

THE EMBODIMENT TIDE

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During the preparation of the first draft of the revised Standards of Practitioner Competencies (SOPC), the SOPC Committee chose to include information regarding an expression of Primary Respiration that is recognized but not widely discussed within our professional community. We believe it is important to present a complete picture of Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy (BCST) to ground the knowledge-base and experiential capacities of practitioners, especially through the educational process. We also recognize that acknowledging “what is” will reify perceptual experiences that many practitioners have had over years of Biodynamic practice. Some of these specific perceptions have been noticed and discussed by many practitioners, yet for the most part they remain undocumented in our field. Finally, we recognize that new findings in related fields of therapeutics garner a great deal of attention within our community; however nothing is more essential to our practice than recognizing a subtle and profound expression of Primary Respiration.

The practice of BCST gives great attention in theory and practice to the expressions of Primary Respiration, the bi-phasic reciprocal pulsation of bioenergy, which is observable in the biofield, the fluid dynamics, and the tissue motility. William Sutherland, D.O., originally named this the Breath of Life. Dr. Sutherland also used the metaphor of the ocean’s tides to convey his perceptual recognition that he was feeling the whole of the human body breathing as an undifferentiated whole. In time the word “Tide” became synonymous with the “Breath of Life.”

Over time a number of specific rhythms of Primary Respiration have been recognized, and the qualities and healing properties of each of these expressions have been well articulated. The Tides that are well-known in the field of BCST are the Long Tide, the Mid-Tide (sometimes called the “fluid tide”), and the Cranial Rhythmic Impulse. (The latter is commonly seen as a result of facilitation within the nervous system generating an interference pattern in conjunction with the Mid-Tide.) We also recognize the presence of the Breath of Life in Stillness.

The purpose of this article is to introduce the qualities and healing properties of another, longer Tide, which some BCST practitioners are now calling the Embodiment Wave, or the Embodiment Tide. It is possible to perceive a Tidal expansion and contraction that is far longer in duration than the Long Tide. Most often this very long breath emerges once a client’s system has entered a State of Balance. Within a short period of time a subtle expansion begins within the system, emerging from the the inertial fulcrum or from the midline proper. With careful observation it is clear that this inhalation is of a long duration, lasting as much as 20 minutes. The inhalation is followed by an exhalation of similar duration, sometimes with a pause between the two.

An early reference to this phenomenon in the Biodynamic CST literature is found in the beautiful statement below:

"The Original bioelectric matrix may be directly perceived as an ordering and organizing field . . . the action of the Long Tide within space will be expressed in cycles of 50 second inhalations and exhalations (100 seconds for both). **The practitioner may also sense very slow, wavelike cycles of expansion around the body.** This has the quality of a pebble being dropped into a pond **every 20 minutes.** . . . Here, the practitioner is sensing the Long Tide as a wider field of action. This is the organizing wind of life." ⁱ

Another comment discusses further the action of this deeper tidal phenomenon:

"The Long Tide can be perceived within the biosphere to generate deep, airy, powerful tidal motions in 100 second cycles. **Its intention may be experienced in a wider field in very slow cycles of expansion (15--20 minute cycles*).** The Long Tide generates the most fundamental ordering matrix, a bioelectric form, as a field phenomenon. The Original Matrix of a human being is laid down." ⁱⁱ

This latter statement points to why some refer to this phenomenon as the Embodiment Tide.

Around the same time these comments were published, the authors were working as teaching assistants on the foundation course taught by Franklyn Sills in Boulder, CO. We remember discussions of this phenomenon in teaching team meetings and between Franklyn and the class.

In the statements in the literature, the movement that we are calling the Embodiment Tide was linked with discussions of the Long Tide. In our observation, it is different from that. Admittedly, the practice of Biodynamic CST has grown a great deal since this early writing, and the professional community now has a much more developed experiential base, leading to corroboration among practitioners and a high degree of consistency in their descriptions.

The Embodiment Tide is a respiratory cycle that presents itself as a facet of the Inherent Treatment Plan. During the total cycle of the Embodiment Tide, it is possible to perceive the resolution of inertial forces that organize a variety of unresolved shocks and insults. This Tide demonstrates a particular efficacy in the resolution of the inertial fulcrums which organize embodiment shock, a shock state which arises when the subtle body is early in the process of encountering and entering a new physiological body. The varied and powerful dynamics that are inherent to the process of embodiment can be experienced as profoundly overwhelming, resulting in a shock state with inertial fulcrums commonly found in the bioenergy field.

During both the inhalation and exhalation cycles, and more so during exhalation, the breath will pause at subtle inertial fulcrums within the field. Once the inertial forces are resolved the movement of the Embodiment Tide resumes in the same cycle of expression that was present before the pause. As with any of the subtle phenomena of healing we see in BCST, it is not possible to make the Embodiment Tide appear; yet through the cultivation of our perceptual clarity, it can reveal itself.

It is our hope that presenting this description of the Embodiment Tide adds to the general knowledge-base of BCST; generates new conversations within our community; clarifies perceptual experiences that practitioners regularly encounter; and brings forward new potentials for healing embodiment shock, one of the deepest sources of human suffering.

ⁱ Franklyn Sills. (2001). *Craniosacral Biodynamics*, volume1. North Atlantic Books. Pg. 400.

ⁱⁱ Franklyn Sills. (2001). *Craniosacral Biodynamics*, volume1. North Atlantic Books. Pg. 418.