

Exploring Movement



Through Hoopment

Margarita Navarrete-Hutchinson, LMT, LMTI

For Allovus HOOPTEES & PHAT KATs:

Happy Open Observant Playful Timeless Embracing
Everything Souls

Patient Helpful Appreciative Transitional

Kind Authentic Transparent

Being is a "Be" state; I state the State of Be!

I support the "you-ness" of you.

Nicely done. Keep it up.

Also by Margarita Navarrete-Hutchinson:

Your Body is a Spaceship!

&

The Pressure Rainbow

available for purchase through the [Blurb.com](https://www.blurb.com) book store.

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Exploring Movement Through Hoopment:

**The Practice of Allowing...
the Hoop(s) to Move Us**

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Making Our Own Mini-Hoops

We can make our own hoops in a variety of diameters, using:

***PVC cutters**

***1/2 inch diameter HDPE pipe for hoop**

***3/8 inch diameter HDPE pipe for connector**

After we cut our tubing to our desired sizes (32-38 inches on average; varied sizes help demonstrate differences in body mechanics), we heat up the ends of the hoop tubing, while the 3-4 inch connector pieces chill in the freezer/cup of ice water.

We may opt to heat our hoop tubing in a hot car or garage; outdoors through solar radiation; with a blow dryer; with a heating pad; or by soaking the ends in hot water.

With the connector tubing contracted, thanks to the cold; and the hoop tubing expanded, thanks to the heat, the hoop(s) will come together easily; and the pieces will lock in place as the temperatures of the materials normalize. If we prefer, we may add a few drops of super-glue to the seam, for added reinforcement.

Finish off the hoop(s) with decorative duct tape; and electrical tape for detail/weight.

Polypro tubing may also be used

1

Finding Our Centers

Getting Started

Before we begin moving our arms, we must Find Our Centers.

We begin with our feet; about shoulder-width apart...a little more or less is OK; as long as we feel comfortable/stable.

Our knees are slightly bent (vs. locked); allowing for sway, bounce, and movement.

Our pelvises are slightly tucked forward, which reduces the curvature of our lower spines; grounding/stabilizing our hips over our knees.

Our core muscles are contracted: abdominals/bellies; obliques/sides; erectors/back; and pelvic floors...providing stable support for our spines.

Our shoulders are back, and down...upright, yet relaxed. *Consider this a neutral posture.*

Our heads are over our centers (vs. in front of); which we may observe when we engage the hoop for our first stretch:

1. Raise the hoop (horizontal orientation) directly over head, as far up as we can reach; then slowly bring it down, over our heads, toward our shoulders. Repeat 3-5 times, mindfully.

We can tell if our heads are in front of our bodies (vs. over our centers) when the hoop rises out in front of us; and in alignment when it rises straight up.

Now that we are upright and grounded, let's check our ranges of motion.

2. We mindfully pass the hoop from one hand to the other, behind our backs and over our heads; essentially 'drawing' large vertical circles behind us.

Repeat 3-5 times, then change direction.

We are getting in touch with how our bodies are moving. Do we feel balanced? Does one side feel stronger/looser than the other?

3. We grasp the hoop with both hands, behind our backs; then push the hoop down, opening our chests.

Take a few slow, deep breaths; feel your tissues expand and contract with each breath.

Return to a relaxed, upright posture.

4. We slowly pass the hoop from hand to hand, front to back, with our arms lowered; essentially intersecting our centers with horizontal circles.

Repeat 3-5 times, then change direction.

We are getting a sense of how we feel as we move with the hoops; and a sense of how the hoops feel, as they guide our bodies

Do what feels good; we don't need to push ourselves beyond comfortable ranges of motion, which may vary from day to day. *May we be aware; & breathe deeply.*

We are ready to explore our centers.

We keep our cores contracted, so our spines are supported; and our postures are upright, yet relaxed.

Imagine how a snake moves; applying the movement mechanics of a snake's body to our respective trunks.

Our feet remain planted on the ground.

While maintaining a loose, yet stationary hold on the hoop, we start moving it around bodies; grazing our vessels...allowing the hoop to flip and flop as it may.

As we become aware of where our bodies are in space, we also observe how the hoop 'prefers' to move through space--which is important, because the hoop is our guide as we move through the same vertical, horizontal, and diagonal planes it moves through.

We venture on to discovering all the different ways that the hoop can move around our bodies; and explore how changing the positions of our feet affect how we are moved through space...all while staying close to our centers.

As we practice exploring our centers, we are training our stabilizer muscles to stay engaged; thus providing better support to our overall frames. We practice until maintaining engaged cores, with a neutral posture, feels natural.

2

**Expanding
Into Our
Spheres**

We practice contracting our centers, as we expand into our spheres.

We begin with our feet firmly planted on the ground, and our bodies in neutral posture.

While maintaining our core muscles engaged (but not rigid), we allow our hoop to explore our spheres: the space in between our bodies and the end of the hoop.

As the hoop moves through space, propelled by our arms, we are guided to move through planes of motion that we may not engage in during our average daily activities.

We bring the hoop in and out, expanding and contracting with our arms; exploring the vertical, the horizontal, and the diagonal planes that we observe the hoop moving through.

By changing the positions of our feet, we may notice how our stance affects our body mechanics as we move within our spheres.

Even though our feet are planted, we are engaging our entire bodies; the destabilizing movements of our limbs force our stabilizer muscles to engage--in the lower body as well as upper.

We explore our spheres up high, and down low, and everywhere in between; until we are familiar with how the hoop likes to move within our spheres.

3

Moving Within Our Spheres Through Space

We are adding to our "spheres of perception" juggling act: awareness of our centers; awareness of our spheres; and awareness of our surrounding environments.

1 + 2 = 3

We use the skills we practiced in 1 and 2; now we add lower body motion.

We may begin with marching in place, while holding our cores engaged.

Our spheres are still stationary, but our feet are not--giving us an opportunity to practice maintaining awareness of all three spheres of perception, before sallying forth into the larger space outside our spheres.

We may progress to turning within our spheres; exploring the different ways the hoop guides our bodies to twist and turn.

Next we may take a few steps, and walk around the space we are in; as our arms continue to expand and contract, propelling the hoop around our bodies and spheres.

And finally, we DANCE!

Consciously moving our vessels through space; mindful of all 3 spheres of perception.

4

**Returning to
Center:
Core Stability**

We are now comfortable moving through space within our spheres; we bring our awareness back to our centers, and focus on core stability.

Welcome to the balancing act portion of our show!

Please remember to keep moving; we don't want to stay too long in any pose/position, so that our tissues are not overexerted.

With our cores engaged, and our arms guided by the hoop (exploring our sphere), we begin with standing one foot; then the other.

We move on to standing yoga poses; essentially, variations on feet positioning/stance/width combined with changes in elevation.

As we balance with our lower extremities, our upper limbs continue to expand and contract within our spheres, which destabilizes our bodies; thus training our stabilizer muscles to engage and adapt to chaotic movement.

Combine the elements practiced in 1, 2, and 3, with 4; and dance, Dance, DANCE!

5
Engaging
More
Implements

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 5$$

Bring on the hoops!

We begin with 2 equal sized hoops, and go back to basics: initially moving the hoops around our Centers, and exploring how 2 hoops guide our bodies.

Then change to odd-sized hoops; and explore movement.

Suddenly, one hoop fits through the other! How interesting and exciting!

We expand into our spheres with 2 hoops, and explore the planes the hoops guide us to move through.

When we are ready, we may explore moving within our spheres, through space, with 2 hoops.

Odd or even...play with both! Different pairings and different diameters guide our bodies to move in different ways.

We may practice our balancing act, with 2 hoops! All while juggling our spheres of perception.

And when that gets comfortable, we add another hoop. And then another! And another!

Mini-hoops are super portable; with a couple of hoops around our necks, we never have to "wait" anywhere, again.

What was "waiting" in the past, is now an opportunity to practice Hoopment in a variety of spaces and places.

With an extra hoop, we may share; and it becomes a hoop of connection, in addition to being an implement for self-care and moving meditation.

We may use our hoops as "shields;" if we don't have the bandwidth for deep hugs, then we can leave our hoops on--granting us a bit more space, without having to express the need.

Our hoops may serve as diagnostic tools, that help us see where we are & are not welcome.

They attract certain individuals to us, and they repel others...We tend to enjoy interacting with those whom the hoops attract...and tend to be grateful when they scare folks away.

Time is never "wasted" with a hoop in hand--we enjoy the gifts of self-care; and cherish the moments...as they bring us to the present.

Making hoops to give away? *That is the next level. That is The Hoopment.*

Bonus:

The Pressure Rainbow

A Self-Awareness and Communication Tool

The Pressure Rainbow (PR) is a simplified way to communicate perceived pressure--whether physical, emotional, or environmental--via a gage based on colors and numbers.

The gage represents pressure; as pressure increases on/within our bodies/nervous systems, our blood pressures, breath rates, and heart rates increase.

Lower pressure is represented by the cooler end of the spectrum; higher pressure by the warmer end.

We may perceive the various colors as "states" or "zones": they are emotional/mental "locations" that our nervous systems may visit, based on how our bodies are processing/interpreting pressure.

Different color states/zones have a direct effect on our vessels/bodies; they affect muscle tone/body posturing, as well as perception.

How we approach others, and take in what they are putting out, may be influenced by the "state" that we are in.

The colors represent the zones/states; the numbers help us recognize where we are within that state, and how close we may be to next state over.

"1" may be perceived as 10X longer than "10," if we imagine the numbers as pieces of string.

"5" is half the size of "1"...putting us closer to the next warmer color state, due to our bodies' protective responses.

We want to become aware of where "3" exists for us within each state...because by the time we are at a "5," we are quickly pulled into the next state by our nervous systems.

It is important to note that it takes our nervous systems/bodies much longer to return to a cooler state, than it takes to reach a warmer state. We may get upset in a flash; but require time before we can process data clearly again.

"Dark Blue" is the state we sleep in.

Our immune systems have primary access to the available energetic resources, which they use to rebuild/restore our bodies while we rest.

"Blue" is associated with a relaxed state & light pressure. "Blue exercises" help calm us.

"Blue-Green" is a relaxed and happy state.

In this zone, we can interpret incoming data clearly, as it is a state where it is easy to be present. When we are present, we may have the bandwidth to take in a bigger picture.

"Green" is an excited and happy state.

We may interpret this state as our nervous systems giving us the "green light" regarding activities, individuals, and environments that we enjoy interacting with.

If it feels "Green," go for it! If what you are choosing to participate in won't potentially hurt you, another living being, or the planet, then it won't turn "Brown" from being tinged with "Orange" or "Red."

"Gold" is an active reward state.

When we are choosing to be challenged, we are in the "Gold" zone: when the mental/emotional rewards far outweigh the discomforts; and the discomforts are enough to trigger the release of our endorphins/natural pain relievers, resulting in a general sense of feeling awesome.

Since we chose our challenges, our nervous systems are more likely to interpret that we are "safe;" and not perceive the pressures that we have chosen to interact with as "threats."

"Yellow" is the "pay attention because something needs to change," zone.

We may perceive this state as our nervous systems giving us the "yellow light," and warning us to pay attention, because change is needed.

This zone is a good opportunity to pause and observe our environments; and determine if our safety is threatened, how so, and follow-up with the according action.

"Orange" is a state of emergency.

In the "Orange" zone, our nervous systems are engaging to protect us from perceived threats; available resources are redirected to our protective response systems, from our immune systems--thus increasing our susceptibility to stress.

We begin looking for problems...and find problems (whether or not they are the source of distress); which validate our nervous systems' impressions that we are, indeed, surrounded by threats.

"Red" is full on "fight/flight."

We don't stay in this state for long: we either address the threat and process the associated emotions; or we don't--and we stay stuck in a state of emergency.

***"Brown" is the state we are in when our vessels/
bodies require maintenance/assistance.***

When we are mired in a state of emergency, we start to feel like poo. Our spaceships are rusty.

We need to ground our vessels; it is too difficult to provide maintenance to a spaceship that is in orbit...it has to come down to Earth, especially if assistance is required.

Body mechanics, such as massage therapists, may be able to return our vessels to the "Blue-Green" state; and back into orbit, where we may engage with other friendly spaceships, and explore our Universe together.

Perhaps we need to ground ourselves with some "Blue exercises," such as conscious breathing or restorative yoga, before our vessels may return to sharing space.

"Orange" and "Red" aren't "bad" states; they are protective states.

Protective states are engaged when our nervous systems register "too much" pressure, which may result from either positive/negative experiences.

Happiness can be stressful, too; especially when it triggers intense emotions.

**Be aware: respect limits; & gently expand
against boundaries. Then, together, may we
grow!**

About the Author



Margarita Navarrete-Hutchinson, LMT, LMTI has been practicing massage therapy, in the State of Texas, since 2003.

In 2005 she began practicing "flow arts," as a hula-hooper, then fire dancer; exploring movement with large hoops; poi; staff; hand torches; double staves; and fire fans.

After rehabilitating her injured shoulder, in 2016, with the assistance of mini-hoops, she recognized the efficacy of these simple, inexpensive tools, for self-care; and made hoops for all of her private massage clients.

As 2017 began, she was giving hoops away to strangers in the street; at the grocery store; at the airport; even when visiting other states and out of the country.

Folks asked for guidance; she created TheHoopment.us as a way to provide simple instructions for folks to practice with.

By 2018 she had decided to take Hoopment to the next level, and properly teach it: as a Licensed Massage Therapy Instructor, and Continuing Education Provider.

To learn more about Hoopment classes & workshops, provided by Margarita, please visit TeachingFamilyMassage.com & TheHoopment.us.

Learn more about the Pressure Rainbow at ThePressureRainbow.com

Learn more about Hoopment at TheHoopment.us

Learn more about massage and our nervous systems, from the author's perspective, at TeachingFamilyMassage.com

Hoopment is the practice of allowing smaller diameter hoops to guide our bodies through a circular range of motion.

As the hoops guide us through their spatial planes, we gently stretch our fascia, warm our interstitial fluids, and lubricate our joints; while we strengthen our core and stabilizer muscles, to help better support fluid motion and healthy body mechanics.

Hoopment may be practiced in most places; most any time; by most any age/body. It can be practiced standing; seated; laying down; walking; on land or in water...by anyone with a mobile upper body limb.

Aside from its physical benefits, Hoopment serves as a moving meditation; that helps to increase mindfulness, while engaging the "flow state."