



The  
**Embodiment  
Manifesto**

by PHILIP SHEPHERD

# The Embodiment Manifesto

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## The Blind Spot We Harbor, the Revolution to Come

*I believe that humanity can survive the crises that are mounting around us – but that our ability to make it will depend on us forging a new kind of clarity.*

*Specifically, we need to shed light on the story we tell ourselves about what it means to be human. It's a story almost too familiar to question, yet it provokes fantasies of limitless growth, personal independence and power, and puts us on a collision course with the realities of our world.*

*I believe this story is the single greatest threat to our survival.*

*I also believe that the single most dangerous effect of this story is the way it demeans and estranges us from our own bodies, and makes that feel normal.*

It is clear to most people that the way we are living is not sustainable. It is clear in the damage we are inflicting on the ecosystem that sustains us; in the cataclysmic rate of species extinction; in the pressures of a growing human population on the earth's finite resources; in the growing calamities of soil depletion and plastic pollution; in the warming of the oceans; in the entrenched racial inequities; and even in the stress we carry in our bodies day in, day out. We try to lessen our impact by altering our behavior, and such changes are important – but their effect is dwarfed by the sheer scale and momentum of what we face. Our instinct to seek more control over our situation is the familiar reflex that created it in the first place. The real challenge we face cannot be answered by tinkering with different aspects of our consumerism or lifestyle. Something more basic is needed: to surrender our agendas of control and turn our hearts instead to the task of coming into harmony with our world. Control and harmony are not different degrees of the same impulse – they are opposites.

If we are to come into harmony with the world, we need to identify and undo the fantasies that hide that harmony from us. So deeply are we entangled in those fantasies, though, that to undo them requires a revolution in our understanding of ourselves. To make matters even more challenging, the revolution that is needed sits firmly in our culture's blind spot. This has always been the nature of revolutions. In our case, that blind spot involves our relationship with our bodies.

It was once considered self-evident that the earth was the center of the universe, and that everything else – the stars, the planets, the sun – revolved around it. Our experience supported our limited knowledge: standing on the earth, you felt that you were at rest – not hurtling through space at over 18 miles per second. The Copernican Revolution changed all that by identifying the sun as the center of the solar system. It was a revolution that made sense of the movements of the heavenly bodies, and disclosed the harmony of the system as a whole.

Today it is similarly understood that the head is the center of the psyche, and that every aspect of the self – our thoughts, our emotions, our desires and senses – is held in orbit by what lies within our cranium. In this case, though, *our knowledge supports our limited experience*: that is, we learn from our culture that the head is our center. That knowledge orients our entire experience of self and world. But our socially-ingrained, head-centric way of being, which we take for granted, is a dangerous aberration. It is at odds with a host of ancient cultures that experience the center of their thinking in the belly – Chinese, Mayan, Incan and Japanese, to name a few; it discounts facts of our own physiology – that we have an independent, second brain in the belly, for instance, that perceives, thinks, acts and remembers without any input from the cranial brain; and it turns a blind eye to history and the roots of language, which show that eight thousand years ago, Europeans too experienced their center in the belly, and that it took millennia for that center to migrate up through the body to where it resides today.

In the course of that migration, our thinking didn't merely withdraw from the body – it dissociated from it. That dissociation lives as a wound within us – perhaps as the primary wound we harbour. It sundered our thinking from our being. If trauma is characterized by a dissociation from the body, we are all traumatized. It is around this wound that the values and priorities of our culture have gathered – not to heal the wound, but to sustain it.

And to be clear, it is not a wound we are born with – it is a wound that is systematically inflicted on us. For instance, it is the over-arching lesson taught by our public education system: if you can suppress the body's energy and sit still and fill your head with the right information, you will be rewarded. If you cannot put your body's intelligence to sleep, if you cannot cram into your head the abstract facts and operations of the curriculum, you will be punished. It is into this system that we send our five-year-olds – and after twelve years immersed in it, they learn the lesson well. They come to believe, as indeed we did, that you can think more clearly if you dull yourself to the 'noise' below the neck. That you can assess reality more accurately by using the isolated fragment of your intelligence in the head than you can by accessing the intelligence of your whole being.

When your thinking cuts itself off from the body, it is cutting itself from your living reality. The body holds the deepest currents of your being, and those currents are informed by and participant in the life of the world around you – the being of the world. The vast, subtle intelligence of the body is akin to and attuned to the vast, subtle intelligence of nature, from which it was born. By distancing the center of your thinking from all that, you commit yourself to a kind of alienation that makes you feel like a spectator on the events that surround you. Furthermore, you start managing from on high what you cannot experience, because head-centric thinking is keen to create structures of control, systemization, judgment and acquisition. But being out of touch and off balance yourself, you can only seed more imbalance with every willful, managerial impulse – even when your impulses spring from an agenda that seeks to improve things. The desire to behave ethically, if coming from a place of disconnected reason, will necessarily focus on amending how your behavior affects the material world; and because disconnected reason tacitly expresses a contempt for the body, it will overlook the problem of how your relationship with the body affects your behavior.

This is our blind spot – and it is a towering liability, because *our relationship with the world can only mirror and express the relationship we have with our own bodies*. How you relate to *your* being sets the template for how you relate to being itself. Having estranged ourselves from the body and its wisdom, we find ourselves also estranged from the world and its wisdom.

The body is not a mechanical attachment that the head is given for moving itself around and implementing its will. The body teems with intelligence. In fact, it processes over a billion times more information than we can be consciously aware of. The body knows by feeling. The brain in the head cannot feel – it seeks rather to know. And its brilliant intelligence is capable of understanding everything, with one exception: it cannot understand life. The intimately interconnected processes of this living earth are beyond intellectual knowing. Undaunted, the brain objectifies what is around it – and does so without any appreciation for what it sacrifices with that act. It shatters the world into mere bits that can be known in isolation, one by one, and remains incapable of noticing the wholeness that sustains and speaks through each of them.

What the body most deeply feels, by contrast, is the living pulse of the present. And what it most deeply understands is that it belongs to the world. When you allow your body’s intelligence to be fully present to a tree, for instance, it experiences kinship within that living magnificence before it. And so it is, too, with a snail, a wave on the beach, a hawk drifting across the sky. The body knows it belongs to all of them, as the dissociated head never will. It is for that reason that Aboriginal Australians refer to the thinking of the head as a “tangled fishing net”; and that the Okanagan word for *insane* translates as “talking, talking inside the head.” By that standard we are all insane.

We cannot join the world’s harmony if we continue to lock ourselves in our heads – and as we see all around us, the world cannot endure the harms inflicted on it by a way of being that cherishes the fantasy of disconnection. What is asked of us, then, is a revolution as radical as the one that brought to light the true center of the solar system. We need a revolution that will challenge the rule of the head and bring us home to the hub of our being – a hub that lies deep in the pelvic bowl, and is associated with the female aspect of our consciousness. We need a revolution that is at once deeply personal, and as boldly political in its implications as were the insights of Copernicus. And just as Copernicus helped to disclose the harmony of the heavenly bodies, the emerging revolution will disclose the true harmony of our life on this heavenly body we call the earth.

## **The Inner Hierarchy**

Inhabiting your body – reuniting with its intelligence – is one of the most potent political statements you can make.

Disembodiment creates patriarchy. That happens on an individual level. The male-inflected, analytical, unfeeling intelligence of the head overrides the integrating, attuning, gathering, sensational intelligence of the body and asserts a form of top-down command over it.

On a cultural level, disembodiment is tacitly modeled and promoted by every institutional hierarchy in our society – whether corporate, political or religious. Each of them is shaped around a top-down ‘command and control’ power structure run by the *head* of the organization, with executive power consolidated at *headquarters*. That power might reside at the *head* office with its CEO (‘chief’ derives from the Latin word for ‘head’); or with the *head* of a political party in the nation’s capital (‘capital comes from a Latin word for ‘head’); or with the *head* of the church. The implicit message embedded in these hierarchies is that the head should rule. That message remains acceptable to us only because it expresses, even as it further consolidates, our relationship with ourselves.

When we center our thinking in our heads, we unknowingly reinforce the influence those social hierarchies enjoy. So it seems natural to us that ‘heads’ of business, politics and religion should rule our society. If we reject the leadership of a particular ‘head’, we will simply seek to replace that individual with another ‘head’ – unable or unwilling to consider other ways of organizing human affairs. Of course, head-centric governance may be the only viable system for a populace that lives in their heads. And indeed, it is in the interest of the corporations and hierarchies that rule society to assure us all of the normality and necessity of the head being in charge.

To challenge that status quo and create a workable alternative, we will need a massive rallying against it – a concerted and unflagging revolution of consciousness that creates a new ‘normal’: the sensitized unity of a fully embodied intelligence. Sustaining that alternative would depend on the creation of a new story of what being human feels like and means. It would reverse the trust we place in the patriarchy of disconnected thinking, and it would reverse the trust we place in the divisions erected by that kind of thinking between individuals, between self and world, and between self and body. It would forge instead an experiential trust in the wholeness of the world, and would bring every aspect of our lives into accord with that wholeness: it would reorient our values, temper our actions, calm our cravings, and impart new focus and compassion and resolve to our individual lives.

A revolution in our status quo cannot happen until we recognize that the story we have been living by has deeply misled us. The dream of conspicuous personal wealth that each of us is prodded to yearn for is actually a manufactured fantasy about perfected, self-achieved disconnection. The dream promises us the opportunity to tower above the city in splendid isolation by retreating to a multi-million dollar penthouse suite, or to disconnect from our neighbors by inhabiting a mansion set among acres of groomed lawn protected by a gated driveway. It promises us the chance to disconnect from process with the convenience of private jets and chauffeurs and staff to cater to our needs. The dream offers to disconnect our daily lives from nature, our most intimate teacher, even as we relegate nature to a role of decoration to adorn our living spaces. The dream promises us full access to the great outdoors, presenting it as an extended amusement park that safely titillates without any risk of real encounter or learning.

We believe that a display of these privileges signifies success, when in fact they represent the fantasies of the mythological tyrant. That was made clear by the great mythologist Joseph Campbell,

who characterized the tyrant as “the man of self-achieved independence.” The tyrant of myth builds a fortress for himself and imprisons himself within it, while asserting the maximum control over his environment. When we live in our heads we do the same, unwittingly lured by the tyrant’s obsession with self-achieved independence. In holding aloft this fantasy of success, our culture has executed a sleight of hand, installing the mythological tyrant as our modern hero.

Because we falsely believe disconnection to be a desirable state, we spend much of our lives working to achieve it. We daily disconnect from process in favor of convenience. We disconnect from the consequences of our actions in favor of personal profit. We disconnect from our neighbors in favor of privacy, unaware that the word ‘privacy’ is a cousin to ‘privation’. We disconnect from our bodies in favor of the simplistic preserve of ideas. We disconnect from our heart’s longing in favor of security and career advancement. Our lives often feel unsatisfying and confusing, but we hang in there, believing that disconnection equals freedom – while all the world cries out that disconnection is freedom’s opposite. To disconnect as we do is to invite into our lives the tyrant’s anxieties, the tyrant’s insatiable acquisitiveness, the tyrant’s frightfully confined world. These traits are all too familiar to us, as is the sense of dislocated staleness they generate.

All of our tendencies towards disconnection are merely extensions of our relationship with our bodies. But there is a deeper reason that our disconnection from the body is so injurious to all: when you disconnect from your body, you are disconnecting from the richest and most tangible reality of your being. To do that habitually – to cut yourself off from the reality of your being as a reflex – is to alienate yourself from being. When you are alienated from being, you can never feel truly secure, because the basis of true security is the security of being – the security that enables you to be present to and participant in your full reality. It’s what you discover when you come home to the body and feel the self as a whole, and come to rest within that whole in the timelessness of the present and the spaciousness of the world to which it belongs. There is simply no substitute for that – not even in all the amassed conquests and acquisitions on which the tyrant fixates. If you are not grounded in that security of being, an undercurrent of anxiety will run through all that you undertake – gnawing at you even while you just sit still. That is the condition to which we consign ourselves by living in the head.

If that condition affected only us, it would be grievous enough; but it triggers even darker consequences for the world around us – for *the insecurity of being that is our constant state disables us from ever feeling that we have enough*. The present will always seem insufficient if we are insufficiently present. And so we try to offset our lack of being – and the unsteady void it leaves at our core – by trying to take from the world whatever might compensate. This gives rise to the acquisitiveness that drives our consumer culture, and it shows up in a host of other activities. The restless craving we live with – at its root, a craving to just ‘be’ – is so uncomfortable and relentless, we seek distraction in pursuits that become addictions, whether sex, or texting, or feeding, or endless entertainment. Or we seek to numb ourselves to that craving with pharmaceuticals, alcohol or drugs. Or we seek to allay our insecurity by grasping at symbols of status – the newest, the best, the biggest, the most exclusive, the most successful. None of it can instil in us a sense of ‘enough’, because none of it can carry us out of the head and back to the cradle of our being.

Indigenous cultures the world over consider people who take more from the world than they need to be mad. And indeed, our disconnection from the body's sense of being turns into a maddened, dark hunger that consumes and consumes without ever feeling sated. The fallout from that madness is tearing at the social fabric of our human communities, even as it overwhelms the naturally replenishing, delicate ecosystems of the world.

## **Coming Home to the Body**

We cannot begin to reign in our madness until we recover what the body knows and learn to accord with it. To feel and surrender to that accord is to flood the emptiness of our lives with the experience of the present – the only true way to begin to harmonize with the world. The revolution that returns us to embodiment begins with the honest recognition of the extent to which we have internalized the hierarchical message – the extent to which its top-down power structure currently lives in us and rules us. In fact, the growing gap we tolerate between rich and poor is a direct expression of the gap we tolerate within ourselves, between the head and the parts of the self that sit below the head. Of course, just as the executive power of an institutional hierarchy believes in its own superior intelligence, so does the head – imposing its will on the body, overriding its subtle genius, and obscuring the world's harmony.

And what about our belief in the almighty ability of the head to take charge and lead us to success? It is yet another cultural blind spot: the depth of our cultural messaging that the head should rule has left us in thrall to reason, oblivious of its utter impotence regarding the things that matter most in our own lives. Think about it: you cannot reason your way into the present; you cannot reason your way into love; you cannot reason your way into a harmony of being. More than that, though, as long as the head rules it keeps you from truly feeling and answering to the currents of your own being; it fragments you on the most personal level, so that even as you obsess over refining your ideas about how best to supervise your progress, you sabotage any possibility that you might respond to your circumstances with your full and unified being – because this inner tyranny obliterates being and silences the body's wakeful attunement.

In reality, the body is no more mindless than the factory workers or community volunteers or lay priests at the bottoms of our institutional hierarchies. Every cell and system of the body participates in our thinking, and does so holistically. We have difficulty recognizing that, though. The body's intelligence isn't verbal, it is sensational, and is the complement and counterbalance to the intelligence of the head. Each is designed to support the other. When the inner barrier between your thinking and your being is dismantled, they become one. You feel every thought resonate through the body, being clarified as it does; and you recognize every sensation in the body as a form of thinking. In that newborn unity, thinking is no longer experienced as a private phenomenon, isolated from the world. Rather, you experience it being illuminated by the world, guided by it. You feel yourself thinking hand-in-hand with the present.

The challenge we face in learning to think with the whole of our beings is huge, because we have been relentlessly habituated to our inner division by the story that surrounds us – a story communicated by the language, the architecture, the hierarchies, the customs and even the icons of our culture. The standardized symbols for washrooms, for instance – icons that have been refined over decades so that we can effortlessly recognize ourselves in them – show a perfect circle for a head, and a body below that isn't even connected to it. Having internalized the pervasive message that 'disconnection is normal', we not only lose the ability to sense our own wholeness, we eventually even forget what wholeness is. Instead of listening to the world through the body, we sit up in the head and '*listen to the body*', as though merely noticing the body from on high were the same as embodiment. 'Wholeness' comes to mean a state of organized inner peace rather than an unfettered communion with the seamless whole to which we all belong. When we cannot feel wholeness, we cannot center our sense of truth in it – and then truth itself becomes fractured. In its place we can only substitute a sense of 'should', which is provided by our executive powers of decision-making. Even our sense of truth, then, becomes a way of upholding and refining our inner tyranny – each of us polishing the set of ideas, political and otherwise, by which we 'should' live. These 'shoulds', divorced from our wholeness, are naturally derived from the divisive messaging of our culture and its head-centric hierarchies.

Facing the challenge before us seems overwhelmingly necessary once you begin to appreciate its widespread effects. When we are estranged from the unity of our own wholeness, that estrangement ignites within us a smoldering anxiety. Such anxiety is the foothold by which those who wish to wield power keep others off balance. That is why they stoke anxiety so deliberately: the more anxiety we feel, the more control we feel we need. Every social hierarchy promises to provide you with more control in exchange for being ceded more power. Through ads and messaging, corporations offer you ways to control your cravings, your lawn, your entertainment, your finances, your shape, your status, and even your anxiety itself. Politicians offer to control crime, the economy and social unrest, and to defend your right to accumulate more and more capital. Religious institutions offer control over sin, your afterlife, your guilt and your sense of moral virtue.

Ultimately, our head-centric way of being directs us endlessly through a stressful, self-perpetuating loop:

- top-down living disrupts wholeness;
- a lack of wholeness induces anxiety;
- anxiety makes us yearn for more control;
- and more control is promised by top-down management – both within the self and within society – even as it further disrupts wholeness.



As this frenzied cycle self-perpetuates, it corrodes our sense of connectedness. But paradoxically, feeling that deepening corrosion is where our hope for the future lies – because only when we feel the effects of our disconnection keenly enough will we want it to heal; and also because our hearts understand that if we can muster the courage to escape the numbing agendas of reason that oppose the world and struggle to outthink it, then we’ll once again be able to share in the world’s ineffable grace – not as spectators, but as active participants.

Top-down hierarchies – whether operating in your society *or your self* – maintain their power by disconnecting you from the guidance of the world and the richness of the present, features that can speak only to your wholeness and which lie beyond all ideas. Returning to the body’s subtle wisdom – the very foundation of your vibrant being – and restoring it to a place of preeminence effectively deflates the influence of those who wish to barter for your power. Undertaking that challenge, though, requires the journey of heroic surrender that is illuminated by the myths of the world: surrendering the tyrant’s place of rule in the head, you allow the center of your consciousness to descend into your body and come to rest in the cradle of your being – the pelvic bowl. In mythic terms, this represents the marriage of male doing and female being. Relinquishing the frenzied realms of spectatorship and oversight, you return to the calm clarity of the present – fully participant in your own life, and in the life around you. By yielding the head’s need to control, you discover a harmony that is not yours to possess, but yours to feel and live and support. By yielding within yourself the head’s obsession with order, you discover grace.

The demise of your inner tyranny will defuse the meager fantasies that drive the tyrant’s actions: fantasies of control, obsessive acquisition, and independence. But the last of those – the desire for independence – exerts a particularly tenacious hold over us, so much so that we fall under its sway without even noticing that it is the greatest illusion of all. Independence doesn’t exist, not anywhere. The word doesn’t refer to anything in reality. You could search every corner of the cosmos, yet you wouldn’t find a single example of it. Everything affects everything, everything depends on everything. To chase what has no reality is at the same time to flee from reality. It can be no other way. And to flee reality is to live with a brokenness that will damage the world as much as it damages your own life.

If you can undo your inner tyranny bit by bit, and extricate yourself from its ruinous fantasies, you will find that all outer tyrannies – whether they are corporate, political or social – lose their pull. Finding your way home to the security of your being, you will also find yourself attuning to the mindful present, attuning to the frail, robust, transient beauty of life; and that in turn will attune you to an understanding of justice that lies beyond dogma or self-interest. This is not about asserting control, but about achieving harmony; not about substituting a new set of ideas for an old, but about living the wordless truth of the moment; not about getting ahead, but about embracing your life, in all its mystery and urgency and love.

Joseph Campbell described the mythic hero as “the man of self-achieved submission”. The impulses of both tyrant and hero live in us all, but our belief in ‘independence’ has skewed our entire

culture towards a tyranny over nature, even as it has skewed individuals within our culture towards a tyranny over their own bodies. To leave the ‘tangled fishing net’ of the head and once more join the intelligence of the body is to initiate the hero’s journey of self-achieved submission to ‘what is’. If you begin that journey for yourself, you will be moving into the sensational, clear, ever-shifting genius of your full and undivided being. By submitting to ‘what is’, you are able to join the harmony of the whole, and nurture it, and feel yourself being nurtured in return. As that begins to happen, your life will begin to change – and the world around you will follow.

## **A New Practice for a New Way of Being**

“Talking, talking inside the head” is the Okanagan description of insanity, and is our experience of normality. Learning to liberate your thinking into the body requires a skill set that is directly contrary to our culture’s messaging and conditioning. On the most personal level the process may feel as monumental as the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, because it threatens to change everything: old, stuck pieces of yourself topple and make room for a newness of breath and ease and clarity, and a disruptive awakening to the deep, true passion and calling of your life. Opening to the world you find not obstacles, but guidance; not indifferent geography, but companionship; not resources, but a living web that shares your own ancestral origins in star matter.

We cannot align with the body’s subtle genius by adopting new ideas about ‘how to be’. In fact, to be directed by ideas, however progressive, is to be ruled by the head. What is needed is a new experience that will put us in touch with the deep attunement of our being. We need practices that will help us beyond ‘listening to the body’ and enable us to listen to the world through the body. The task is not to make the body do new things that are good for us, but to surrender the rigid entitlement of the head and discover our embodied wisdom – which belongs to the world as much as to us, and knows the whole so intimately that it recognizes its steadfast, unseen gaze in each individual pebble, star and blade of grass.

Many practices are available to help us, and many are needed – you cannot simply wish your way into a new way of being. One practice that is central to my own work is called The Elevator. This practice recognizes the long journey that was made in the evolution of our consciousness, whereby our centre of awareness migrated from the belly to the chest and finally to the head. For 8,000 years this journey has carried us away from the wonder of the sensuous present and up into the dry certainty of our abstractions. But that journey can also be reversed – not to eliminate the thinking of the head, but to ground it in and reunite it with the attuned thinking of the body.

That’s what The Elevator is about. It is designed to carry you home to your true center – the place that brings all the orbiting concerns of your life into coherence and accesses the harmony that guides the world. To begin the exercise you need to locate your perineum – or more accurately, the perineal body. It sits in the center of the pelvic floor, amid all those parts of yourself our culture warns us are somehow unacceptable. You can locate the perineum by gently engaging the muscle that you use to stop yourself from peeing. Once you locate it, relax and bring your attention to your

breath. By relaxing more deeply, you will begin to feel the wave of the in-breath enveloping the perineum, and the out-breath releasing from there. Be patient with this. It may not happen immediately. It may even take a process of returning to it over a couple of days before you can really feel it – but there's no rush. After all, it took us 8000 years to complete the journey in the other direction.

Once you feel the presence of the breath around the perineum, allow to unfold within your body a spacious corridor that opens first on the pelvic floor and then rises slowly to the top of your head. The center of this corridor is an axis that sits in front of the spine and connects the perineum below to the centre of your head above. At the top of the corridor, up in the head, locate the center of your awareness. This is 'the elevator', and you can experience it in any shape or form that feels right to you. It might show up as a diamond, or a drop of oil, or a flower, or just as a presence of energy – it doesn't matter. If you play with it you'll find that you can actually move it around inside your head – back and forth, or side to side, or even in a circle.

If you bring your attention to the relationship between that center of your awareness and the perineum, you may feel a recognition in each that its counterpart lies in the other – its twin or complementary opposite. You may even feel a tug, or a pull or a longing between them, as might be experienced by lovers who have long been separated. When you feel ready, allow that center of your awareness to give into the gravity of that pull and begin a smooth descent through the spaciousness of the corridor towards the perineum. This may begin as an exercise in imagination – but ultimately you will actually feel that centre moving down through your body, the way a pebble tossed into a pond seeks the bottom. It's important to feel its journey continuously, without gaps or jumps. And if you should find at any point that the elevator stalls out and seems reluctant to drop further, understand this as a gift. That is, you have disclosed a little shadow or block in the body – a piece of your Berlin Wall, standing between you and the core of your being. If you offer that shadow your full acceptance and your love, it will warm and soften and disperse into the whole, so that the elevator can resume its descent.

By supporting the center of your awareness throughout this journey with patience and loving attention, you'll find that the elevator can continue its descent until it arrives at the perineum. When it does, let it come deeply to rest there, and allow your being to adjust to its grounded presence. Pay attention to how that feels, to how different the world feels, and to your dilated sense of wholeness. By remaining at rest on the perineum, you are allowing all the scattered bits of your life to orient and gradually come into relationship with the ground of your being, integrating and harmonizing.

I feel that deep centre as my core. I feel it as the unity of my thinking and my being. I feel it as the stillpoint from which I can attune to all the currents of the present. The more often you return to that centre, the easier the journey becomes, and the more natural it feels.

You can practice the Elevator exercise virtually anywhere and at any time: in a grocery store or a boardroom, while partying with friends or lying alone in bed. Practicing it helps not only you, but

those around you too. The influence of anyone who is grounded – clear and present in their body – spreads into the world gently and slowly, like ripples in a pond. By returning to your own center, you help others do the same. You also come to understand that only in feeling the present as a whole can you be ushered into your own wholeness. It is an understanding that promotes compassion, responsibility, and the instinct to nurture. It is an understanding the world desperately needs. Let the revolution begin.

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### **About Philip Shepherd**

Philip Shepherd lives in Toronto, Ontario. He is the co-founder of [The Embodied Present Process](#) (TEPP), author of *New Self, New World* and *Radical Wholeness*, and recognized as an international authority on embodiment.