The First Year and the Rest of Your Life

Movement, Development, and Psychotherapeutic Change

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Contents

Chapter 3

Six Fundamental Movements

INTRODUCTION

Using a sequence of yielding, pushing, reaching, grasping, pulling, and releasing movements, a baby communicates what he wants and needs from his parents and expresses how he reacts to what his parents want and need from him. Through these macro- and micromovement fundamentals, baby and parents coconstruct and convey desires, feelings, and intentions. From the first adjustments of a baby yielding and pushing while on his belly in the first weeks of life to aid his digestion to the greater complexity of the older infant walking toward a parent to receive comfort, these movements become part of the baby's efforts to self-regulate and regulate interpersonal relationships. They are essential to character development in that they become the preferred and routine ways we dynamically adjust, making them simultaneously psychological and physical by nature.

Imagine, for example, a 4-month-old baby yielding in the arms of her father and ready to nurse from a bottle. Inadvertently, her father does not curl his baby inward enough so that she stays close to his chest, nor does he hold her firmly enough so that the baby senses the stability necessary for fluid yielding to emerge. To find and make stability for herself, the baby must tighten the muscles of her neck, abdomen, and buttocks, creating a "false floor" as her gripped muscles attempt to do the work of securing her. With such tension, the yielding experience is so compromised that the pushing of buttock bones against the father's arms does not have sufficient leverage to emerge clearly. Without the background clarity of pushing, the reaching, grasping, and pulling of the mouth toward and onto the nipple now find less support, making it difficult for the action sequence to complete itself. The coordination of fluid sucking actions and the affective connection between parent and baby, part and parcel of the emerging movement, is affected. How does the baby now gaze up at the parent, reaching and grasping onto him with her eyes and hands, when she is struggling to make herself comfortable?

In this chapter, we describe the sequence of basic movements that emerge in the first year and are essential in all human interactions throughout life. Further, we demonstrate how our understanding of their ongoing role in forming relationships can be used to recognize and treat interactive difficulties that arise in infancy. The fundamental movements—*yielding*, *pushing*, *reaching*, *grasping*, *pulling*, and *releasing*—are integral aspects of experience.[1] That is, they enable and support the varied ways in which we connect with ourselves and within our world. Although fundamental movements are explicated here in a linear fashion for the sake of clarity, in experience one category of movement does not occur in isolation from the others. Rather, the movements are interdependent, one interpenetrating or participating with others, and together provide the basics necessary for action.

Fundamental movements always arise in relation to the surrounding environment and, particularly in the first year, in relation to the parents. In other words, when a fundamental movement pattern emerges, it is a function of relationship and cannot be separated out as if the movement were *of* the baby or *of* the environment. That is, fundamental movements are a dynamic part of the whole of relationship. Interactive by nature, these movements develop as the baby regularly adjusts to the parents and the parents adjust to the baby. When certain movement patterns are no longer useful in the changing relational field, others take their place. Sucking is no longer the dominant mode of eating when teeth are there to present another alternative. And, when it becomes possible for the baby to stand and walk toward another, crawling becomes less preferable.

But as development progresses, the earlier movement patterns do not disappear. Instead, they become part of increasingly complex patterns as babies, children, adolescents, and adults continually organize and reorganize their actions and reactions within the changing environment (Frank, 2001, 2004, 2005). That is, every fundamental movement pattern contains both the roots of the prior movement experience and the seeds for the next to develop. For example, the basic coordination of lips, tongue, and jaw that enable reaching toward the nipple with the mouth will be present and develop further in the actions of forming words as well as in more complex speech patterns. All the earlier fundamental movements employed for the baby to sit on his own, hands free to manipulate a toy or play with a parent, will form the underlying coordination necessary for crawling to emerge, which then underlies and supports standing, toddling, and walking. Later in development, these movements are essential for mastering

[1] These movement categories are explained in detail in this chapter. Two movement sequences—yield/push, reach/pull—were recognized and placed within the larger developmental motor system delineated by Bonnie Bainbridge-Cohen (1993). Ruella Frank added grasp and release to this system and augmented these "basic neurological patterns" to include their psychological attributes and to show how they participate in the infant's developing system of gestures (Frank, 2001, 2004, 2005).

the more complex actions of jumping, running, playing sports, and so on. It is through these evolving movements that babies learn about themselves and their world. All other learning emerges as an outgrowth or elaboration of these early organizing experiences.

Further complexity arises because the fundamental movements are also a crucial part of the infant's first nonverbal language. Although a baby has a number of cries and various sounds to tell his parents what he needs, the baby also uses yielding, pushing, reaching, grasping, pulling, and releasing movements to define and communicate needs, interests, and spatial boundaries and to express curiosity, relate to objects (human and otherwise), move about independently, and give voice to feelings. These basic movements are expressed and experienced on both physical and vocal levels as it is movement that produces and supports the emergence of sound. For example, the 6-month-old girl signals her desire to be picked up as she reaches out with her eyes, mouth, and arms to her father while "pushing against" him with her voice, saying "Ah-Ah-Ah." In response, the father looks toward her and says, "Ohhhh-kaaay," with a vocal quality that yields to his daughter's request as he reaches down, pulls his baby onto his lap, grasps and holds her close, and coos lovingly. In this case, physical and vocal signals are clearly sent and well received.

Every healthy baby develops and uses these basic movements, but babies do not execute them in the same way or at the same developmental moment. In fact, there are as many different variations of fundamental movements as there are diverse relational fields. Within each distinct relational field, every baby organizes a personal movement vocabulary—individual variations of the fundamental movements—that includes movements of all parts of the body: head and tailbone, arms and hands, legs and feet. With this personal movement vocabulary, the baby expresses himself and negotiates others' responses to that expression.

Parents' actions become entwined with their baby's actions such that babies and parents conduct their continual nonverbal dialogue—a language of bodies—as each one influences and is influenced by the other. That is, as the movement of one person modulates those of the other, movement patterns emerge within the relationship that are mutual, reciprocal, and cocreated. The process of this coregulation of movement in the crucial first year means that *how* movement emerges and is engaged has far-reaching consequences for every aspect of life. The optimal development of these fundamental movements in relationship with parents is key to fostering the full range of movements that support the baby's flexibility and creativity in all realms of development. This is expressed not only in expanding physical exploration but also in increasingly complex communication and sensorimotor thinking.

Parents express their own intentions, attitudes, perceptions, and feelings through their own movements, and all of these dimensions of experience are directly relayed to their baby through this moving dialogue. This means

that the way parents respond to and shape their baby's efforts at movement not only influences the development of each fundamental pattern but also affects the emotional and cognitive dimensions of experience. For example, parents' physical support for a baby's motor development, along with their gentle encouragement, has an impact on a baby's walking as a motor activity. But in addition, the parents' physical and emotional support also have an immediate and long-term impact on other dimensions that are part of the experience of walking and that we often capture in metaphors such as "standing on my own two feet," "putting my foot down," "standing tall," and so on. While most parents want to believe that they support their babies in both dimensions, they are not necessarily able to see how their own emotional and physical expressivity become intricately entwined with their baby's and, in practice, how various elements of their actions sometimes can get in the way of just what they wish to support. For example, a 9-month-old baby boy pulls himself to standing and is delighted with his newly accomplished mastery over gravity. His parents, believing that early standing signifies an important and "special" achievement, begin encouraging him to walk before he has mastered standing. Here, the problem is that the parents have taken over the baby's initiative and are now pushing their own agenda in their eagerness to be supportive.

Identifying how fundamental movements are emerging allows psychotherapists and parents to see the complexity and intricacy of movement transactions that both support and interfere with a baby's needs. When psychotherapists observe how parents relate to the baby's uses of their fundamental movements, they see essentials of the family's psychological world, including when and how particular interactive patterns serve the ongoing dialogue to enrich the parent-and-baby relationship and expand exploration and when and how patterns develop that stifle communication and growth. Because this dialogue is based on movements that contribute to a sequence of actions at the same time a baby is developing and using these fundamentals as the basis for sensorimotor learning, she is also forming the basic processes and transactions of interactivity—what we call the *dynamics of engaging*. These are the motoric expressions that shape our interactions, when a "push comes to shove," that is, when the baby is not only pushing against the parent to make more space for herself but also is expressing annoyance at the same time. In "hugging," for example, we can see that on one level it is an action involving the smaller movements of reaching for, grasping onto, and pulling another close. On another level, hugging involves emotion and conveys a range of nuanced meanings that includes both parents' and babies' abilities and readiness to embrace or withhold. In the hugging example, the meaning of the movement is cocreated through a coordination of fundamental movements organized in relation to another—and it is this vocabulary that grows with amazing rapidity accompanied by a syntax that is ever more complicated.

Although the fundamental movements themselves appear basic and straightforward, it can be difficult for parents to observe and understand the complexity in how an infant uses them. As our case studies at the chapter's end illustrate in detail, if parents do not understand the complex role these movements play in their baby's self-expression, relational difficulties can ensue.

SIX FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENTS AND THEIR ROLE IN DEVELOPING EXPERIENCE

Yield

Gravity draws the baby's body toward the surface of the earth. When the newborn lies belly down, he *yields to* the earth as the weight of his body is released to gravity. The baby lies on various surfaces: a mattress, the floor, and of course, the parent's body. Each surface meets and differently resists the weight of the baby's body in opposition to the downward force of gravity. The baby experiences a heightened pressure on those parts of the body that are in touch with a surface, so the muscles of each dimension of the body (front, back, and sides) are stimulated when the baby rests that part against a supporting surface. This slight increase in pressure leads to a slight countervailing muscular tone that gives the baby a *sensation of weight*, which flows from center (the spine) to periphery (head, tailbone, arms, and legs). Experiencing weight allows the baby to orient in space.

In addition, moving from one position to another allows the baby to differentiate the front of his body from the back and from each side. Yielding in each position not only brings with it a different postural organization with its varied sensations but also generates a *sense of volume*, or fullness of being, for the baby. With each postural shift, a different perception of, and therefore relationship to, the environment emerges. Yielding forms the ground on which the baby rests and organizes *how* the baby rests. For yielding to emerge fluidly, the parent–child relationship must be secure enough that the baby can sense the parent's underlying support, which allows him to yield his weight *to* that support. Yielding provides the stable background from which all other movements up and away from the earth emerge.

Acts of yielding are the basis for experiences of receptivity at every level of functioning for both the baby and the adult. In a yielding moment, we are giving ourselves over to the other (person or object) and simultaneously receiving support and stability and a basic sense of orientation. The experience of yielding is not simple passivity (or the state of "no resistance"); rather, the degree and way of yielding are dependent on that to which we adjust. To sit in an easy chair is one thing, to lie on a floor is quite another.

To yield with someone receptive and inclusive is different from yielding with someone who is not. Thus, we learn something important about ourselves and ourselves in relation to others through our continual process of adjusting. The stability that the baby experiences, in the absence of neurological impairment, then forms the platform on and from which the baby can discover and make support in a variety of relationships throughout his life.

Push

Each time a 2-week-old baby squirms to adjust to internal or external tensions, there is a subtle and ongoing process of *pushing against*. In yielding, the environment provides stability; in pushing, the environment provides leverage, including the leverage needed to further investigate the environment, thus enhancing perception. For example, one part of the baby's body pushes against a surface to stabilize, enabling another part to be free to mobilize. This is most obvious when a 3- to 4-month-old pushes his hands downward to lift his head and upper torso up and away from the underlying support.

As the baby pushes, the experience of weight condenses at the origin of the push, whether at head or tailbone, arms and hands, or legs and feet, as the act of pushing compresses tissues of the body. Mass gathers at these places and forms an *experience of density*, which then flows in particular channels through the body. For example, pushing against the floor with forearms and hands creates condensation of mass and energetic flow that moves from the hands and arms, through to the body's center (spinal column), then outward through the legs and feet. Sensing one's mass, or experiencing density and energetic flow, brings about an experience of *cohesion* and *integration* as the body's periphery is experienced in relation to its center. The repeated experience of cohesion and integration in turn fosters movements that are clear and well coordinated. When the baby cannot easily push, movements appear as clumsy and ungrounded. The experiences of pushing, then, have consequences for a baby's mobility. By 3 to 4 months old, pushing his hands downward moves the baby out of a prone, horizontal position to one in which the upper body is more upright and vertical. This is a developmental step to a new perspective. Later in development, pushing against while in a prone position enables the baby to shift his weight from one side of the body to another, which becomes an important aspect of locomotion.

The earliest development of pushing and its vicissitudes not only are important to all later movement but also are crucial to the baby's developing interpersonal relationships. Babies are always moving in relation to whatever stimulates them. A baby pushes against a surface to get a better look at something or someone or to hear where an interesting sound is coming from, or even to follow an interesting odor. For instance, the baby can set a body boundary as he or she pushes hands against a parent to gain

greater distance, or the baby can say "no" by pushing away a spoonful of applesauce. We cannot push without something to push against. As a baby pushes against, she is simultaneously able to experience *separating from while including the other.* In essence, pushing is a primary way of gaining information about the contours of the world of objects and people and the boundaries of the baby's body: "Here you are, and here am I." As the baby is adjusting to the surface tensions of that which she pushes against, in some fashion, the surface also adjusts to the baby and is sensed as "pushing back." There is adjustment on both sides of the boundary since even a wood floor has a certain amount of bounce to it. And accordingly, the way the baby adjusts to the "other" varies considerably—a wood floor is altogether less flexible than the body of either parent.

Since the baby is continuously establishing procedural memories of whole interactions, *how* she pushes herself upward will anticipate the parent's usual body tone and emotional tone through generalized memory processes of how they have already moved together. The anticipation of parental response often suffuses the baby's routine movement repertoire in other situations or with other people besides her parents so that her actions show a generalized anticipation of, for example, cheerful enlivening or saddened dampening. In this process, what is being perceived comes to affect the movement itself as particular emotional colorations develop with the whole experience. For example, the movements of a baby who pushes herself up to meet the eyes of a smiling receptive parent will appear quite different from those of a baby who pushes up to meet a depressed and unresponsive parent. In the first experience, the parent has provided a solid enough response against which the baby can push—"I am here *with* you." On the other hand, the depressed, unresponsive parent fails to give the baby the sense of pushing back, so the baby does not appear as sure and energetic as she might be meeting a parent eager to greet her.

Whereas how one *yields with* allows one to join another, how one *pushes against* allows one to differentiate from another. Experienced as an almost simultaneous shuttling back and forth between one and another, yield/push and push/yield are essential to and necessary for interpersonal meeting throughout the life span.

Reach

The earliest reaches of the baby involve the face and are seen as the baby searches actively with his nose and mouth for the breast or bottle. This first reaching with nose and mouth is rapidly followed by a baby reaching with her eyes and hands toward faces of her parents and toward a variety of objects that are to be mouthed and chewed. A similar reaching movement can often be observed as the baby's fingers subtly open and begin a reach, as if to accompany the movement of his reaching mouth. Carving a pathway through

space, reaching with his mouth toward the nipple, is the baby's contribution to the accomplishment of a basic and necessary task: In the reaching lies the baby's search for pleasure, comfort, and nourishment. This movement is the live embodiment of wanting, needing, desiring, and longing.

Thus, how parents meet a baby's reach is clearly important in the growth of the baby's emotional and physical well-being. Both baby and adult reach in the hope of finding, touching, meeting, and discovering. When the dyad is functioning optimally, the baby's reaching gestures—"I want this" or "I want you"—and the parents' intercessions and responses organize the elaboration of a personal movement vocabulary and syntax of desire in action. A parent who consistently holds his baby in a way that facilitates easy reaching for the bottle or a parent whose holding action requires the baby to strain are only two of many possible variations with far-reaching consequences.

We call the reach space around the body, and the imaginary boundary of it, the *kinesphere* (Bartenieff & Lewis, 1980). The body has three dimensions, which are experienced by extending the limbs to the farthest reaches of its length, width, and depth of the body while in an upright position. Exploring her reach space or kinesphere through reaching enhances the baby's sense of the three-dimensional space of and surrounding her body. With every reach of the eyes, nose, mouth, and limbs, a baby expands through space and takes herself away from center, at a risk to equilibrium. Moving farther into the environment, the baby is able to explore her world and grasp hold of it.

In the earliest weeks and months, the responsive parent offsets the risk of reaching beyond center by adjusting her body to the baby's shifts until, with experience and growing strength, the baby is able to adjust his body to recover balance. The baby's reaching movements are shaped in relation to an object, very often the parent, that can offer assistance. In other words, that which is reached for (the stimulus) shapes the reach (the response). For reaching to emerge with fluidity and grace, the longed-for object, in the end, must be available. Here again, what is real for the baby is also true for the adult.

Grasp

Just as the first reaching is with the mouth toward the nipple, the first grasping occurs at birth as the baby reaches out and takes firm hold of the nipple with her mouth. The baby's earliest grasping movements of the mouth also are echoed in subtle grasping-like movements of fingers and toes. Only slightly later can the baby more fully reach and grasp with her

hands.[2] Grasping movements, like others, grow more complex with development and come to include grasping onto a loved one with both arms. Again, parents play a part in the baby's movement repertoire, either facilitating or discouraging the baby's grasp with their responses.

While grasping onto and holding an object (person or thing) with their mouths and hands, babies develop an understanding of the three dimensions of these objects and their weight and textures and learn the possibilities for action that each object offers. When a baby does grasp an object, what was only seen now can be explored through many senses and becomes more precisely known. This exploration is true for the eyes as well as they reach out and "touch" objects. In other words, a baby's explorations with mouth, hands, and eyes are mutually reinforcing and integrative.

Grasping emerges from and coordinates with reaching. Whereas reaching brings with it the risk of moving to the edge of and beyond one's kinesphere, extending into what is not yet known, grasping can reestablish stability by creating balance through holding onto what is grasped. Parental support begins with firmly *being there*, which reestablishes the baby's stability and comes to include an understanding of the greater meaning that underlies the baby's reach and grasp.

What was called out for in the expression of reaching—the wanting—is satisfied in the action of grasping. Simply said, in grasping, we sense in a more immediate way what we have reached for. This relationship is expressed in metaphors about grasping a situation or grasping a difficult idea. Further, the adult's metaphor holds a background of prior experiences of grasping and the assistance or interference he has routinely encountered. In such cases, we can see in his present movement patterns the results of early interactive patterns that fostered or interfered with the security of his present capacity to grasp. These patterns could be summarized by the phrase "getting a grip." Clearly, what is metaphor for the adult in some situations is immediate and concrete for the baby in all situations.

Pull

Pulling movements are also available from birth in nursing actions. Having reached for and grasped onto the nipple, the baby uses the suction of her mouth to pull the nipple into her mouth. In the process, the baby's body reorganizes and lengthens in support. The nipple provides enough resistance that the baby can feel her own body, primarily her mouth, as well as the nipple and the milk that flows from it and into her. Thus, this first

[2] Due to the Palmer reaction, an action pattern that organizes in the womb, the baby is ready at birth to grasp his hands around an offered finger, but this is distinct from a reach and grasp with the hands that is far more deliberate.

experience of pulling entails an act of drawing what is other toward the baby and incorporating it.

In further elaboration, the 3-month-old baby uses his hands to grasp and pull objects into his mouth with great enthusiasm. In these pulling experiences, the baby draws something toward himself, discovering what the object (person or thing) has to offer him. Through this process, the baby can differentiate qualities of attraction, resistance, and degree of flexibility in response to his actions.

As the baby pulls the nipple into his mouth, he simultaneously pulls the mother into his gaze. Later in development, he pulls on the mother's hands for support as he pushes his feet down to stand up. The coaction that organizes here, the distinctness of one and another sensed through pulling, contributes to the growing clarity of experiencing "me with you." This is crucial to the ongoing development of self because, just as with all the other fundamental movements, these kinds of interactions serve as the basis for healthy autonomy: the capacity to differentiate from another as well as the capacity to relinquish separateness and merge. In adult life, we frequently say, "I feel myself pulled toward you," or "It's hard for me to pull away from you." These expressions are not just metaphors—they express the measure to which we draw on one another. In reaching, grasping, and pulling, both babies and adults are involved in a complex experience of "me" and "you" and in discovering the degree to which me and you can become "we."

Release

Pulling movements begin another action, and when it is complete, release can follow. In the neonate's behavioral repertoire, the action of releasing an object can be accomplished only passively. For example, releasing the nipple after nursing is a consequence of the baby's entire body yielding in relaxation. In other words, it is only when the baby yields with another (object or person) that the object held—in this case the nipple—can be given up.

During this early period in development, the baby will similarly keep a steady gaze on whatever becomes most fascinating, whether a dark ceiling fan that moves against a white background or a bright ray of sunshine on a gray wall. The baby's attention often appears "captured" in this action. The release of an evenly held gaze, necessary for allowing another object to come into view, occurs only when the baby is ready to fall asleep, when the baby squirms in rising discomfort to adjust position, or because the parent shifts the baby. In just a few weeks, however, the baby can release his gaze more deliberately and thus easily shift his eyes to move around the room.

By about the fifth month, the baby is able to grasp, pull, and actively release the grasp of her hands on an object. Babies become quite delighted by releasing objects, flinging and dropping them, all in celebration of their

Figure 3.1 Finding stability within her mother's embrace, the baby yields and nurses. The mother also yields as she shapes her body around her baby.

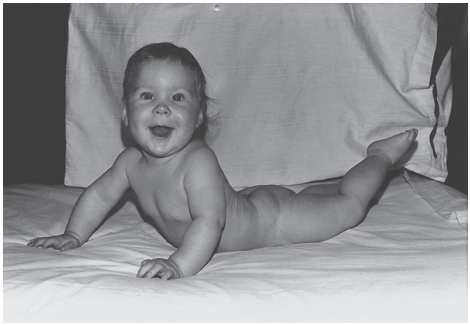

Figure 3.2 From the firm downward push of her arms, this baby is able to reach up and out with her head, eyes, mouth, and legs. That which attracts her is expressed in the excitement of her response.

Figure 3.3 Yielding on the earth, the baby first reaches with his eyes, then reaches with his right arm across his body and pushes down with his left foot, then the right to roll. Here, we see how fundamental movements emerge in concert—one underlying and supporting the other.

Figure 3.4 The energetic and downward push of this baby's lower limbs sequences upward through his spine to culminate in the reach of his head and arms. Now, he has support to grasp the drawer and pull himself to stand.

The Six Fundamental Movements

Every fundamental movement, emerging within context, holds a psychological meaning as well as serves a particular function for the baby and the adult. Each movement in combination with every other offers essential support in finding and creating changing definitions of self. All six fundamental movements operate throughout every

Yielding In yielding, we give over to and thereby take from the other. Receptivity. How do I receive from and give to you in any given moment?	Yielding with the other, we find and make support for ourselves. The quality of yielding depends upon that which we adjust to and that which adjusts to us.	We give our weight over to a chair as we take its support. We lean on a friend, giving ourselves over and taking support.
Pushing In pushing, we separate from while including the other in experience; discovering and making difference. Differing. How do I make and sustain my differences in relation to you?	Pushing against, we sense the "push-back" or resistance of the other. In doing so, we experience qualities and subtleties of this other and learn that there is "me" and "not me."	Sitting at the table, we push our feet onto the floor and the base of our pelvis onto the chair to keep ourselves upright and erect. When we get up, we push our hands against the table and feet onto the floor in order to stand. During a moment of protest, we push our hand forward as if to say, "Stop!" Putting our hand on top of another's shoulder in assurance, we gently push against them as if to say, "I am here with you."
Reaching The act of seeking; extending beyond oneself and into the environment. How do I open to and invite you to meet me?	Sensing the fruitfulness of our environment, we feel invited to reach out. Our reach is an investigation into the possibility of what may be there for us. We reach toward the other in the hope of meeting and being met.	We reach for a sparkling glass of water in the hopes it will quench our thirst. We reach toward an appealing other to comfort us.

sequence of action; however, some are more foreground than others as action proceeds. This chart defines and exemplifies each movement at a moment when they are foreground in experience. In the context of relationships,these movements become the basis of interactive dynamics.

Grasping The act of enclosing and containing what one has reached out for. How am I holding what I have attained?	In our grasping of the other, we sense in a more immediate way what we have reached. In the grasping moment, perception of the contained object expands.	We grasp onto an object and discover its utility. We grasp onto the hand of another and discover how in the holding we are held.
Pulling The act of drawing what is other toward oneself with the possibility of incorporating it into oneself. How do I draw you toward me and make you mine?	From the act of reaching, grasping and pulling arises an experience of "me" and "you" and the degree to which "me" and "you" are becoming "we." We experience the other's qualities of attraction, resistance and flexibility.	We pull the delicious looking apple toward our mouths to satisfy our hunger. We pull the longed for other toward us and discover the possibility of satisfaction.
Releasing Letting go of the held object allows the whole body to reorganize. As we release the other, the action comes to completion and yielding moves foreground once more. How do I let go in order to move onward?	The act of relinquishing what was enables one to move toward what is now becoming or what soon will be.	When we finish writing the final paragraph, we release the pen from our hand. Sensing the completion of our embrace, we let go of each other.

Figure 3.5 Simple yet powerful movements define the relationship between one and another.

Figure 3.6 Holding on to what she has just grasped, this woman clarifies her idea. Now, she can pull it toward her and incorporate it into experience.

Figure 3.7 The language of movement underlies this verbal exchange. The two women reach toward each other with head, eyes, mouth, and hands in lively conversation.

Figure 3.8 "I am here with you." Yield/push, push/yield: These are the essentials for interpersonal meeting.

new ability to "let go." Releasing is now a chosen action rather than a passive response that accompanies relaxing. Over time, releasing patterns continue to grow and elaborate with every new situation. By the end of the first year, babies enjoy handing objects to other people. At first, they expect them to be given back immediately, but soon after they seem satisfied to fully relinquish an object to another.

Releasing a held object allows the baby's whole body to disorganize and reorganize to move onward to new engagement. The act of relinquishing what was enables one to move toward what is now becoming or what soon will be. Parents must often help babies and young children release a present pleasure or safe occupation to move on to an activity that is barely understood. The way they work with their baby shapes the baby's experience and sense of mastery over this phase of action. This history can appear in adult life, in physical and emotional disorganizing and reorganizing when one "lets go" or "relinquishes" what is finished or alternately feels "torn away from" present interests in order to plan the next activity.

MOVEMENT FUNDAMENTALS IN CONCERT: YIELD/PUSH, REACH/GRASP, AND PULL/RELEASE

Combined fundamental movements are present in all action sequences, from the simple adjusting of one's gaze to bring an object into focus to the more complex action sequences that require greater adjustments.

In the following developmental and maturational progression, we show how one fundamental movement coordinates with another and in relation to the environment as the baby moves up and off the earth, with gravity and through space. Although the movement sequence unfolds in relation to these universal forces of the field, the baby is also moving toward an object that excites and stimulates interest. In this example, it will become clear how the prior sequence of fundamental movements forms the underlying support for the next sequence to unfold as the action completes itself.

A 6-month-old baby in prone position, and yielding onto the floor, pushes her hands down so that her head reaches upward. Next, she begins to wiggle and bend at each knee to alternately raise and then lower her legs. In the process, she discovers the undersides of her toes as they make contact with the floor. Every engagement of her foot touching the floor enhances the baby's awareness of that part of her body, and she begins to push with more effort. Now, the baby discovers how to push both feet simultaneously onto the floor, and the weight of her body shifts forward and onto her hands. Pushing from her toes elongates her spine, and the reach of her head is also augmented. The increased pressure on her hands sensitizes and sharpens her awareness here, and she pushes them downward, which then moves her body backward. As this coordination of upper and lower

limbs is practiced, in time the baby can rock back and forth. Should she see something interesting in front of her, she might try to move toward it by shifting her weight to one side of her body, alternately reaching her free arm and hand toward the object while the other grasps the floor and pulls back.

By the age of about 7 months, however, a baby's coordination of upper and lower body is more developed. Still on the belly, when the baby sees something interesting that is just out of reach, he hikes the knee of one leg and moves it headward, while the toes of that same flexed leg push onto the floor. The push gives the baby enough leverage to propel him forward. This energetic thrust moves upward from the baby's foot through this flexed leg and thigh and into his hip socket, eventually extending that leg and the same side of the spine. This enables the baby to reach his head and arm (of that same side) beyond the boundaries of his kinesphere. Pushing at one end thus supports the emergence of reaching at the other and enables the baby to move toward the desired object or person.

The reaching action, in its turn, will culminate in a grasp onto the floor as the palm of the baby's hand meets it, pulls backward, and then releases its grip. In the experience of grasping and pulling, the center of the palm creates a subtle suction action on the floor, as if for a moment the floor is contained within the palm. Pulling the floor backward moves the baby forward and simultaneously facilitates hiking the leg on the opposite side, an action that results in a "C-curve" shape on the same side. Now, the baby can yield and push the toes of her hiked leg against the floor, initiating a similar reaching, grasping, pulling, and then releasing on that same side. It is the coordination of yielding, pushing, reaching, grasping, pulling, and releasing that allows the baby to advance. The baby crawls on the belly along the floor with first one side initiating the movement and then the other.

These fundamental movements—yield, push, reach, grasp, pull, and release—are all present as the baby moves from lying to sitting, kneeling, crawling on all fours, standing, and finally walking. Yielding flows into pushing, and pushing flows into reaching, grasping, pulling, and releasing, and these movements flow into yielding once more as the sequence begins again. Thus, movement fundamentals remain with us throughout the life span and constitute the ways we connect with ourselves and within our world.

THREE CASE STUDIES

In the following cases, we demonstrate how we work in short-term psychotherapy to solve particular problems the parent has brought to us. Here, we show how the fundamental movements constitute the *dynamics of engaging* between parents and babies, how nonverbal signals are cocreated, and the degree to which they are well sent and received. We also

show how a change in movement patterns can open an interactive process that appears to be closed. This creates better mutual understanding and offers further options for the family. In addition, every example shows how much information can be gained from the observation of movement.

SUSAN, 29 YEARS, AND ABBY, 4 MONTHS

Susan, a first-time mother, comes to see F.L. because she has noticed that Abby does not enjoy being on her tummy for long and becomes quickly frustrated and cries if she is not picked up. Susan is concerned that this could limit Abby's development because she has read that babies who do not spend enough time on their tummies might have a problem with crawling, which could lead to later cognitive difficulties.[3] Susan has begun to avoid placing Abby on her tummy altogether because Abby finds it difficult and uncomfortable.

Susan sits cross-legged on the floor while Abby sits on her lap. Susan draws Abby's attention to the toys in front of them. "Oh Abby, see all those toys! Would you like to play with them?" She gently places Abby on her tummy within easy reach of the toys. Abby immediately pushes herself upward with both arms so she can get a better look. Then, quickly she fusses, and Susan moves to pick her up immediately.

It is often tricky for a parent to encourage a new pattern that is not an infant's favorite. The needed parenting skill is to provide time for practice with enough playful entertainment so that the baby stays engaged but not to overemphasize the activity so that the baby develops an aversion to the movement.

Noticing Abby's difficulty and Susan's impulse to rescue Abby, F.L. invites Susan to get down on her belly with Abby and make face-to-face contact to encourage her baby's interest. Susan talks to Abby and places a toy directly in front of her. Abby is quite able to hold onto the toy with one hand while supporting the weight of her torso on the other. Abby looks at her mother intermittently but quickly begins to fuss. As she vocalizes, she

[3] Some developmental thinkers believe that physical and brain experiences involved in crawling are crucial for certain cognitive tasks, specifically the ability to read. There is some evidence that when there are reading difficulties, contralateral movements (left leg moves with right arm and right leg with left arm) like crawling help alleviate these problems (Hannaford, 2005). But, there is as yet no research that definitively connects the absence of crawling with later cognitive problems. Also, there is strong cross-cultural evidence to suggest that crawling is not necessary to the development of locomotion itself (Hopkins & Westra, 1988). Nevertheless, crawling gives infants the stability of being on four limbs before they must stand on two. It also provides the satisfaction of moving from one place to another before they are ready to stand. Given all these considerations, it is important in working with children to rule out neurological difficulties when a motor pattern like crawling is significantly delayed and to encourage it if possible.

brings her head down and up again and then looks off to the side, suggesting her desire to change her position. She cannot yet roll over, so her fussing continues and increases.

Susan responds by whisking Abby off the floor and begins to soothe her by making cooing sounds and rocking her gently, "Oh my sweet baby, shhhhh, shhhh," and presses Abby close to her body. Now, Abby pushes her hands onto her mommy's chest several times, making space between them. Following her baby's signal, Susan turns her baby outward, saying, "I'm not sure what she wants. She doesn't always soothe easily when she gets so frustrated." Susan jiggles Abby and continues to make cooing sounds for her daughter. Abby continues to fuss, making deep, guttural, and "grrrrrring" noises in her throat. She pushes her head backward into Susan's chest, and the more Abby pushes and growls, the more Susan gently yields and coos.

The dynamic engagement at this moment is a mismatch between mother and baby incorporating both movement and emotion. Susan imagines that Abby needs and wants to be soothed, even though her ministrations are clearly not working. The more Susan tries to "soothe" and change Abby's angry feelings, the more Abby's frustration grows. This is expressed by the strong sustained pushing of her vocalizing along with the pushing of her head and arms against her mother.

F.L. suggests to Susan that she might try another way to relate to Abby's vocal expressions. She demonstrates this by speaking to Abby in pushing, guttural tones similar to the ones that Abby makes that express recognition of her angry feelings. F.L. growls with an intensity and rhythm similar to Abby's as she says, "Oh, you really don't *like* lying on your tummy, *do* you? You don't *like* that at all, do you? *That* made you angry! You wanted to *get* that toy, and you *didn't* feel good doing it." Abby immediately stops her own vocalizing and turns her attention directly to F.L. When F.L. pauses, Abby immediately begins to growl again. F.L. continues this back and forth and then adds some yielding moments to her vocal tones, some lighter more oozing moments that stretch her words out: "I knoooow you didn't liiike being on your belly. Soooo, we need to try just a liiiiittle bit. Let's see, maaaaybe we can practice just a little bit at a time," she says. Abby responds to the changed tone of F.L.'s voice by shifting the tone of her own vocalizations, which grow lighter too and begins yielding, pushing, and reaching as she adjusts in her mother's arms. The conversational turn-taking continues as Abby and F.L. smile at each other.

F.L.'s actions, their energy, and the abruptness of her vocal tone all at first matched Abby's push and supported her emotional expression. Then, F.L.'s gradual yielding and more sustained words and vocal tone "explained" Abby's dilemma to her. Even though Abby does not understand the content, she can mirror the quality of F.L.'s increasing yield and, in doing so, take something of F.L.'s experience inside her. Abby finds her

own ability to yield fluidly. This mirroring capacity is the ground from which babies learn to self-regulate and even think.

Susan says, "I thought she needed soothing, but I can see that you let her stay upset." F.L. replies, "You're right, she did need soothing, but it seems that she couldn't let go of her frustration until she could share it with someone. Abby really 'talks' to you and has a lot of feelings to express." Susan agrees and says she realizes now that Abby's strong feelings have been scaring her a little—she wonders how such a little one can have so much going on. As F.L. and Susan talk, Susan recognizes that she has not really wanted to think about the strength of Abby's feelings.

Susan can be happily engaged with her daughter most of the time; however, if she is uncomfortable with Abby's expressions of frustration, she needs to explore her discomfort so that she can tolerate Abby's discomfort.

Susan says, "I would never have thought to talk that way with her—it seems so strong." F.L. asks, "Did you ever talk to your mother with that kind of strength?" Susan immediately responds, "My mother was always depressed and seemed disengaged and vague most of the time. And even when she was there and doing things for me, I never felt satisfied with our relationship. It's as if she wasn't really there."

F.L. says, "If I think about what you've said, I get the image that there was no one for you to push against." Susan replies with enthusiasm, "Yes, that's exactly right. If I pushed into her, it would be like pushing into thin air." F.L. holds her hand up and invites Susan to push against it, and when she does, F.L. gives her no resistance. Susan says, "Yup, that's familiar. My mother's not there and I'm … alone." F.L. adds, "You were there when Abby pushed against you with her hands. You understood what she needed. But it seemed harder for you when she also pushed with her angry and frustrated voice." Susan says, "Yes, I'm kind of afraid when she's angry with me."

F.L. invites Susan to push onto the floor with both hands in front of her crossed legs, much like Abby was doing while on her belly, to sense how she experiences that movement. Susan executes the experiment and says that she enjoys it. "Well, I feel strong and well-met right in the palms of my hands," she says. F.L. encourages her to continue pushing and also make some of those guttural noises that Abby beautifully demonstrated.

Susan now makes intense and guttural sounds as she pushes her hands onto the floor. "Wow, I feel those sounds all the way down to my belly. It feels terrific," she says. Susan pauses for several moments and then says, "I think I have a better feel for how Abby feels when she's frustrated. It's amazing to think I need to push with her more, and she needs to push against me—it's really foreign to me because my mother was really a 'pushover' and I had to be very gentle with her." "Well now," F.L. says, "you can join her in that 'terrific feeling.'"

Discussion

It was clear that Abby had difficulty pushing with her hands while on her abdomen, but interestingly enough, she had no trouble finding her push vocally. Susan, however, had difficulty meeting Abby's vocal push and instead cooed softly and invited her daughter to yield with her as a way of soothing her. But, Abby needs the experience of her feelings being mirrored and met. Without Susan's "push back" and the recognition of her feelings, she might experience herself as "pushing into thin air" against a mother who feels like a "pushover." For Susan to match her daughter, she needs to discover the strength of her own push and what it offers. As explicated, pushing patterns give the developing baby a sense of cohesion and integration, all parts coming together, that enables the clear experience of me and you—or in this case, "*I* am here with *you*." From this more secure relational configuration, Abby finds and makes the strength necessary to push solidly against the floor.

SARAH, 35 YEARS, AND LUCIA, 5 MONTHS

Sarah brings her first-born baby, Lucia, to see R.F. because she is concerned that the back of the baby's head, which was perfectly fine at birth, has grown quite flat. The pediatrician has told her not to be concerned because when her hair grows, it will not even be noticed. But, Sarah is not convinced and worries that the flatness of Lucia's head has something to do with her baby lying on her back too much.

Wheeling a bright red carriage, Sarah enters the office. After R.F. greets her, she peers into the hooded carriage to greet Lucia and notices the baby's furrowed eyebrows and pursed lips. When R.F. begins talking to Lucia, the baby looks directly at her and for a moment smiles brightly. Quickly, however, Lucia's eyes wander in an unfocused way, and she no longer smiles. Even when Sarah extends her hands toward her baby to take her out of the carriage, Lucia does not look directly at her mother or vocalize to her. Once picked up, Lucia briefly gazes at her mother, and again her eyes float without appearing to reach toward anything in particular.

Sarah removes Lucia's cap and points to the back of the baby's head, which is rather flat and bald, making it look slightly misshapen. On her doctor's advice and as prevention against SIDS Lucia is put to sleep only on her back.[4] "She has not begun to roll over by herself," Sarah adds, "and when she is awake I think the nanny is not helping her to spend much time

[4] Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is thought to occur when young infants, lying belly down, attempt to move their heads from one side to the other and suffocate in the process. Although the syndrome is not well understood, much of the medical community advises that placing infants on their backs while sleeping is the best prevention against SIDS.

on her belly. I ask her to put Lucia on her belly more of the time, but I can't be certain if she does this. Anyway, when I try to put Lucia on her belly, she cries pretty quickly, so I think the nanny probably doesn't try."

R.F. asks Sarah to put Lucia belly down to see what happens. Once there, Lucia pushes two fisted hands down onto the floor to straighten her elbows. The downward push manages to lift her head and upper body off the floor. But, while Lucia does have a strong initial push, she does not sustain the push to maintain this upright position for long. She does not seem to look at the toys or people around her from her upright vantage, and soon her head droops slowly downward; eventually, her forehead touches the floor, while her arms and upper torso continue to strain in keeping her upright. Her head, shoulders, and arms appear poorly coordinated. With great determination, Lucia valiantly works to right her head into a vertical position once more, but it wobbles and droops downward, as if her head is just too heavy to be supported. Finally, Lucia gives up. She lowers her upper torso to the floor and lies completely prone, fussing quietly.

Lucia appears unable to sustain the lift of her head to match the position of her upper torso. It is possible that the muscles of Lucia's neck, back, and shoulders are not yet strong enough to support her head and also are not in balance with the muscles along the front of her body. When the muscles of the front and back body are balanced, they permit proper control of the head, and that coordination enhances the baby's vision. Conversely, as visual control develops, it reciprocally influences control of the head and neck. Lucia wants to lift her head up, but she is having trouble mastering the move.

R.F. suggests that Sarah join Lucia on the floor so that she can meet Lucia's eyes. R.F. also lies on her belly and places several toys close to Lucia. Rather than notice the toys, Lucia lifts her head up just a little, skims the horizon with her eyes, and seems to find nothing much to hold on to. Her eyes appear somewhat vacant and unfocused, as if she is lost. At the same time, her hands grasp into tight little fists.

Sarah quickly picks up a toy bear from the floor and shakes it in front of Lucia to get her attention. As she stimulates her baby, Sarah's eyes appear to be on the toy rather than on Lucia. Lucia looks at the bear briefly and then looks away. Sarah brings the bear closer to Lucia's face but gets no response. Lucia drops her head and Sarah looks down. R.F. takes another small soft stuffed animal and begins gently stroking one of Lucia's fisted hands from wrist to fingers. In an instant, Lucia reaches up with her head again, gradually opens her fingers so that her palms are on the floor, and then, with some difficulty, but also with determination, she reaches and grasps onto the toy and pulls it toward her. Sarah and R.F. watch as Lucia now uses both hands to center the toy directly in front of her just under her face. She then begins to press her hands onto the soft animal and soon brings her head down to mouth the toy gently. Next, Lucia pushes her now-open palms against the floor. At the same time, her head reaches up and away from the toy and then

down several times in succession as she tries to get a better grasp on the toy with her mouth. Her eyes, hands, and mouth are clearly focused, and the movement is motivated and well directed.

When R.F. stimulates Lucia's hands to open, her eyes, attention, and interest open with them. Once her attention is on manipulating the toy with her mouth and hands, Lucia immediately has more control of her head and neck. Her interest in doing something new gives her the persistence needed to work through the difficult physical effort of holding up her head. Lucia pushes down with her forearms and subtly pulls her arms toward each other. The pushing and pulling movements contract and condense the muscles of her upper torso, giving her enough support to lengthen her spine and reach her head upward. What was needed was more physical stimulation of her hands to bring out her grasping impulse and all the curiosity that is part and parcel of it. Once Lucia can grab onto the toy with her hands, the coordination of her eye, hand, and mouth; head and neck; and upper torso follow. Lucia now moves with more coherence and seemingly greater purpose.

Abruptly, Sarah takes a set of brightly colored plastic links, shakes them in front of Lucia's face, and places them near her hands. As she does this, Sarah bends her head down and looks directly at her baby. Lucia immediately releases the stuffed animal, grasps onto the links, and pulls them toward her. She already appears more confident in mastering this new task of bringing her head downward to mouth them and back up again. Her movements have greater intensity and directness. And although Sarah's timing is sometimes quick as she connects with her baby, she continues to catch Lucia's attention. As they play together, Lucia appears even more energetic, engaged, and determined, as does Sarah. Lucia remains on her belly for what Sarah says is an unprecedented 15 minutes. R.F. tells Sarah that as Lucia spends more time on her belly rather than her back, her flattened head will fill out, and her hair will grow back.

In the next few sessions, Sarah learns how to give Lucia the needed visual, vocal, and tactile stimulation that will encourage her curiosity and desire to explore. Sarah and R.F. decide together that inviting Lucia's nanny to their sessions would be useful so that they can coordinate their efforts. Both need to support Lucia's motor development, which in turn will fuel her curiosity, persistence, and yearning. Sarah also learns that following Lucia's timing more closely, in particular, will strengthen her daughter's ability to sense her own energy and excitement as they build up and diminish within her.

Discussion

Lucia's inability to reach out for, grasp onto, and pull an object or person toward her—to say with her body, "I want this, I have this, I am making

this part of me"—is clearly seen here. A similar restriction in fundamental movements and their psychological function is echoed in her mother's movements as well. Perhaps Sarah does not psychically grasp onto and pull her baby toward her to more fully take her in, actions that would help Sarah better understand Lucia's experience and vice versa. In the dynamic of this situation, both mother and baby appear lost in relation to each other.

While it appears that Lucia cannot push, in fact she is having more difficulty with developing the *reasons* to push because her eyes, hands, and mouth do not fully reach, grasp, and pull. The inhibition in all these fundamentals creates negative feedback that diminishes the strength of her push, and the less-available push now feeds forward to influence and diminish her reach, grasp, pull, and so forth. R.F. first observes the baby's inhibition in these movements when she notices her lack of eye focus while in her carriage and then while on her belly. In those moments, Lucia's eyes do not distinctly and energetically reach out, grasp onto an object of interest, and pull it toward her. This pattern repeats itself with her fingers and hands, which remain fisted and unmoving when the toys are presented. Inviting Sarah to focus on and attend more closely to Lucia and then watching Lucia's response to her mother's more directed attention creates a stronger pull in the relationship and a stronger experience of cohesion between them.

GRANDMA JEAN, 66 YEARS, AND BEN, 10 MONTHS

Jean, Ben's grandmother and daytime caregiver, came to see R.F. at her office with a specific concern about Ben's inability to creep on his belly or crawl on his hands and knees. In fact, Jean said, "Overall Ben's developing very slowly—even at 10 months, when he is sitting up, he just doesn't go after a toy that's out of his reach. He just had a checkup, and the doctor says that he's just fine, but I don't know why he's not doing more." When Jean placed Ben belly down on the floor, his struggle became obvious. Ben could not coordinate the reach of his arm and hand toward the toy placed just in front of him with the push of his foot or leg that would allow him to crawl forward on his belly. Instead, his lower limbs were waving in the air and made little contact with the floor. Ben looked toward the toy for a few seconds, looked toward his grandmother, and then back toward the toy.

Not all babies creep or crawl by 10 months as each has an individual timetable of development. Observing Ben and Jean, however, it did seem to R.F. as if there were some greater difficulty here. Sometimes, an emerging dynamic is more clearly seen during a home visit, so R.F. suggested that their next meeting be at Jean's apartment to see what a typical playtime would look like, and Jean agreed. This would better inform R.F. about the relationship between Jean and Ben and how that relationship was shaping Ben's mobility.

During a home visit, R.F. is seated on the couch a short distance away from Ben, who sits on the floor, alongside his grandmother. There are many playthings around Ben. He is holding a small toy in one hand, and he looks at another on the floor in front of him just out of his reach. Ben does not move. He looks at the toy, then looks toward Grandma, and then looks back at the toy again. Grandma abruptly reaches out and grabs onto the toy and hands it to Ben. Ben smiles and begins banging the two toys together. But soon, he lowers his hands, opens his grasp, and lets the toys fall to the floor. He now stares straight ahead, and Grandma quickly reaches out to grab another toy and offers it to Ben.

Most babies at Ben's age, even if they were not crawling, would change position, perhaps lower to their bellies or lean forward to reach for the toy, but Ben lacks the push to mobilize and support his reaching, grasping, and pulling.

Seeing that Ben has nothing to occupy him, Grandma swoops him up, pulls him closer to her side, and puts him on his belly next to some of his other toys. Ben pushes himself up with both hands and then rests comfortably on his elbows. He takes some time to look at the toys and then reaches for and grabs a brightly colored ball. He pulls the ball closer to him, lowers himself down onto the toy, and chews on it. After a few moments, Ben stops what he is doing, and the ball rolls to the side. Without missing a beat, Grandma moves the discarded toy away and now offers Ben two more objects, a block and a small teddy bear, saying to R.F., "I'm trying to get him to move more on his own," and saying to Ben, "Here is something else, Ben. Ben, look … look here … here's a block and a teddy bear!" Instead of handing the toys directly to Ben, she puts them at a little distance, out of reach, and says, "Here, go get the toys. You can do it." Ben looks up at the toys, bends his legs at the knees, lightly waves his feet in the air, and at the same time makes small pushing movements with his arms, lightly bobbing his head up and down. But, Ben just gazes at them and appears unable to make any effective push or pull that might bring him closer to the toys.

Ben's waving feet and small pushing movements indicate some interest. But, we see here that Ben does not effectively push with his feet onto the floor, and he does not reach out with his arms and hands to follow through on his interest. R.F. suspects that a particular dynamic is taking place, and it is unclear how it began: Grandma seems to be overdoing and could even be described as "pushy." Her push is not moderated by an accompanying yield, which would allow her take Ben in, and Ben seems not to express much push at all, a necessity for his sense of separateness to develop.

Ben furrows his brow and sticks out his bottom lip as he quietly whines. Turning his head to face Grandma, who is next to him, Ben twists his neck and shoulders in her direction, pulling back with one arm while pushing down on the floor with the other in what looks like an attempt to sit up. Then, Ben stops moving and appears somewhat frozen, his face

tightly squeezed to the center, probably in frustration. Jean's face mirrors Ben's worried expression. But rather than express her concern with evident emotion, she speaks to Ben in a playful, high-pitched voice, "Okay, you want up, we'll go up." She grabs onto both of his arms and pulls Ben to sitting and then brings some toys closer to him.

Jean jumps in and distracts Ben from fully feeling his own desires to push, reach, grasp, and pull himself in lots of directions to satisfy his needs. These actions would stabilize his body and provide support for his emotional experience and expression: "I see something interesting, I feel my eyes open, my mouth water, my body lengthen, and my wanting to reach." But now, Ben waits for his grandmother to complete and even start actions for him. In fact, his grandmother's takeover of action, if we can call it that, may have been going on from such a young age that Ben now has trouble feeling and showing much desire at all. We see that when he drops his toys, loses steam, and gives up. Ben needs to be increasingly self-activating, but Grandma Jean's "helping" tends to derail his own actions and the growth of his sense of autonomy.

Jean's cell phone rings, and she answers it and excuses herself for a moment to take the call. Left to his own devices and still sitting, Ben tries to reach for a ball in front of him. He pushes downward with his legs and pelvis, lengthens his spine, and reaches with his arms but does not change position. He does this several times, but then he stops, makes soft protests, and gives up on his own efforts. Ben shifts his eyes and head away from what he wants and scans the environment. He does not appear to focus on anything in particular and looks as if he is drifting through space, his face expressionless. R.F. says, "Ben do you want that ball? It's right there. Try again."

For a moment, Ben seems to know what he wants but cannot act to satisfy his desire. Then, it appears that his very sense of desire quickly vanishes. He appears to go blank as soon as he feels any discomfort instead of continuing to experience what he wants, to reach for what he wants, or even to fuss and protest with some passion. Ben fully expects that his grandmother will come and rescue him, so he waits. But in his waiting, Ben loses touch with his wanting.

After a few moments, Jean is finished with her phone call and comes back to Ben. "Okay, do you want to do some walking? Come, we'll stretch our legs." She reaches to Ben, and he reaches back with a big grin as Jean pulls him to standing. Now standing behind him, Grandma stretches Ben's arms up above his head, and he steps along in a lively way, all the while smiling and now vocalizing with some energy. Grandma also smiles and chatters to Ben, "You can really walk, huh! Soon you'll be walking by yourself, like a big boy."

Seeing Ben's enthusiasm for walking and knowing that Jean lives in an apartment building with clean and carpeted stairs in the hallway just outside her door, R.F. suggests that climbing up the stairs might be enjoyable

and useful for Ben. Once they move into the hallway, R.F. asks Jean to stand Ben at the base of the stairs and place his hands onto the step just in front of him.

R.F. thought that Ben's expressed desire and pleasure in his ability to stand and walk with Jean's help would be enhanced in the task of climbing the stairs. In addition, the later patterns to develop—standing and walking, which are elements of the climbing pattern—could be used to stimulate and strengthen crucial muscles that generally develop during the prior pattern, crawling. With continued climbing practice, when Ben eventually did walk on his own, he would have greater support from these underlying muscular structures. In addition, in this moving exploration, Ben's desire and Jean's useful assistance could be united.

R.F. shows Jean how to hold her hands lightly around Ben's waist to give him as much support as necessary and no more. Immediately, Ben knows what he wants to do. To "walk" upstairs, Ben shifts his weight onto his right leg and then reaches the same-side arm onto the step above, grasps onto it, and pulls down. The downward pulling movement frees his left leg to lift off the floor, and he moves it up and onto the stair and pushes it downward so that now his left arm reaches out, grasps onto a higher step, and pulls downward. Now, his right leg is free to lift off the floor to reach another step and so on, and in this way Ben begins climbing in a homolateral style, giggling and squealing with enjoyment.

After some time and much shared delight, R.F. tells Jean that just as she had her hands lightly around Ben's waist as he climbed the stairs, she could do the same when he is learning to walk along on the floor. Although it is more difficult to follow him around, she can give Ben enough support so that he can more securely balance as he walks. As R.F. gathers herself to go, Ben and Jean continue practicing on the stairs and appear thoroughly engrossed in their play.

Discussion

There can be many reasons why a baby does or does not crawl on belly or hands and knees at particular times in development; in some cases, babies do not crawl at all and still manage to hop, skip, and jump a few years later. Although it is unclear at this moment why Ben is unable to crawl, there is an obvious dynamic emerging between him and his grandmother that contributes to this dilemma. Ben's low-key style of being and behaving is a powerful call to his overly active grandmother. And the more that his grandmother responds to Ben in her involved way, the more passive he becomes.

The fundamental movements work in concert, all supporting the achievement of connecting with oneself and another. But here, Ben's movement sequences are interrupted: There is no stable ground of yield/push from which to reach or the firm ground of grasp, enabling the clarity of pull and

then release. Ben's capacity to connect is without requisite support. This inhibition in movement dampens Ben's desire; reciprocally, his dampened desire inhibits his movements.

The task of climbing stairs stimulated Ben's fundamental movements into activity and, at the same time, repositioned the dyad so that Jean was, literally, following Ben's lead and was now less intrusive. For his part, Ben was able to take the lead and enjoy doing so. As Ben strengthens his own desires and allows them to move through him, Jean can, it is hoped, become an advocate for Ben's autonomy. As Ben practices crawling up and even backing down the stairs and practices supported walking, a new phase of his life opens for him. Exploring these new and different relational configurations, Ben has a new opportunity to experience his desires and to follow them.