



Student Assessment

It is important to assess your student before working with them so that you can:

- Teach them exercises that address their habitual patterns and areas of pain
- Refer back to your assessment notes before each session with your student
- Keep notes at each session regarding their progress
- Discuss other lifestyle factors that may be affecting their pain levels (when appropriate)

The manner in which you assess your student, and the degree of detail of your assessment, may vary depending on the situation in which you are teaching.

TEACHING A GROUP CLASS

If you are teaching Clinical Somatics exercises in a group movement class, then you will likely not have the opportunity to do individual assessments. In this scenario, you should give general instructions to the class such as:

“This exercise will help you release and gain control of your lower back muscles, and help to relieve lower back pain. If it is not comfortable for you, you can make the movement smaller, or skip the exercise and simply rest in a comfortable position while breathing deeply into your lower belly.”

When teaching the exercises in a group setting without the opportunity to do individual assessments, you should make sure that your students know that they are in charge of their experience with the exercises. They should not feel pressured to do the exercises if they cause discomfort or pain.

ASSESSMENT IN INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

When you are working with a student individually, doing a detailed assessment is crucial. The important information that you want to get from your student is:

- Their profession and regular daily activities, and time spent doing each
- What pain, conditions, sensations and symptoms they are experiencing, and for how long they have been experiencing them
- Medical history, including any diagnosed conditions, injuries, major illnesses, surgeries, and medications, and when they occurred

After obtaining this information, you will make observations of your student's posture. The most efficient way to do this is by observing them while they are doing the Standing Awareness exercise. While you are talking them through the exercise, they will be standing in a relaxed position with their eyes closed. This is the ideal way to observe them, because they will be standing in their habitual posture. Observe your student from the front, back, and both sides – you will have to quietly walk around them in order to do this. You should let your student know that you will be walking around to observe their posture so that they are not surprised by it. Write down your observations so that you can refer to them at the end of the session and at future sessions. You can share your observations with your student after they have described their internal observations from the Standing Awareness exercise.

On the next page is the Assessment Form that I use when doing individual sessions. You can alter it as needed in order to suit your style of assessment, but make sure that you gather all of the pertinent information.

Clinical Somatic Education Assessment Form

Student Name:	Session Date:	Time:
Practitioner:	Location:	Student Birth Date:
Referred By:	Handedness: R L A	Height:

Profession/Regular Activities:

Presenting complaints:

Medical history (Diagnosed conditions, Injuries, Surgeries, Major Illnesses, Medications):

Observations:

Exercises taught in session:	Student homework:	Notes, Future plans:
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