

Editorial

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Rosen Method International Journal

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In this Issue of the RMIJ

This issue, Volume 6, Issue 1, Spring 2013, contains two articles, both written by Rosen professionals from Sweden: Lillian Lavesson, a Rosen bodywork practitioner, and Mikael Kindborg, a Rosen movement teacher. The articles were based on presentations that each of them made during the Rosen Method Global Congress held in Sweden in the summer of 2012. After the Congress, which I attended, I sent emails to many of the presenters. Lillian and Mikael both accepted my invitation and agreed to embark on the process of writing, editing, and responding to editorial and reviewers' comments.

This issue of the RMIJ is unique and special in a number of ways. First of all, Lillian's article appears here in both Swedish and English. Although publishing articles in languages other than English has been an option since the inception of the RMIJ, this is the very first issue in which we were able to make this happen. Readers from Scandinavia will have an opportunity to read the work in one of their native languages, which makes it more accessible to both mind and body.

The second unique aspect of this issue of the journal is that Mikael's article is the very first one in this journal on the topic of Rosen Movement. As editor, I am happy that this issue puts Rosen Movement on the map of the Rosen Journal. I know that there are other people who want to write about Rosen Movement and I hope and expect that they will submit articles in the future.

Both Lillian's and Mikael's articles are unique in and of themselves. They both bring fresh and novel approaches to thinking about and doing Rosen Bodywork and Movement. Both articles challenge our view of the possibilities for Rosen work, and raise important questions about how we work. I invite all readers to submit commentaries on these articles, which would appear in the Fall issue of this journal. If you would like to comment on either of these articles – to agree, disagree, or discuss – please submit your commentary to fogel.alan@gmail.com by October 31, 2013. Commentaries should be in the form of a WORD document and no more than two pages in length. Please include your name, email address, and your level of certification within the Rosen community. Authors will be given an opportunity to write a response to any and all commentaries.

A Pilot Study of Rosen Practitioners' Experiences Receiving a Modified Form of Rosen Method Bodywork in a Garden Setting. Lillian Lavesson's article presents a preliminary research study in which she investigated the effects of modifications to the usual form of Rosen Method Bodywork (RMB). The clients in her study, all of whom were RMB practitioners, commented upon the similarities and differences between the modified session they received from Lillian and a normal RMB session that they scheduled with a practitioner of their own choosing.

What were the modifications? Lillian works in a rehabilitation hospital as a RMB practitioner. In order to

fit into the treatment schedules and routines of the hospital, Lillian created RMB sessions in which (1) to fit typical treatment plans, the client was asked “What do you want me to do today?” which became the starting place, after which the session proceeded as in a normal RMB session; (2) the session lasted only 30 minutes; (3) the client left their clothes on and was covered with a blanket; and (4) the sessions were done in a small building adjacent to a garden where the clients could stroll or sit following the sessions.

Lillian used RMB practitioners as the clients in her study because they are informed about the nature of Rosen work. Strategically, from a research perspective, this is a good choice for a first study on this topic. These informed practitioners noticed differences in how the modified and normal session was experienced, but on the whole, they felt that both types of sessions reached similar places of holding and tension.

What does this study mean for RMB standards of practice? Is it appropriate to modify how we do our work in ways that suit our, or our clients, needs or preferences? These are important questions, especially now that the Rosen Institute is developing code of ethics and scope of practice documents. Can these modified sessions still be classified as RMB and not something else?

Lillian’s study cannot answer these questions but it does raise the issues for us to examine and discuss. It seems to me very important that Lillian did not simply modify sessions and leave it at that. She actually did a detailed investigation to find out if and how the modified sessions were different and she plans to continue her studies along these lines. If research shows that similar modifications of RMB are experienced in ways that feel like a normal Rosen session, then we have a more solid basis on which, as a discipline, we could accept such modifications. The acceptance of such modifications could potentially lead to an expansion of the ways RMB is used and applied.

Aside from the clothing and the opening question, “What do you want to do today,” Lillian’s sessions looked and felt a lot like a normal RMB session. Lillian did not add what are clearly non-Rosen practices such as psychotherapy, physical therapy, energy work, or massage. Her modifications seem to fall within the scope of practice and standard approaches used in RMB and did not include any other modalities of practice.

Consider the case of the 30-minute chair massage that, in many countries, is offered in shopping malls, grocery stores, and outdoor fairs and markets. Almost everyone in the massage community agrees that chair massage is, in fact, a form of massage even though the sessions are only 30 minutes and done seated rather than lying on a table. Therapists use the same strokes, have the same intention, and use the same standards of practice as for normal massage.

Chair massage has done a great deal to promote normal forms of massage to the wider community. Could RMB be done sitting up, for 30 minutes with clothes on, in a public space, like chair massage? This seems a topic worthy of investigation and a possible pathway to delivering the work to people in ways that they can appreciate and understand it. Even without a more public form of RMB, Lillian’s modifications seem very suitable to integrating RMB into normal health care in hospitals and clinic settings. This alone would be of enormous benefit to integrating Rosen work into these settings, both for the professional opportunities for Rosen practitioners and for the patients whose healing process would be greatly enhanced by their exposure to RMB.

It is also important to remember that Lillian’s study is only a preliminary investigation. It is not conclusive evidence because her study has limitations, which she clearly describes in her article. There were only a

small number of clients, the clients were not the usual population from the rehabilitation hospital, and multiple factors were changed including session length, clothes on, an initial question, and a garden setting. We don't know which of these factors was more or less important, or whether the same effects would occur if only one factor was changed rather than all of them.

Finally, RMB training, as described by Lillian in her article, would continue to take the same form as in the past regardless of how the work may come to be applied in clinical settings. This article, however, is an excellent example of how research can begin to inform us about ways to expand our own discipline without losing what is unique and special about RMB. I do encourage readers to submit commentaries about these important issues.

Rosen Movements and Words. Mikael Kindborg, a Rosen Movement (RM) teacher, gives us a great deal of insight about the way words are used in the teaching of RM. Because this was the first article in the journal on RM, and I, as editor, am not trained in RM, I asked three – instead of the usual two -- different reviewers to read this article and give comments to Mikael. The reviewers I chose were all long-term movement teachers: one was a movement training teacher, and the other two are in a program to become a movement training teacher. So, a lot of expertise in RM went into the writing, review, and editing of this article.

As a reminder, the Rosen Journal has a blind peer review process. This means that reviewers do not know the identity of the author until the article is published. The author, in addition, does not know the identity of the reviewers.

For previous issues of this journal, reviewers often comment to me – in a Rosen sort of way -- about how the article they read affects them. All three reviewers for Mikael's work commented on different aspects of the article and made worthwhile suggestions for clarification and continuity. In this particular case, however, all three of these highly trained reviewers made one very similar comment, that Mikael's article made them much more aware of how they used their words when teaching movement. It is remarkable that a work of writing about something as dynamic as RM can deepen the awareness of those who are professional movement teachers. Most likely, it would have the same effect on students in training to become movement teachers.

Aside from being the first article in this journal on RM, Mikael has written this article in a way that breaks new ground in teaching us how to write about RM with clarity and depth, and in a way that preserves and enhances the flow and beauty, and the *aliveness*, of a movement class.

Speaking as a RM *aficionado* and not as a RM professional, I never imagined how detailed and complex, how dynamic and important, the words are to RM. As someone who attends many movement classes, I feel I now have a clearer sense of why some things work and some things don't work for me as a student. I can really feel in my body how the timing and content of a teacher's words make a huge difference to my own experience in the class.

Mikael, much like Lillian, gathered data from his own observations of the many movement classes he has attended. He also noticed what happens to his own students when he was teaching. He became a careful observer of the communication process between teacher and students, which is what led him to his discoveries about when words work well, and when words get in the way of students' experience.

Of course, RM is more than the words. There is the choreography, the social interaction, the different phases of the class, and the choice of music, all of which go into the mix and make the class come alive and reach people. Mikael's example of writing about the words, and his reference to several different theories of communication that capture the dynamic aliveness of a movement class, gives insight about how to write about and better understand all the components of a RM class. It helps me to appreciate Marion's genius and why she created a whole discipline of bodywork and movement that so many of us are still trying to feel, grasp, use, explain, and understand.

Big changes are coming for the RMIJ

Beginning with the Fall issue of 2013, the Rosen Method International Journal will be under new leadership. I will remain as editor-in-chief but there will be a new editorial board and a new team-based editorial process. Members of the new editorial board, to be introduced in the next issue of the journal and on the journal website, are Helmi Boese (Germany), Carol Cober (Maryland, USA), Alan Fogel (Utah, USA), Riitta Hoffrén-Larsson (Sweden), Lillian Lavesson (Sweden), Jane Pittsinger (California, USA), Susanna Smart (Ohio, USA) and Jeanie Williams (New Mexico, USA).

In the past, our editorial policy has been to encourage Rosen professionals to write articles for the journal. In the future, this will continue. In addition, the new editorial board will also be generating article ideas and creating teams of board members working together with Rosen professionals to create a larger knowledge base about Rosen practice and its applications. We will also be creating materials for Rosen professionals to use in gathering information about their clients, movement classes, and teaching experiences. These include guidelines for generating case information, free questionnaires, and the like, and reaching out to Rosen professionals globally to encourage dialogue and more effective written communications about our work.

The copyright for the Rosen Method International Journal is held by the Rosen Institute. As the Rosen Institute moves forward and collects annual dues from the Rosen community, we will be able to have the Rosen Journal hosted on the Rosen Institute web site and consolidate administrative costs involved with hosting this free, open access journal with the goal to maintain it as a free resource to everyone inside and outside of the Rosen community.

Although supported by the Rosen Institute, the RMIJ has been an independent editorial voice for Rosen professionals and we will consider for review and possible publication, any article about Rosen Method so long as it meets the requirements for the journal given on the web site. The new editorial board will be creating a journal mission and charter statement that includes details about editorial independence and the article review process. We will also be seeking input from the Rosen Institute Board and the wider Rosen community as we move toward the next level of professionalization of this journal.

Please write for the Rosen Journal

Submissions for articles, commentaries, and book reviews for the next issue of this journal are due no later than October 31, 2013. I encourage you to contact me at fogel.alan@gmail.com soon if you have an idea for an article or book review so that I, with the help of the new editorial board, can help you prepare it for submission. A complete listing of guidelines for preparing your articles for submission can be found on the journal web site at www.rosenjournal.org.