt through something greater than mind that includes body. Somatics is in-line with the large variety of disciplines of hard science, new literature, and new generation understandings of the world. Primarily who we are is a highly complex, interaction between *minds*, *body*, *spirit*, with our *environment*. The environment is defined as our earliest relationships, our intimate relationships, friends, family, culture, community, and our responses to the global environment. We can also include the cyber environment for those who participate in it as a major player in shaping our sense of self. The environment is also a mindset or an attitude that is not just our own, but collectively shared, these have profound and unconscious effects upon our somatic life. The environment can also be traumatic events that have occurred to us in the past, but are literally caught in the body, but

ignored by the mind and so trauma loops around in our sensations, breath, and relationships. This creates another interactive environment as to how people respond to us and our confusion as to why they responded the way they did. Somatic Psychology trains therapists, coaches, facilitators, and anyone drawn to the field how to perceive the somatic in the individual, couple, or group and work with it. Somatic Psychology trains practitioners to gently provide biophysical feedback to the client through awareness of breath, sensation, posture, and gesture. This feedback is not an attack on the ego, because the ego is merely a portion of the totally self. In fact defenses are a bodily act of tension toward others that are often occurring in our blind spots communicating from our bodies to another body that we do not want to connect. Learning to listen to the body provides the whole somatic life with more information that is simply missing from the intellect. Information from the body requires a listening, a witnessing, and a curiosity. Somatics fosters this to bring more aliveness to everyone involved.

The somatic is the sum total of all the factors already mentioned, so what does that look like and how does one perceive it? In many ways it's like watching an ecosystem. Watching an ecosystem for multiple days reveals many interactive clues to how the macro and micro forces are interacting to reveal a mood, a feeling, an ambiance to a place. The place has a personality and a feeling, in many ways working with the somatic is very much the same. What's important in perceiving the somatic is to be able to listen deeply with our own body, with our senses, with our whole mind-body-being. To listen from this place to a person or a place is to be able to resonate and "get" a real sense of a place. If I relied on a map to know a landscape, I could still be lost. If I relied on what others told me, I might miss some of the changes, but when I sense a place, I become intimate with it and can track its history, its present, and its future becoming all right here right now via somatic perception.



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