

# This is PME

by Dieter Rehberg

The method "Physio-Mentale Entwicklung" (short: PME) is a holistic and sustainable somatic method to promote human health.

The goal of this somatic method is defined in its name: Body and mind should develop in a helpful and healing way.

The tools of the method PME are touch, movement, language and perception training.

The procedure of the method is to trigger and accompany the process of physical and mental self-organization and self-development through a mindful and compassionate dialogue. A helpful and healing process is created through mindful and compassionate perception. Self-regulation arises through trust in the wisdom of the body in an open "somatic dialogue" with oneself or with a (professional) counterpart.

The method PME is offered in individual sessions and groups, as well as practiced in "healing dance".

What is unique about the somatic method PME is the application and use of buddhist psychology, which allows the definition and practice of perceptual qualities and gives a clear framework for intention and action. The precisely describable procedure and mode of action in the "somatic dialogue", makes the method safe, highly effective, sustainable and easy to use.

PME always promotes the health of the whole person. PME holistically develops bio-psycho-social-health.

With physical complaints, PME is helpful, healing and liberating for the body. PME counteracts the pain and provides relaxation and re-coordination.

PME is also helpful to solve problems of mental or social nature.

The body is both a resource and an anchor.

Physical changes precede mental changes. The Body is the source for liberating solutions.

Mental changes are anchored in the body.

Furthermore PME is helpful in overcoming emotional conflicts and in coping with crises.

PME helps to relieve (new and old) emotional stress and supports helpful development of behavior.

The term "Physio-Mentale Entwicklung" was coined by Dieter Rehberg as an essence from his trainings, his practical work experience as movement educator and therapist, his insights in buddhist psychology and the creative developments based on it.

## Methods and Tools of “Physio-Mentale-Entwicklung”:

### **Movement:**

Movement is used in the Method PME

- as a very direct tool of communication between coach/therapist and client.
- to guide clients in a more active state during perception training.
- in simple, easily repeatable exercises to teach movement principles such as: self-organization with and against gravity, speed and timing, flexion and extension, balance, alignment and direction, force and release and effortless movement.
- to express and communicate feelings, memories, stories, metaphors on a physical, often preconscious, implicit level.
- to communicate the solutions that the body expresses.
- to support and continue the individual development process into free movement.
- to recognize movement patterns and guide them into a healing development.
- to sustainably integrate the developments in standardized everyday movements (walking, standing, sitting, eating, etc.).
- to dance the “healing dance”.

### **Touch:**

Touch is the most basic sense of the human being, which contributes significantly to its early development. In later years, touch is subject to strict social regulation in most cultures. In touching, sensor and motor functions appear in the same place at the same time. Touching in the Method PME focuses on sensing. The mental intention of the coach/therapist while touching is not “this should change!” (as in most other touch techniques) but is asking the open questions “what is there?” and “how is it there?”. At the same time, the coach/therapist tries to perceive with his hands in a certain quality, namely mindfully and compassionately, in order to trigger a helpful and healing process. (see Somatic Dialog). Actual techniques of touch step into the background, the focus is on the quality of the touch. Subsequently, as an effect of the somatic dialogue, the coach/therapist tries to perceive and support the changes and developments under his hands carefully and friendly. Such changes can be: changes in temperature, tension and nature, internal and external movement, perhaps in a rhythmic repetition.

### **Language:**

In the Method PME language is used in an educational manner as an explanation and invitation for touch, movement and perception training.

Secondly language is used as feedback from the clients about their mental and physical changes and developments.

Thirdly language is seen as an independent creative medium in which the pictorial, metaphorical nature of the mental and emotional self can be expressed in an idiosyncratic way by asking for striking key words. With further inquiries about the more positive images and metaphors, a resource-oriented process is initiated and strengthened.

### **Perception :**

Perception is a major tool in the Method PME.

The focus on perception makes the Method PME a somatic method.

The concept of perceptual qualities is the core of the “Somatic Dialogue” and makes the Method PME unique in the somatic world.

In the Method PME the perception is not only promoted by the “Somatic Dialogue”, but the clients are also guided to focus their attention and to practice healing and helpful perceptual qualities for themselves.

In “Anatomical Embodiment” the perception of the body will be refined and guided by anatomical images and physiological metaphors.

## **Principles of PME:**

### **Mindfulness and compassion:**

These mental factors are a basic prerequisite for making any kind of communication coaching and therapy a success. These are qualities of perception and not of being or acting (correct: "I listen mindfully" and not: "I am mindful"). These mental factors can be learned and practiced.

### **Non-attachment and non-identification:**

PME coaches/therapists perceive clients with compassion and loving kindness. They are at and with the client and not in their suffering, as the original Greek meaning of the word empathy suggests (in the pathos). By practicing helpful and healing mental factors (= perceptual qualities) attachment and identification with the clients can be avoided.

### **Client centeredness:**

In the Method PME, the focus is on the clients. No theoretical plan is worked through. The clients are the experts for their problems, the clients bring not only their problems but also their solutions. The clients have ultimate sovereignty over interpretations and meanings.

### **Process-oriented:**

The process of coaching and therapy is started consciously, but results, directions, next steps and often goals are open. Decisions about the process are made based on the perception of the client's' current responses and reactions, whether consciously or unconsciously, externally or only internally perceived. Experience and trust in improvisation and intuition is helpful.

### **Dialogue:**

The “Somatic Dialogue” is the heart of PME.  
See the detailed description below.

### **Somatics and Embodiment:**

Soma is the spirit-animated body, the alive and living body. In the German language there is the beautiful translation "Leib" for soma. Embodiment is the process of the mind becoming aware of its body. The mind that lives in the body is a perception or an image and also includes thinking and feelings. The Method PME therefore works from the clients sensing the body, as well as the client's thoughts and feelings. The direct somatic experience is more important than conventional medical diagnoses, x-ray photographs or the opinion or experience of the PME coaches /therapists.

**Salutogenesis:**

PME does not cure, it is healing. PME does not cure diagnosed diseases, but performs specific and non-specific health promotion and rehabilitation. PME tries to address clients as completely and holistically as possible in every treatment (body and mind, preferably the whole body in different systems, in different media). As a result, and by strengthening old and new resources, the health of clients can be promoted broadly and not just treated with one symptom. Nevertheless (or maybe exactly because of this) treatments with PME can remove many symptoms that conventional medicine cannot help, however, PME does not see itself as competing with conventional medicine but as complementary to it.

**Cause and effect:**

PME assumes that every effect has a cause, but that a cause-effect unit does not happen alone and linearly, but as a systemic feedback loop embedded in many transsystemic feedback loops, which can all have a reinforcing or reducing effect. Even the smallest disturbances in balance often have great effects because they are amplified in many feedback loops. In the same way, the smallest developments or a very unspecific health promotion can alleviate seemingly great suffering effectively.

**Self-organization, survival strategies and homeodynamics:**

PME takes advantage of the power of self-organization, self-development and survival strategies, which are inherent in humans. When coaches/therapists go on a search together with their clients with the questions: "How could it be freer, easier, more pleasant", and apply the "Somatic Dialogue" in their search the individual resources and idiosyncratic patterns of homeodynamics become visible and can be promoted.

**Effective, sustainable and economical:**

On the one hand, the principle described above makes PME very effective, since the development process continues for one or two days after the 75 minutes of the consultation unit, because the development is reinforced by the client's own healing feedback loops. On the other hand, PME is sustainable because the "system" person learns to use the more helpful patterns alone, without a consultant.

A better balance uses fewer nerves and muscle tension and therefore less energy. It is therefore also economically and ecologically sensible.

**The power of the mind:**

The power of the human mind is unfortunately only recognized by conventional medicine in the "placebo effect" and eliminated as far as possible by double-blind studies. Unfortunately, there are only a few approaches that make positive use of this power. Mindful and compassionate self-perception, as it is practiced in the Method PME, is, for example, a key to the "inner pharmacy", to the healing power of the mind.

**Resource-oriented:**

In the method PME, old resources that have brought the clients up to here are discovered and made aware (sometimes through reinterpretation). New physical and mental resources and options for action are developed through the somatic dialogue.

**Oriented from here and now into the future:**

PME does not work revealingly, but takes everything that is shown in the here and now. Of course, these can also be old memories and emotions, but solutions and developments can only happen in the here and now or in the future. So-called "active letting go" is not considered practicable, helpful and healing development can only happen by refocusing and strengthening new helpful patterns.

**Pleasant and effortless:**

Every PME treatment looks for the pleasant and effortless, because a "go through the pain" only activates more negative reinforcing feedback loops.

**The Somatic Dialogue****Healing and helpful development through the somatic dialogue:**

The somatic dialogue is a repetitive process.

The individual steps can occur in a different order.

However, each step should occur at least once within a teaching/coaching/therapy unit.

In this communication model, communication does not begin with asking or communicating, but with being there and listening.

**Compassionate Being:**

The coach/therapist concentrates exclusively on the client without any disturbances.

The clients are perceived with compassion, without identification and without attachment to their suffering. The coaches/therapists are with and at the client, but not empathetically in their suffering.

**Mindful Perception:**

Mindfulness is quality of perception (mental factor) that creates memory through mental collection, it is an internalization. In order for mindfulness to be helpful and healing, it also requires enthusiasm, knowledge, compassion and lack of desire (non-attachment).

Mindfulness is practiced in the Method PME especially in the following sensory channels.

- Interoception of the body
- Kinesthetic perception of movement
- Touching
- Hearing, Listening
- Seeing
- Thinking (in buddhist psychology thinking is seen as a sensory channel)

**Asking Questions:**

Questions are seen in the Method PME as a metaphor for an inner attitude, which is used in all media of the PME, i.e. also in touch and movement.

Expressed in language, the questions are like this:

- How is it ?
- How would it be?
- Does something want to change or move?
- How could it be more pleasant or easier?

"Why?" Or "Where does that come from?" Is avoided.

**Perceiving and picking up responses from the clients' selves:**

If the perception and questions happen in a mindful and compassionate quality (see above), then the answer can be a self-organization in a healing and helpful quality.

Particular attention is paid to:

- Keywords
- The actual content of language
- Movement expression
- Changes in alignment
- Changes in facial expression, gestures and voice
- Changes in the tissues of the body
- Changes in perception
- New realisations and thoughts
- Emotional changes

**Space and time for helpful and healing self-development:**

Physio-mental development takes time.

Physio-mental development takes time to become, to grow, to be "perceived" and to develop.

That is why a PME individual session usually lasts between 75 and 90 minutes.

**Support, guidance and amplification of the process:**

Let the process unfold by free movement.

Take up movement as a repeatable exercise.

Enhance inner movement and tissue change by touch (rhythm of development).

Use the location of the change as a starting point for the next question.

Mirroring and paraphrasing externally visible changes.

Immerse into the metaphorical image-world of the clients.

**Intellectual recognition of new patterns:**

A linguistic naming and speaking is required to become aware of the development. Since there is no codified language of embodiment, language has to be reinvented in every session, which is sometimes not so easy, but sometimes it becomes very creative, clear and precise.

**Take a break, rest and forget**

Only if there is a moment of silence and doing nothing before the next action or repetition, the change will become subconscious and the development will be sustainable

**Repetition:**

Learning needs repetition. Only through repetition the development can become deeper and farther and connect with other human instances.

**Transformation and development into other human instances:**

Because of the the many connections and feedback loops inside a human being, the specific healing developments will continue and transfer into other tissues, other parts of the body, into the mind and the social systems: (For example, if a development in the shoulder area is repeated, a development in the heart region or in the pelvis could also be perceived, feelings and memories may arise and, as a result, also metaphors and solution ideas for a life problem.)

**Integration in everyday life:**

Practice of everyday movements  
Reflection on meanings for your own life  
Planning of actions and next steps

**Philosophy of PME:****Freedom and personal responsibility:**

The method PME assumes that everyone can and should decide about themselves. From a socio-political point of view, this is common sense, but when it comes to one's own body, most of the time, also favored by the system of conventional medicine, responsibility is passed on to a supposed expert. In the method PME clients learn to perceive their own body mindfully and compassionately, to take the body's signals seriously and to gain confidence in the process of self-organization of their body. As a result, they can regain more responsibility for themselves and dealing with themselves in a more healing and helpful way.

The role of the coach/therapist in the method PME is therefore that of the listener, that of the presence and space provider and that of the questioner and the process facilitator. He is not an expert, the clients are the experts.

**Selfregulation and selforganisation for the development of the self:**

The method PME works with the view that the body and mind have the tendency to bring themselves back into balance if you give them time and space and ask them mindfully and compassionately. The knowledge about the organization of your own self is mostly below the perception threshold, most behavior is automated and reflexive. With the method PME the client can learn to perceive and express the hidden implicit knowledge and transform it into helpful and healing explicit knowledge, which enables selfregulation and development of the self.

### **Symptoms and traumas:**

Symptoms are seen as a creative achievement, how the human system keeps alive and reacts to external disturbances. Symptoms that cause pain and suffering can be an expression of a self-survival strategy. Through updating and transformation, they can be handled as a resource, or can be released when a more economical and pleasant solution is identified and supported.

### **Dialogue and Co-regulation:**

If it is not possible to trigger and shape a helpful and healing self-development in yourself, on your own you need a dialogue and a connection to an external entity that a PME coach/ therapist can offer. The dialogue should be started with careful listening and resonant, resource-oriented questions and should give enough time and space for the answer. It is also important to be open and attentive to different (often absurd) answer options, only with this the individually correct process can be triggered.

## **Psychological basis of the method PME, with main focus on buddhist psychology:**

### **Body and mind:**

A person's self consists of the body and the mind. The mind is the instance of self that knows. The mind forms a unit with the body (the self), but cannot be located in the body (not even in the brain). The mind is the cause for the effects expressed by the body.

### **Mental factors as qualities of perception and intentions:**

The mind is either an idea/image or a perception.

For every perception you need a sense organ (a sense) and an object (a content).

In addition to the classic 5 senses, PME works with the proprioceptors, the body's own sense of itself and the kinesthetic perception.

For Buddhists, thinking is an additional sense (an additional sense organ). So every person has an authority over thinking, the mind, which can recognize thinking and its contents. At the same time, thinking is on the same hierarchical level as smelling, seeing or touching and is therefore equivalent to them.

At every moment of realisation, with every perception, mind factors are connected to the mind that give the mind a certain quality. For example: Always present mind factors are the feelings. Feelings do not play such a prominent role in buddhist psychology and practice as they do in Western psychology, because they are an allways present and therefore unchangeable mind factor. In contrast, there are changeable and not always present mind



factors, which I can influence myself and which are therefore a key for development, coaching/therapy or spiritual liberation. there are approx. 52 (depending on Buddhist tradition) of these mind factors, which are not always present, and they are divided into 2 sections:

the helpful and healing mind factors and the not helpful and healing mind factors

Healing and helpful mind factors include: mindfulness, compassion, enthusiasm, knowledge, non-attachment, etc.

Not healing and not helpful mind factors include: greed, hate, ignorance, attachment, ambition, anger, etc.

### **Cause and effect:**

According to the Buddhist law of cause and effect, a mind connected with a healing mind factor triggers a healing effect, both in the object and in the subject. So it is important to exercise your perception in a healing quality in order to achieve a healing effect.

Ethical intentions that are important for the coaching and therapy situation can thus be trained and practiced.

Importance for working with PME:

- When a coach/therapist listens to the client's words mindfully and with compassion, he triggers a healing and helpful effect, both in himself and in the client.
- When the coach/therapist observes the client's movements mindfully and with compassion, he triggers healing and helpful reactions in the client.
- When the coach/therapist teaches clients to perceive their own body mindfully and compassionately, they can initiate a healing process themselves.
- When the coach/therapist touches clients and tries to perceive what he touches mindfully and compassionately, this has an effect on the quality of his touch (it can be healing and helpful), the body he touches and the mind that the body belongs to.

## **The history and roots of "Physio-Mentale Entwicklung":**

The term "Physio-Mentale Entwicklung" was first coined by Dieter Rehberg in 2004, as the essence of his trainings, his practical work experience and the creative developments based on it. The most important influences are briefly mentioned below.

### **Expressive dance and body liberation:**

From 1986 to 1990 Dieter Rehberg studied intensively expressive dance according to the "System Rosalia Chladek" with dancers of the "Tanztheater Homunculus" and at the Conservatory for Music and Performing Arts of the City of Vienna. The "System Chladek" followed the (especially German) tradition of body liberation, free dance, the power of personal (brilliant) expression and body training through gymnastics and music (rhythm).

The following inspirations were included for the PME method: psycho-hygiene and mental-emotional self-organization through improvisation and free movement, the healing power of dance, basics of physical communication, precise language when guiding groups and the integration of somatic experience through reflection in groups.

### **Post-modern dance:**

From 1991 to 1995 Dieter Rehberg studied at the "European Dance Development Center" (EDDC) at the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten in Arnhem / Netherlands. This training saw itself as an attempt to combine american postmodern dance (especially in the tradition of Judson Church) with current forms of somatic movement education ("Alexander-Technique", "Release-Technique", "Body-Mind Centering) to a new form of performance art. The insights gained for the method PME were: The influence of tangible anatomy on movement and behavior, the importance of touch and imagination on personal development, precise exercises and techniques in somatic work and the healing effects through the ongoing practice and inspiration of the dance form "Contact Improvisation".

### **Performance art, creativity and self expression:**

From 1995 to 2000, Dieter Rehberg worked as a freelance performance artist in Vienna. The following factors were incorporated into the method PME: space and time as media of communication, artistic creation as a metaphor for essential mental and emotional states and taboo-free research, development and creation from one's own somatic-artistic practice.

### **Somatic movement therapy:**

In addition to his experience in somatic movement training at the EDDC, Dieter Rehberg also studied "Body Mind Centering" according to Bonnie B. Cohen and "Psycho-Physical Integration and Mentastics" according to Dr. Milton Trager. In 2006, Dieter Rehberg was recognized by the "International Somatic Movement Educator and Therapist Association" (ISMETA) as a "Registered Somatic Movement Therapist" (RSMT). The following facts from the somatic work became important for the method PME: That the movement development of a human being shapes his mental development, the power of the tools: perception and touch for development, an embodied understanding of anatomy and physiology and that the inner attitude is crucial for the success of a therapeutic relationship.

### **Massage and manual therapy:**

From his training as a healing masseur / medical masseur and his further training in the osteopathic technique "Ortho - Bionomy", Dieter Rehberg brought, in addition to a lot of practical tools of touch , above all the connection to the classic conventional medical thinking into the method PME.

### **Idiolektik:**

Through Dieter Rehberg's study of "Idiolektik" (graduation 2014), a counseling and conversation psycho-therapy method that was developed by the doctor and psychoanalyst Dr. David Jonas, language has become also a major tool in the method PME. Also the attitude that the solution to a problem can always be found within the client and his own resources, and that language through targeted questions leads to a metaphorical-poetic Self expression , became part of PME.

### **Buddhist psychology:**

Dieter Rehberg's Buddhist practice (since 2003) and his further training at the Komyoji Institute have shaped the theoretical structure of the PME method very strongly. The definition of mind and its factors, as well as how healing and helpful effects can be achieved through a certain quality of perception, became part of the PME method. Knowledge, basic

ethical attitudes and practicing mindfulness and compassion are crucial for teaching, coaching and therapy.

**Psychological counseling (LSB)**

Dieter Rehberg's training as a psychological counselor clarified the place of PME within the field of mental health promotion and further developed PME for use in private coaching and business coaching.