

Advanced Seminar Group Spring 2024
NERVE DANCES AND MAPPINGS OF OUR PERIPHERAL VOLUNTARY NERVOUS SYSTEM
10 classes to be taught by Irene Dowd and curated by Stephen Williams
TUESDAYS: February 6 - April 9, 2024

The human nervous system provides connections throughout our entire being, everywhere in our body. It is a prime "communicator" and "coordinator" of all our bodily actions and functions. It also connects us with the world we live in, and also initiates our interaction with that world.

The central nervous system includes all the nerves and their connections contained within our skull and spine. The peripheral nervous system includes everything outside of those bony structures - all the nerves passing throughout the rest of our body.

The peripheral nervous system includes our "voluntary" nervous system that innervates our muscles and joints, and our "autonomic" nervous system that innervates our organs and glands. We will focus primarily on our voluntary nervous system, in this course.

The nerves of our voluntary nervous system enter/exit at apertures between our skull, all of our vertebrae, and our sacrum. We will consider each, including their pathways of joining and separating outside of our spinal cord

Nerve signals are electro-chemical in nature (and can vary in effect according to the exact properties of the signal being conveyed). Sensory signals travel from everywhere in our body to our spinal cord and potentially to our brain. Motor signals travel from our brain and spinal cord to our muscles. A motor nerve signal is necessary in order for a muscle to contract (except under very special circumstances).

If a nerve signal arrives to or departs from the cerebral cortex ("skin of the brain") - we can become "consciously aware" of it. This means that we can "feel" a sensation, and we can intentionally direct our body to move in a particular way or toward a specific action goal (through the coordination of our muscles).

In order to gain a functional kinesthetic experience of our voluntary peripheral nervous system, we will:

- a. chart the mappings of each major nerve (note that an individual named nerve is composed of many individual nerve fibers)
- b. practice a series of "nerve dances": choreographies that involve traversing the pathway of each nerve with our own touching fingers, stroking the areas from where the sensory part of the nerve provides sensation, and actively exerting the muscles that the motor part of the nerve innervates. Some nerves are exclusively sensory, motor, or both sensory and motor.

Dates: February 6 – April 9, 2024 (10 weeks)

Time: 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. every TUESDAY

Location: Noho Pilates, 611 Broadway, Suite 608, NYC 10012 (northwest corner of Broadway and Houston Streets)

If you sign up for this course, you will receive a **ZOOM link** at beginning of seminar that is usable for the entire course (Zoom recording can be viewed for 7 days after the class meeting)

NOTE: hybrid course - you can attend in person physically or on Zoom or view the Zoom later - just let us know what you choose.

Fee: \$500 - Pay to Stephen Williams with **PayPal or Venmo**. Contact Stephen Williams at nohostudio@yahoo.com and make your payment to him. If you want to pay by check, write your check to Stephen Williams and mail to: **Noho Pilates, 611 Broadway, Suite 608, NYC 10012**. **Please make sure that you get your payment to him before the course begins so that he can send you the Zoom link, and the handouts in advance.**