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## The Fluid Self

By Emilie Conrad

*Emilie Conrad thinks about being human in a different way than most people do. For her, reinventing the human at the species level is an everyday experience. She helps people with severe trauma to the spinal cord find new pathways for movement where traditional therapy would say none would be possible. Her body of work illuminates our inherent bio-intelligence through patterns that spiral, arc, curve, and undulate. Her students are invited to discover the wisdom of their own bodies unfettered, alive, and in never-ending fluid form.*

Technically speaking, our bodies are not exactly ours. What we call a body is an open-ended experiment, the present result of billions of years of an ongoing universal *process* that is in constant flux, arranging, re-arranging, and experimenting as new formations come into existence. The continuum of life on land takes place within the galaxy and humans alike.

As human beings, we are an accrual of many life forms that have been shaped by our oceanic origins, still pulsating as the intrinsic world of our organs, our connective tissue, our nerve fiber. Our forms have been designed and redesigned, unendingly adaptive and innovative. We learn to crawl, to stand, to move forward through the savannas, the mountains, the cities, outer space. This stabilized creature called human—what is it? Can we ever know?

The fluid presence in our bodies is our fundamental environment; *we are the moving water brought to land*. The human body has been spiraled from the vortical tendency of living water, an extension of the primordial ocean, appearing separate but maintaining constant resonance. We are in perpetual resonance with all fluid systems *everywhere in the universe*, functioning as an undivided whole. I say that this fluid expression resonates with our galaxy in ways that our limited form of development probably can't know—or doesn't yet know. As organisms of intelligent life, we may be interacting beyond the familiar levels of our awareness.

When we see a newborn, essentially we are looking at the movement of water made flesh. We are seeing a fluid system meeting the vibrational field of Earth, where an elegant exchange begins to take place. As this exquisite system adjusts to its new atmosphere, a gradual stabilizing occurs. Liquid grasps, eyes focus, experiments are made. The baby rolls, thrusts, jerks, flails ... trying out the best possible sequences to ensure survival on Earth.

The very nature of stabilizing impels the fluid system to coalesce, giving the support that is needed to become functional. Fluidity consolidates as new requirements are met. Our oceanic memory pales as the demands of life on land become more immediate. All is forgotten, except for the primordial characteristics of our intrinsic environment: our muscles, bones, and fluids, and the air that

moves in and out of us. Humans can be seen as undulating messengers from the stars. Our bodies contain the memories of all that has been—a historical record of the original swirl, residing now in our fingertips.



Yemaya wall hanging by Marston Blow

No matter what anyone says, no matter how many mouths drip with “theories,” we basically have no idea why we have arrived. Some say we are the mistakes of a primordial coupling that took a mutational curve and *voila!* Here we are—a wandering species.

Spinning through the galaxy, frozen drops of chemical codes plunge into the primordial soup and melt into the heart of this vast coupling. Like the sperm swooning inside the egg, we meet our heated destiny with our frozen spaceships...our iced-up tears...we land, sink, and become one with the Earth.

We (as bodies) parallel the cell as our watery beginnings resonate with a larger field of planetary and universal intelligence functioning in us both locally and non-locally. The layered, interpenetrating complexity of cellular life can be seen as similar to the internalized functioning of a human being.

We are thousands of wave motions that converge to form what is now being called a “body.” Water is the medium of our deliverance. Form travels through us, leaving its bio-morphic imprint. The intelligence of unfolding form is encoded in our system.

When I speak of fluidity, I am also referring to the idea that what we call “body” is not matter but movement. Movement is the fundamental reality. In my view, the “body” is a profound orchestration of many qualities and textures of movement—interpenetrating tones of fertile play waiting to be incubated.

What I see as “body” is the movement of creative flux, waves of fertility. The cosmic play that we carry into this atmosphere still intrinsically pulsates.

We can be seen as a fluid unfolding of an innate intelligence. It is the same intelligence that is guiding the sperm and egg, the same intelligence that created the membrane of the first cell that directs stem cells to differentiate, the intelligence that moves galaxies and iguanas. We inhabit a sea of intelligent life beckoning us to enter.

I see our “bodies” formed by the liquid of our first cradle. Our early watery environment shapes and gives us its secret. This is our first home, our “primordial field.” The fluid in our cells is our birthplace, our memory of the creative matrix in which all life is summoned.

Emilie Conrad, founder and director of Continuum Movement, is a visionary whose revolutionary work continues to inspire an international audience of therapists and movement educators from fields such as Rolfing, Physical Therapy, Cranio-Sacral Therapy, Osteopathy, Feldenkrais, Body-Mind Centering, Yoga, Theatre, Dance, and Physical Fitness. This is an excerpt from a chapter in “Life on Land,” published by North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, Ca. Emilie can be reached at her Continuum website: [www.continuummovement.com](http://www.continuummovement.com). “Life on Land” can be ordered through Amazon.com.