

Ep. #334 - Becoming a Movement Detective Part 1 of 3: Eyewitness



Full Episode Transcript

With your host:

Susi Hatelly

[From Pain to Possibility](#) with Susi Hatelly

Introduction (00:00.00)

You are listening to From Pain To Possibility with Susi Hately. You'll hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain, and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

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Susi (00:22.55)

Welcome and welcome back. I'm so glad that you're here because today we are beginning a three-part series on becoming a movement detective. Because at the heart of helping someone out of pain, is not about piling on more exercises or layering in more cues, or repeating the same thing over and over again, hoping that it finally clicks. It's about learning how to see and hear differently like a detective.

Now, as you listen to this, and it really begins to resonate with you and you wanna take further training with me on how to become a movement detective and truly help your clients reduce and eliminate physical pain, you might be interested in the upcoming Therapeutic Yoga Intensive, or even my full yoga therapy certification program. And you can learn more about the Intensive at functionalsynergy.com/intensive. Our asynchronous training begins this September 2025, and our synchronous training begins in October. So take a look there [@functionalsynergy.com/intensive](https://functionalsynergy.com/intensive).

Susi (01:42.31)

Now, when I use the word "detective", I don't mean Sherlock Holmes with a magnifying glass, although sometimes it can certainly feel like that. What I mean is the way that we observe, inquire, and follow clues in the body, the breath, and the nervous system. Think about it. Think about a detective entering a scene. They don't rush to conclusions. They don't announce "case closed" within two minutes. They gather. They notice. They ask: *"what's here"?* *"what's missing?"* *"what's not lining up?"*

And that's exactly the mindset that we need as practitioners and even as our own clients, because pain is rarely neat and linear. It's not always 'this caused that'. The knee hurts, but the issue may be the way the hip is transferring load or even the way the shoulder blades are moving on the ribcage.

Susi (02:41.29)

So becoming a movement detective is about widening your lens. Seeing the bigger coordination at play, noticing what compensates, following the threads and not just chasing the symptom. And here's the thing, when you work this way, you're not sculpting or fixing the body as if it were

a machine. You're supporting someone in processing data and recognizing the coordinating parts of their own system.

This is when change really becomes sustainable because they're not just doing what you say, they're learning how to notice, how to connect, and how to shift. So with this first episode, I wanna set the scene. What does it mean to be a detective or an eyewitness? And how do we as a practitioner, hold questions instead of rushing to conclusions? Why is this shift so vital if we wanna help people to truly reduce pain and build ease?

Susi (03:39.57)

So let's dive in. Let's begin with the notion of clues versus conclusions. As I've mentioned earlier, the detective does not walk into a scene and simply declare, *"I already know what happened"*. They pause, they gather clues.

They notice the details that others might dismiss as irrelevant or perhaps even complaining. And this is the first shift really in becoming a movement detective: it's distinguishing clues from conclusions and recognizing as well the power of data that exists in complaining.

Susi (04:36.90)

In practice, this looks like a client who might be coming in saying, you know, *"my knee aches going up the stairs"*, or *"my shoulder hurts when I lift my arm"*. And to an earlier trained teacher, one without a lot of experience, there might be a rush to a conclusion, a jump being straight to something about a muscle that is weak or something that needs to release.

But really, what we need to do is take a pause. And we need to recognize what's really going on that leads to the experiences that someone is having. This also plays into when people say a lot about their story, to the point that I'll hear practitioners saying, *"ugh, they're so caught in their story, they complain so much"*. But the reality is that they're not whining or being difficult. They're reporting the best that they can with what they notice.

And for me, I love it because the more story that they can give me, the more valuable the data. It's part of their eyewitness account. It's part of their role. When I hear someone who many would call "complaining", what I am hearing are all the things. Because I know that humans are icebergs and I only see part of it, but the more that someone can give me, the more I can understand.

So when someone's complaining, what I hear is passion, determination, and drive. Someone who really wants to get to a solution. So I hear that and then I also hear the data that they're actually sharing. So many practitioners turn off at the tone of complaining, and as a result, they miss so much data, both what's said and what's not said.

Susi (06:49.80)

So I hope when you hear that, that as practitioners, some pressure is relieved. The reality is we don't need to solve everything in the first two minutes. Instead, if we listen to the sensory detail, then we can follow the threads because we can see more clearly the thread. We can get us closer to questions like what's working? what's compensating? and what patterns keep repeating?

Then for the client, it's just a place that they can relax and feel safe. By honoring their clues, instead of rushing past them or even turning off to the tone of them, we can enable them to allow awareness to really bubble up and they begin to connect the dots themselves. And we'll get more and more into how this happens in future episodes, but I wanna just set that stage because this is the detective's mindset at work and how we're working with the eyewitness.

We wanna collect as much data as we can, and we're open to the data that is coming and then the tone that it's coming in. This enables us to gather the data, so that we can in turn process the data. We don't have to impose a solution per se. And when we can get to that place, being the detective, that's where real possibility for change begins.

Susi (08:31.20)

So let's ground this idea of eye witnessing a bit further. So eye witnessing is the act of reporting what's happening right now. Sensations. Timing. Sequence. Context. All without rushing to interpret. It's noticing and naming what's true in the body in this moment. So as I've mentioned earlier, initially, the eyewitness accounting can sound a lot like complaining.

It can also sound very clinical in observation around, you know, at 60 degrees of hip flexion, my pelvis tilts and my breath catches. And then there's also, as people start to become more aware of their body, when I lift my leg as they come into figure four, I notice that my pelvis is moving or it's getting a little bit wobbly, or I'm noticing my toes are driving the movement as I come into repos, right?

So these are all a variety of qualities of eye witnessing accounts. And the key is that none are bad or good or better. They're all data, and the data is giving us detail and pattern. So as I've mentioned, I love the data. It's like, give it to me. Give me as much as you want to give me. Because the more data that I have, the more easily I can solve the problem, because solving the problem in my mind is about understanding patterns. And the more data that I have, the more pattern I can perceive.

So let me reiterate one more time about the story. As people get stuck seemingly in their story, I let them talk. I let them move that energy because again, the more story that I hear, the more I can understand the pattern. So instead of shutting it down, I say to myself or out loud to them, *"tell me more"*. Right? Allow for them to bring you that data. It's such amazing raw material for everything that follows.

Susi (10:45.75)

Now I need to flip the script here a little bit because as a movement detective, it's easy to sort of stick in that analysis role. A reality though, is that when we are being that 'movement detective', we actually have a role in our line of work of being an eyewitness too.

So we need to get really good at the discipline of eyewitness as well, for our ability to see what's going on, but also to model for our client how not to jump to "fix-its".

As a practitioner, I see it all the time. As a trainer of practitioners, I see it a lot, how easy it is to jump into fix-it mode. And yet what's really, really important to understand is that key solutions are not found in quick fix-its. Sure, they give relief. But the real key, the real gem here is if we can step back and take a breather, zoom out a bit to see more about how the body and mind interact and witness it all, we can have a clearer and cleaner set of data to work with and to analyze.

So our job, if I can put on a bumper sticker, is to witness with the client before we analyze. This means that as someone is talking or as someone is moving, I'm really paying attention to what it is that I'm hearing and seeing. In some cases, I'll be naming what it is that I'm hearing or seeing by reflecting back, by mirroring back, by describing what it is that I'm seeing and hearing, and then I might ask them what they're feeling, what they're perceiving.

Susi (12:52.56)

It's two eyewitnesses coming together, sharing and exploring the data points, because here's a really important piece of all this, is the subjective world that our clients are in, we can't see. Even if someone was to tell me that they feel tension or they feel strain, and even though I have my own version of what those words mean in my body, it doesn't mean that my version is the same as theirs. So for me to assume what I know tension and strain means for my client, borders on, how do I put this? A little bit of arrogance. Because we don't know. So if we can simply be in this place of two eyewitnesses together, initially sharing and exploring the data points, we'll understand more and see more of the pattern, and the pattern is where the problems get solved.

All in all, when we operate this way, the client feels more seen and not dismissed. And me, as the detective, I'm gathering more and more clean, clean, clean data and not rushing to solve. If you want to see this in action, all of my on-demand courses show me doing this in action.

So most of my on-demand catalogue are classes that I have already run live. They're recordings of those sessions, so they're broken down. So you've got the exercises that you can follow and you'll watch me interact with the folks in the group and I'll ask them, alright, so tell me what's going on? What are you feeling? What are you noticing? I might see someone on video and I might say, *Hey, this is what I'm seeing. This is what I'm noticing.* That's the group of us being eyewitnesses. It's me helping them to tune into that which they're perceiving and feeling. It's why helping people name the sensation is so, so important.

It's another version of eyewitness and taking their data curiosity to a new level.

Susi (15:04.03)

So as we close out this episode today, let's come back to the heart of what it means to be a movement detective. It's not about piling on exercises, chasing symptoms, or trying to fix the body like a machine. It's about widening your lens, seeing how the body coordinates, where it compensates, and what the real patterns are underneath the pain.

We explored how clues are different from conclusions. A client saying, "*my knee hurts*", isn't a diagnosis, it's an eyewitness account. In every account, whether it sounds like a complaint, a story, or a clinical observation, is useful data. I also talked about how eye witnessing really belongs to both sides: clients gathering sensory detail, practitioners resist the rush to fix, and together we witness what's unfolding, and this is where trust grows, where patterns emerge, and where real change becomes possible.

So as you move into your practice this week, I invite you to play with the mindset, and listen and see for clues, capture details, hold questions a little longer before jumping to answers, whether you are a client or whether you are a practitioner. Because when we honor the data from the body, the breath, and yes the story, we stop chasing pain and start seeing possibility.

In the next episode, we'll be moving into detective mode and how we bring the eyewitness clues into something to support deeper coordination and lasting ease; the real work of being a detective.

So I look forward to catching up with you on our next episode, and until then, have a great time exploring your body, and helping your folks reduce and eliminate pain.

Susi (17:02.49)

If you've enjoyed and resonated with what I've shared today about the 'movement detective', you'll probably really like the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive. I'm running it asynchronously, beginning in September and synchronously in October. You can learn more over at **functionalsynergy.com/intensive**.