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### Paradoxical Law of Change

“When you accept something as it is, it changes.”

Paradoxes confound our logical reasoning. They ask us to bring two concepts that seem contradictory together into an inseparable relationship.

A familiar example is the ‘Catch 22’: A situation in which someone is in need of something that can only be had by not being in need of it.

In a similar manner, linking ‘acceptance’ with ‘change’ challenges many of our cultural beliefs. Generally, when we want to change something, acceptance is limited to figuring out what is wrong. Then we can go to ‘work’ on changing it!

The Paradoxical Law of Change proposes a different approach to change.

In my field of expertise, *Trager*® Somatic Body Therapy, I am continually working with this paradox. One of my focuses is to change how the client’s body is coordinated so that they can feel relief from injury compensations and poor posture.

I use specific movement created with my hands to communicate with the nervous system and movement pattern/motor center of the brain. By observing the movements that I create, I can find restrictions in the client’s body that I want to change.

The power of this paradox becomes evident as I back off from broader movements to create ones that are smaller and softer. The conversation I am having with the client’s brain motor center is, “I feel the restriction you have here. I’m not going to keep reminding you of this pain by pushing against it. I’m not going to demand that you change the restriction by overpowering you. Instead, I’m going to help you experience ways that you can feel better right now with this easy movement.” This is when ‘spontaneous’ releases happen and the client can comfortably receive larger, freer movements.

The Change Paradox emerges through helping the client’s brain motor center experience acceptance of the restricting pattern. Then, when I demonstrate movements that the client can easily receive, their motor center allows the old pattern to change.

This Paradoxical Law of Change is active in many aspects of our lives. Albert Einstein expressed this as “Once we accept our limits, we go beyond them.” If you have been struggling to try to change some area of your life, consider what you might first need to accept. Think about how you can communicate this acceptance to yourself. Allow space in your life for the change to express itself. Watch for what emerges. I am usually surprised at how profoundly I have to accept before change will begin to happen – but it does!

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