

Water Blessing 2020



*Instructions for a Continuum Practice
PDF version.*

Water Blessing Continuum Exploration A Personal Movement Practice

Water Blessing has five parts that flow into each other as a whole. These five parts make up one layer or cycle. Each layer or cycle can be repeated as long as your practice time allows.

If you need assistance with understanding any of the concepts of Continuum, or how to do the sounds, please contact Elaine at info@watermark-arts.org, or a Continuum Teachers Association member near you at www.continuumteachers.com.

Part 1 – Vertical Gesture with O sound

- **Wait for an impulse to raise one, or both arms overhead. Gently curl your fingers in; bring your arm down the central axis or mid-line of your body, while sounding O's.**

This gesture encourages presence in the moment and establishes a bodily connection from sky to earth. The gesture also acknowledges the mid-line of the body – a place of central organization from which so many bodily systems emerge.

- **Sound O's** as you make this gesture, repeating the sound as many times as you need. To make the Continuum O sound: breath in with your mouth closed, shape your throat and mouth into an O shape and let the sound of O ride your exhalation. To encourage your sound to penetrate your being, use a lower tone and encourage the sound vibration inward.
- Repeat this sound and gesture until you feel present in yourself. Let the gesture emerge each time in a unique and individual way.

Part 2 – Horizontal Gesture with E sound

- **Place both hands anywhere along the mid-line of your body - perhaps at your heart, belly or eyes - open your arms, each to their own side while sounding E's.**

The horizontal gesture establishes a connection to the environment. This gesture also acknowledges the growth of body-wide systems from the mid-line outward. This branching pattern is mirrored in nature.

- **Sound E's** as you make this gesture: breath in with your mouth closed, shape your mouth and throat into an E shape and sound as your exhale. To encourage the inherent lateralization of the E sound, draw the corners of your mouth outwards as you exhale. Tone in the middle to lower range.
- Experiment with gesturing from various locations of the mid-line to evoke different experiences. Let yourself be drawn to an area to begin each horizontal gesture.
- Repeat this sound and gesture until you feel connected to the world around you.

Part 3 – Water Gestures, with Hah breath

- **Whether you are in contact with an actual or imaginary source of water, use your hands to cup water and anoint yourself with it. Occasionally, sound Hah breath as you exhale.**

These gestures with water give an opportunity to tap into the refreshing, cleansing, revitalizing qualities of water. Repeat over and over, varying the places your hands contact your body, varying your position and relationship to gravity as you respond to your contact with water, a source of creation and a source of solutions. What does this experience reveal to you?

- From time to time, accompany your response to the water gestures with the **Hah breath**. The HAH breath is done by inhaling with the mouth closed, then exhaling your breath with the shape and breath sound of Hah – rather than a vocalized sound. The H shape relaxes the tongue which flows into the ah shape which releases the jaw.

Part 4 – Becoming water, with Humming

- **Move in wave like motions: undulate, arc, spiral and curve. The steady vibration of the Hum can awaken fluid movement response. Breathing is a wave motion, ride the expansion of your inhalation and the dissolving of your exhalation into fluid movement.**

As the founder of Continuum Emilie Conrad was fond of saying, ***“If you want to know about something, you become like it.”*** (From Elaine Colandrea’s personal workshop notes.)

- Move in slow motion so you can follow your own internal impulses and sense the response throughout your being. Encourage one movement to flow into another. Pause or suspend the movement if you become disconnected from what you are doing, or find yourself moving in familiar or known patterns. As you suspend your externally visible

movement, pay attention and be guided from deeper movement impulses you might not have noticed before.

Moving like water is a way to enter into an unknown space of open inquiry. *What qualities are you aware of as you move? How is your body changing? What ideas, senses, feelings are emerging as you become like water?* Do not rush to make meaning, but immerse yourself in the direct experience.

- To get under the thinking, cognitive brain, let your humming sound be tuneless. Breathe in through your nose and then hum as you exhale. The vibration of the humming transmits throughout the whole of you, though you may notice the felt sense of the hum more in some areas. Exhalations become lengthened with each of the sounds and breaths of this exploration, which can lead to greater relaxation and a sense of settling.

Part 5 – Blessing water, with an offering

- Whether the water is tangible or imagined, make an offering as the final gesture of the *Water Blessing*. Honor water by placing flowers, petals or leaves in the source.

Repeat another cycle or layer as many times as you wish

General Notes:

- The practice of “open attention” begins and ends each cycle. Take time to quietly notice your inner landscape – your breathing and sensations, your sense of your whole being.
- This exploration can be done standing, seated or supine.
- Varying relationship to gravity is encouraged – change level and direction.
- Slow motion is encouraged so every nuance of movement can be felt from within, and so every movement impulse is given time and space to reveal itself.
- Multiple layers, or cycles, of the exploration are encouraged.

With gratitude to Jean-Claude van Itallie of Shantigar Foundation, for inspiring the creation of the Continuum version of his Horizontal and Vertical gestures.

For an example of a *Water Blessing* please see the first inaugural *Water Blessing* performed at the Sanctuary at Omega Institute, Rhinebeck, New York as part of The Somatic Movement Summit, The Creativity of Health 2019. [Water Blessing at the Sanctuary 2019.](#)

For the Water Blessing Instructional video please visit [Water Blessing Instructional Video.](#)