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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Readers,

In this issue of the Cranial Wave we have a variety of articles and poems for your enjoyment and inspiration.

Our theme, “How we apply our Biodynamic principles in various aspects of our lives,” is a continuation of what we explored in our biennial conference, “Rooted in Wholeness, Branching Out in Possibility.” We wanted to see just how the heart of the work can pervade into other parts of our lives, and transform them in a healing way.

As you read, you may want to reflect on the ways in which Biodynamic principles have applied themselves in your own life. We are always looking to share inspiration from and with our community, so please tell us what you discover.

I have personally seen these principles transform my understanding of relational dynamics. I often credit my marriage to my ability to be with someone in a neutral way, allowing them their own timing and not needing them to speed up to meet me. I also have noticed that when I can find my own ground and orientation to the present moment, my capacity to handle things becomes much greater. Finally, in experiencing the Breath of Life firsthand, I am able to more easily let go of my attachments and expectations, finding faith in the Health in all, as life unfolds.

With Warm Regards and Wishes for a Healthy New Year!

Mimi Ikle-Khalsa
Interim President
BCTA/NA

“We can practice being present throughout the day:
we don’t have to be meditating formally.
The object or focus of mindfulness can be anything
that brings us back to right where we are.”

Pema Chödrön

THE THREE FUNCTIONS OF POTENCY

Franklyn Sills, MA, RCST®, BCST, UKCP

Franklyn Sills has been a major influence in the worldwide development of a biodynamic approach to craniosacral therapy, specifically in bringing Biodynamic work to North America. He has been teaching in this field for over 30 years, and has influenced many of the current teachers and schools in the U.S.A. and Europe. Franklyn has a long history of study and clinical practice in psychotherapy as well as in craniosacral therapy. He has studied and collaborated with Dr. William Emerson, one of the prime developers of pre- and perinatal psychology. Franklyn was a Buddhist monk and also studied in the Zen and Taoist traditions. His experience in the cranial field has convinced him that the body must be included in any form of therapy. His published books include **The Polarity Process, Foundations in Craniosacral Biodynamics Vol. One and Two, and Being and Becoming: Psychodynamics, Buddhism and the Origins of Selfhood**. Franklyn offers teachings internationally.



Author’s Note: I hope this paper helps clarify common clinical experiences in terms of the action of potency within healing processes for both students and practitioners alike. It contains new material and also updated sections from *Foundations in Craniosacral Biodynamics, Volume One*, which is in the process of being updated. A new version will be available in late Spring 2016.

William Garner Sutherland, the founder of osteopathy in the cranial field, perceived that life is supported and maintained by a sacred presence that he called the “Breath of Life.” The Breath of Life maintains the relationship of all created things to the origin or Source of creation. When its presence comes to the forefront of one’s awareness, one’s heart is cast open in love and empathy. In 1945, when treating a dying person, it was Dr. Sutherland’s direct experience of the Breath of Life that dramatically changed his relationship to his work. The Breath of Life seems to arise from a depth of stillness—a ground state called Dynamic Stillness in biodynamic work. Sutherland clearly sensed that the Breath

of Life generates fundamental ordering and healing forces active throughout the universe and throughout life itself. He called its most basic expression the “groundswell of the Breath of Life.” In session work the groundswell may be sensed in a depth of stillness as a deep and slow impulse that moves through all things and seems to support interconnection and wholeness—where, like in new physics—every part is an expression of the whole, and the whole is affected by every part. From the groundswell of the Breath of Life, specific expressions of its creative intentions, called primary respiration, are generated.

Sutherland discovered that primary respiration manifests both as a vast field phenomenon and as an embodied life force within and around the human system. He spoke of the natural expression of primary respiration as the *Tide*, also called the *Long Tide* by his protégé, Rollin Becker, DO. Sutherland called its presence *Intelligence with a capital “I.”*¹ These creative forces generate and support all specific forms in our universe, from galaxies and solar systems, to life on our planet.

Sutherland discovered that the primary respiration, as the Tide, is a totally stable rhythmic phenomenon, maintaining and supporting life even in the most challenging conditions. The Long Tide manifests in stable 100 second cycles, as a tide-like phenomenon which the Tibetans called the *unconditioned winds of the vital forces*—a primary ordering principle which maintains and supports all of life’s forms and conditions. Each tidal expression of primary respiration in its 100-second cycle is specific to the entity or form being supported, yet is also not separate from the vast expression of primary respiration sensed throughout all of life. Awareness of Long Tide, and the Dynamic Stillness from which it arises, is so important when working with trauma and activation in the human system. It is a stable presence that supports all conditions—yet is not affected by them, and can be sensed as a ground of support even in the most severe circumstances.

Sutherland also wrote of a *transmutation*, or *change in state* from the Tide into the fluids of the body, manifesting as an embodied ordering principle that he called *potency*. In this perceptual

¹ Sutherland W. G. (1990). *Teachings in the science of osteopathy*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

The Primordial Resonance

Settling into the original axis

The breath enters the cave of the heart

The ten thousand things revert to pristine purity

Mother nature swells and sighs

Who can describe this mysterious birth?

Beyond conception or deliverance

The grasping mind cannot obtain

The taste of this oneness no one can claim

Matthew Sieradski

understanding, primary respiration—as Long Tide, transmutes, or changes in state to become an embodied life force within the fluids of the body, an intelligent bioenergy which maintains order and organization throughout life.

Sutherland wrote:

...there is an invisible element that I call the "Breath of Life." I want you to visualize this Breath of Life as a fluid within the fluid, something that makes it move...Visualize a potency, an intelligent potency, that is more intelligent than your own human mentality... the Tide fluctuates: it ebbs and flows, comes in and goes out, like the tide of the ocean. You will have observed its potency and also its Intelligence, spelled with a capital I. It is something that you can depend upon to do the work for you, In other words, don't try to drive the mechanism through any external forces. Rely upon the Tide.²

This Intelligence, he stressed, is a function of the Breath of Life—the sacred and creative presence introduced above—that is the wellspring from which all life arises and is maintained. The Breath of life manifests a "fluid within the fluid," an enlivening and empowering potency within the fluids of the body. This is similar to the concept of *jing*, or *vital essence*, in Chinese philosophy and medicine. Jing is the embodiment, or transmutation, of what is called *cosmic chi*—a vast field of Intelligence that orders and supports all of creation. Cosmic chi is a manifestation of Tao—the eternally nameless, sacred essence of all things. Like the Long Tide, cosmic chi arises out of a depth of stillness, the gateway to our essential nature. Mantak Chia, a renowned chi kung master, writes,

*Cosmic Chi is born out of the original chi of Tao and literally carries the intelligence and essence of life. Guided by this intelligence, it spreads out into the universe and manifests in different densities and forms defined by cosmic laws. This is how stars, planets, human cells, subatomic particles and all other forms of life take form and are nourished.*³

Having been involved in Chinese philosophy and chi kung practices for many years, it has always struck me how amazing it is that Sutherland perceived the action of the primary forces in the human system so resonantly with Chinese philosophy, chi kung practice and Chinese medicine. His understanding of primary respiration both as a field phenomena and embodied life force so deeply mirrors this ancient wisdom. Thus, Sutherland's usage of the term *potency* as an embodied, intelligent life force is very important to understand.

The Functions of Potency

As we shall see, potency, like jing, has three basic functions in the human system: *organizational*, *protective*, and *healing*. It is important for the practitioner to recognize when these functions come to the forefront and to have an appropriate relationship to each of its expressions.

Organizational:

Potency acts from the moment of conception to organize cellular differentiation and embryonic development, maintaining tissue morphology and order throughout life, and—given the unresolved conditions

³ Chia, M. (2004). *Tan tien chi kung: Foundational exercises for empty force and perineum power*. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, p. 1.

present within the system—will further act to generate the best possible overall cellular-tissue organization in a moment-to-moment fashion. It is important to perceptually experience this ordering force at work in clinical sessions and, indeed, within our own system. This most basic ordering function is a primordial expression of the Intelligence that Sutherland spoke of—an Intelligence with a capital I.⁴ In relatively recent research from Tufts University, scientists discovered that the folding of the frog embryo into a body form has nothing to do with genes, but is an expression of bioelectric forces at work between cells, within the fluids of the embryo! In Sutherland's terms, this is an illustration of the primordial organizing forces within the fluids of the body, that he called potency.⁵

During session work, when unresolved history and related inertial issues and fulcrums resolve, you may sense the organizational function of potency coming to the forefront. Here a period of reorganization occurs, where the fluid-tissue field is reorganized into new relationships as conditional forces are resolved and are no longer organizing factors. You may also simultaneously sense a resurgence of the potencies/life forces that folded the embryo into a body shape, as the primal midline surges and the tissues, suspended in fluid body, are reorganized into a new compensatory form.

Protective:

When the conditions of life are met—and conditional forces enter the mind-body system—potency will also act in some way to protect the system from its effects. It initially does this by confining the conditional force to as small an area as possible in order to localize and minimize its effects on the system. To achieve this, potency densifies, or coalesces locally where a conditional force has impinged upon the system. This can be readily seen in William Seifriz's 1950's research on the stable 50-second cycle of streaming within the fluids of the slime mold, a primordial fluid organism. This constant and stable streaming was found to

⁴ Sutherland W. G. (1990). *Teachings in the science of osteopathy*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press, p.14.

⁵ Vandenberg, L.N., Morrie, R.D., and Adams, D.S. (2011). V-ATPase-dependent ectodermal voltage and pH regionalization are required for craniofacial morphogenesis. *Developmental Dynamics*, 240(8):1889-1904.

always be present as an underlying factor, not affected by the presence of conditions or conditional processes. In this research, he noted that when he introduced toxins into the fluid of the slime mold, the local protoplasm densifies in order to minimize the effects of the toxin on the wider system. It does this by confining the toxin to as limited an area as possible and "meets contingencies, heals itself and thus saves itself."⁶ This is a direct expression of the protective function of potency within the fluids of our mind-body system throughout life.

Likewise in biodynamics, we discover and directly perceive this protective function within the human system—where potency densifies, or coalesces within the body's fluids in order to protect the system from the presence and effects of conditional or added forces. In Becker's language, potency acts to *center* the conditional force within

the system. He called this the *centering function* of potency.⁷ As we shall see below, potency acts locally to protect the system from the presence of unresolved conditional forces by generating what is called *inertial fulcrums*, areas of density and relative inertia which, as in the slime mold research, confines the impinging force to a

limited area, in order to reduce its impact upon the system as a whole.

In clinical practice, the practitioner may sense potency coalescing in a spiral-like fashion, centering the unresolved conditional force within as local an area as possible. This will be sensed as local areas of density and inertia, which, in turn, generate various compensatory tension patterns within the human system. It is always important to recognize that within every inertial fulcrum, and every condition found in our body-mind system, there is health at work centering the unresolved issue within the whole mind-body system as best as possible, given the nature of the conditions present. It is the role of the biodynamic practitioner to orient to the health present within each condition, and to help the client's system access and express that health. Likewise, in truly overwhelming experiences, potency may also express a system-wide protective response. As a practitioner, you may then sense density and protective inertia throughout both the physical

⁶ Seifriz, W. (Producer). (1954). *Protoplasm of a slime mold—The stuff of life* [Video film]. USA: University of Pennsylvania.

⁷ Becker, R. (1997). *Life in motion*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

and fluid bodies.

Healing:

Under the right conditions, potency will initiate healing processes and act to resolve conditional forces and their effects upon the system. In this context, one role of the practitioner is to help a client's system settle into states of deepening equilibrium, where a systemic shift to wholeness and primary respiration is attained.⁸ This process is called the *holistic shift*. As the holistic shift deepens, potency will naturally initiate healing processes.

In our current Karuna Institute foundation training, we orient students to the presence of what is called the “three bodies” in some osteopathic practices. These are really three interactive fields: the physical body, or tissue field (cells and tissues), fluid body (field of fluids and embodied potency or life force) and tidal body (the vast tidal field of the Long Tide as it moves towards and away from a person's midline). Each field is suspended in the other, the tissue field is the densest, suspended in the fluid/potency field which is less dense, suspended, in turn, in the vast tidal field of Long Tide, which is least dense, but most powerful in its supportive role. In the *holistic shift*, these three bodies enter a state of deepening equilibrium—physical body suspended in fluid body, suspended in tidal body—all suspended in stillness. As this occurs, field within field, the waveforms of the cranial rhythm (CRI) and the various expressions of history sensed, will subside and the practitioner may sense the physical body becoming more whole and fluid, like a fluid-embryo suspended in a wider tidal field.

Once the holistic shift deepens, primary respiration may express healing intentions in many ways. One common expression is a shift in function of potency from its protective function to a healing process.

As a practitioner, you may sense potency as a healing force shifting in the fluid body towards particular issues in the system. Along with this, you may sense the whole fluid-tissue field reorganizing around an inertial fulcrum, expressing a specific pattern relative to its presence (classically called a strain pattern). As the local area enters a deeper state of balance and stillness, you may then sense a shift in function as the inertial potency within the inertial fulcrum shifts from protective density, to a healing intention. As this time, you may also sense a number of things expressing. These may include: (1) local pulsations of potency within the inertial area; (2) shifts of potency from the wider fluid field towards the inertial area; (3) a welling-up and permeation of

potency in and around the inertial site that may have a soft, yet powerful quality; (4) a deepening of the state of balance and the emergence of field phenomena and healing processes mediated by the Long Tide; and a deeper settling into Dynamic Stillness from which multifaceted healing processes emerge.

As these processes occur, you may also sense local conditional forces being resolved as heat and vibration, along with related nervous system activation clearing. As the conditional force and its inertial fulcrum resolve, you may sense a quality of softening and expansion in the local area and a period of reorganization and realignment to natural fulcrums and midline then occurs. As introduced above, here potency expresses its organizational function and acts to generate a new form of cellular-tissue organization, order and compensation. Commonly, as a process completes, you may sense a surge in the fluid tide as more potency/life energy becomes available within the client's system.

The Protective Function of Potency and The Generation of Inertial Fulcrums

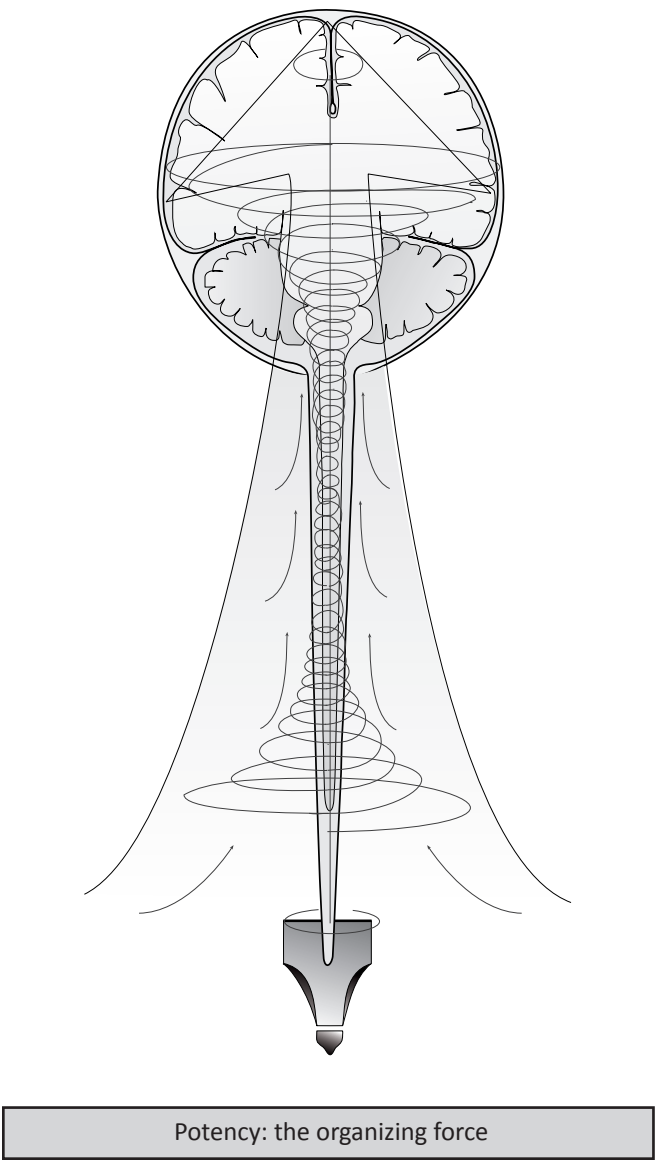
I would like to take a deeper look at the protective function of potency as conditional forces are met within our mind-body system. This protective function is at work from conception throughout life. Rollin Becker, DO, clearly described how two categories of force interact to generate local areas of inertia and protective density. These are the forces of primary respiration and its potency, and the myriad conditional forces met in life. When conditional forces are introduced into the system, the potency of the Breath of Life will attempt to resolve them in some way. If it is not possible to resolve the force—for instance, if the system is already compromised in some way, or if the experience is overwhelming, or if there is shock or strong emotional process involved—then potency condenses in and around the added force and becomes inertial in order to contain and compensate for its presence. This then generates an inertial fulcrum, a site of protective energies and related stasis that manifests both locally and throughout the whole body.⁹

Becker discussed this concept in many ways. He sometimes called the wider field of potency the *bioenergy field*. This intelligent bio-potency field extends 20 inches around the body (50 centimeters). Becker called this local field the *biosphere*. The biosphere includes the cells and tissues of the physical body, the body's fluids and the potency—or ordering forces within the fluids—that, in turn, generate the fluid body. As introduced above, this can also be sensed as a wider

suspensory system—physical body suspended in fluid body—all suspended in the vastness of the tidal body of Long Tide.

Becker maintained that potency naturally manifests as places of stillness in this wider bioenergy field. These manifest as fulcrums that organize and order the activities and functions of the body. This is true for the body's natural fulcrums as well as its inertial fulcrums. As potency acts locally to contain and confine the effects of an added force, an inertial fulcrum is generated that is centered in the body physiology and tissue field as a whole. As introduced above, Becker called this the *centering function* of potency. In this protective function, potency acts to center the presence of the conditional force in the wider energy economy of the system. It concentrates or condenses in this wider field and becomes inertial in order to constrain and compensate for the presence of these added forces.

Becker called inertial potency *variant potency*. In this concept, the potency of the



Breath of Life has had to *vary* from its natural expression in order to meet and center these unresolved experiences, conditional forces, and traumas. Potency thus has the ability to vary from its natural expression in order to center the disturbances found in the system. These variant or inertial potencies will also maintain compensatory patterns as they respond to the unresolved traumas or disease states held in the body. This is a truly dynamic process in which equilibrium is maintained in a moment-to-moment fashion throughout the system.

Imagine that potency is like the salt in the sea present throughout the whole fluid body. As a conditional force enters the system, potency condenses in this wider sea at the site of intrusion and becomes inertial in order to limit the effects of the force on the organism. Potency thus acts locally in its wider field to center the conditional force in the dynamics of the body as a whole. At the same time, a localized fulcrum is generated. As introduced above, the intention is to contain the unresolved force in the wider sea in the smallest area possible and to minimize its effects on the system as a whole. As potency has become inertial, so do local fluids, cells, and tissues, and this then becomes a site of inertia that does not easily shift in the phases of the fluid tide. Eccentric tension patterns are then generated around this local area of stasis, and altered motility and mobility occurs. This manifests as altered tissue quality, compression, resistance, fluid stasis and hypersensitivity in nerves, which may also be coupled with emotional process. Conditional patterns of tension and motion are likewise generated throughout the wider system. Healing occurs when there is a shift in the function of potency from this protective function, to healing expressions as outlined above. This commonly occurs in states of stillness and equilibrium. Sutherland oriented his practitioners to the Stillness at the heart of the Tide, This stillness centers all things and is the ground of all healing process.¹⁰

Potency's Healing Function as Expressed in Common Stages

In the sections above, we outlined the three basic functions of potency, *organizational*, *protective* and *healing*, and looked at its protective function in some detail. In these next sections, we look at its healing functions in more detail. As introduced above, once a client's system can access a holistic shift, then the healing function of potency can come to the forefront. This occurs as the three bodies—physical, fluid and tidal bodies—settle into a deeper

⁸ Becker, R. (1997). *Life in motion*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

⁹ Becker, R. (1997). *Life in motion*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

¹⁰ Sutherland W. G. (1990). *Teachings in the science of osteopathy*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

equilibrium. The practitioner may sense that the tissue field deepens into wholeness and fluidity, that historical patterns and the Cranial Rhythmic Impulse (CRI)/cranial rhythm settles or recedes, and that primary respiration as fluid tide and/or Long Tide, comes to the forefront.

As the holistic shift deepens, a state of dynamic equilibrium within the client's system is attained and potency can now shift from purely organizational and protective functions, to initiate healing processes. This may be sensed by the practitioner as a shift of potency within the fluid body towards a particular area. It may seem like a force within the fluids is shifting or orienting to a specific area, which is commonly the site of an inertial fulcrum of some sort. As this occurs, the practitioner—and indeed the client—may sense the whole fluid-tissue field reorganizing around a specific inertial area/fulcrum within the client's system. The tension or strain pattern organized around the local inertial fulcrum will also clarify. At this point, the practitioner may sense a common sequence of events that occurs as potency within the inertial fulcrum shifts from its protective coalescence to a healing function. As this occurs, potency initiates a local healing process within the inertial area in order to resolve the conditional forces being centered within the inertial fulcrum. Becker clearly wrote about the phases of this healing process:

When I have my hand in the area of one of the patient's complaints, I will feel these bioenergy fields go through three phases of activity: (i) It feels as if these energy fields and tissue elements are working their way, within their pattern, towards the point of balance for that pattern. (ii) A functioning still point, the potency, is reached at which time all motion apparently ceases, relatively speaking. Up to this time the physician is able to follow the changes within the energy fields and tissue elements through hand contacts and fulcrums points and thus gain diagnostic insight concerning the patient's problem. When the pattern goes through the functioning still point, a change takes place within the potency. 'Something Happens' as a result of this change in the potency. This is the corrective phase of the treatment program. (iii) Motion is again felt within the bioenergy fields and tissue elements. The patterns that unfolds is one that indicates a more normal pattern of functioning for the disabled area. These three phases can take as short a time as one minute to complete their cycle or it may take several minutes depending upon the degree and intensity of the pathological-physiology involved.¹¹

Dr. Becker clearly outlines a three-

phase healing awareness that commonly emerges as the holistic shift deepens and healing processes clarify in the fluid and physical bodies. I call these three phases: (1) *seeking*, (2) *settling and stilling*, and (3) *reorganization and realignment*. In phase two, settling and stilling, the forces in the inertial fulcrum enter dynamic equilibrium, also called the *state of balance*. Becker describes this as “a functioning still point.”

As we have seen, as a conditional force enters the system, potency—in its protective function—becomes inertial within the area of intrusion. It becomes relatively still as it densifies locally in order to center the presence of conditional forces within the dynamics of the whole. Thus it is actually *stillness* that centers and constrains these unresolved forces. Stillness is a direct manifestation of health. In this context, one of the roles of the practitioner is to orient to emergent stillness as it manifests in the state of balance. As this occurs, the potency and the conditional forces present in the inertial fulcrum access dynamic equilibrium, a state of balance where options are again available and potency, within a depth of stillness, can express its healing function. When this dynamic equilibrium is accessed, “something happens.”¹² There is a change in the function of potency within the inertial fulcrum from protection to a healing process, and inertial potencies are activated beyond the containment and compensations held. The wider field of potency comes into play and permeation or shifting of potency into the inertial site commonly occurs.¹³ Let's explore this three-phase healing process in more detail.

The Three-Stage Healing Awareness

In order to appreciate Becker's three-phase healing awareness, the practitioner must be able to orient to and perceive the action of potency in healing processes. Becker emphasizes this insight and uses the term bioenergy field to denote the manifestation of potency as a unified field of action. He stressed that there are bioenergy fields of wellness that are always present and accessible in clinical practice:

Through the years, I have learned that there are bioenergy fields of activity within body physiological functioning and that it is possible to learn to feel these bioenergy fields, to analyze them, to interpret them, and to re-evaluate them in anatomical-physiological terminology for diagnosis and

¹² Becker, R. (1964). *Diagnostic touch: Its principles and applications* (Vols. I-IV). Carmel, CA: Academy of Applied Osteopathy Yearbooks.

¹³ *Ibid.* and Becker, R. (1997). *Life in motion*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

*treatment.*¹⁴ Work in this field, as we get to the depths of clinical practice, is essentially energetic in nature. As we deepen into the work, we discover that these “bioenergy fields of activity” order and maintain the human system. As we have seen, this is not a mechanistic energy, but an intelligent life force at work. Here Becker is pointing out that it is possible to sense the presence and action of bioenergy as potency in the human system, and to evaluate and treat from this perspective. This does not mean that an understanding of anatomy and physiology is not necessary. A clinical awareness of the embodiment of suffering and related tissue form and organization is essential for effective and efficient clinical work. An awareness of the bioenergy underpinnings of structure and function, however, deepens the nature of the work and clarifies the healing processes set in motion by “intentions not framed by human hands.”

In this context we will explore: (1) a preliminary phase, where the system settles into a state of relative equilibrium and a specific issue and inertial fulcrum is chosen for healing purposes and (2) Becker's three-phase awareness: the first phase of *seeking*—where healing decisions are made and potency seeks a state of equilibrium relative to a specific issue in the system; the second phase of *the state of balance*—where there is a shift of the function of potency from protective density to healing processes; and the final phase of *reorganization and realignment* of potency, fluids and tissues to natural organizing midlines and fulcrums.

Preliminary Phase

The holistic shift is the essential starting point. Here the fluid and physical bodies enter deeper coherency and the practitioner experiences the client's biosphere (fluid and physical bodies) suspended in the wider tidal body of Long Tide as a unified and coherent whole. It is here that the practitioner may sense the physical body returning to a holistic fluid-tissue state—like an embryo suspended in fluid, and primary respiration, as fluid tide and Long Tide, may clarify relative to the client's midline and system. As the holistic shift continues to deepen, it is common for the fluid tide to enter a state of equilibrium and stillness. It is within this state that potency may express healing intentions and a particular inertial fulcrum, related tissue

¹⁴ Becker, R. (1965). *Diagnostic touch: Its principles and applications* (Vols. I-IV). Carmel, CA: Academy of Applied Osteopathy Yearbooks.

pattern and history may clarify. As this occurs, a number of phenomena may be perceived. For example, as introduced above, the practitioner may become aware of a shift or energetic drive of potency towards specific areas in the body as particular fulcrums are chosen for healing purposes. Alternatively, a welling-up and permeation of potency towards and within a particular area may be sensed, like seawater permeating dense sand. As this occurs, it may seem like the whole fluid-cellular-tissue field distorts around a particular fulcrum as a unified tensile field. It is here that specific strain patterns and history may be sensed. The inertial fulcrum is now suspended in all three fields—physical, fluid and tidal bodies—all suspended within stillness, and any level of healing process may be initiated.

This is a powerful clinical moment. Now all fields of action—potency, fluids, and tissues—are oriented to a particular fulcrum, issue, and healing potential. As this occurs, all other inertial fulcrums recede into the background and the fulcrum being attended to can be safely dealt with without overwhelming the system or the person involved. As this occurs, the practitioner settles into a receptive listening state and waits for primary respiration to initiate healing processes in relationship to the fulcrum being attended to. This is a key concept in craniosacral biodynamics. Although practitioners can facilitate stillness and deepening within a client's system, and augment expressions of potency within inertial states, it is *primary respiration* that makes the decisions, not the practitioner. From this preliminary stage, let's look at Becker's three phases in more detail.

Three Phase Healing Process

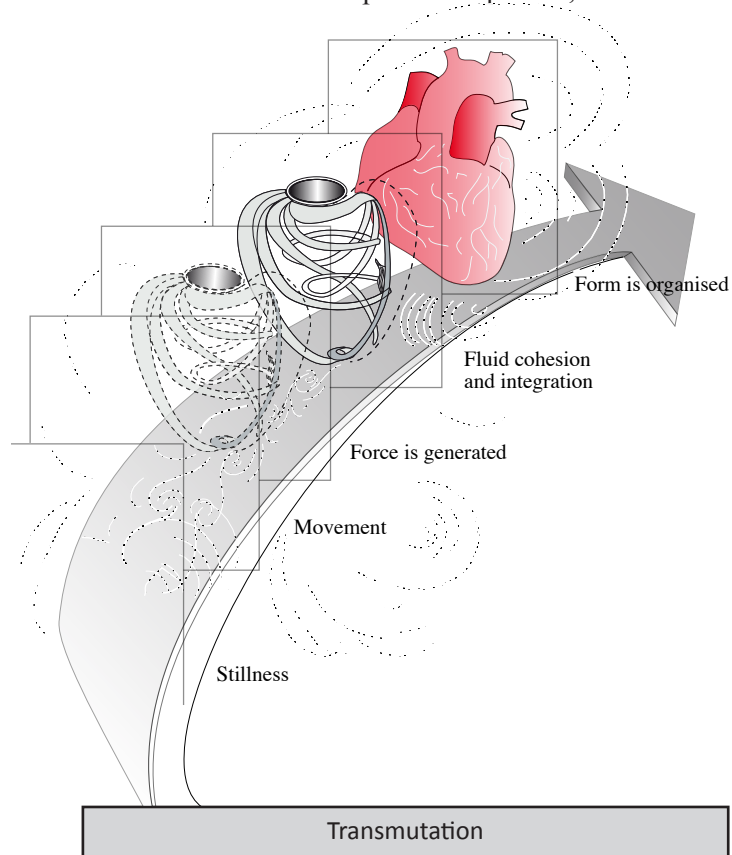
Phase One — Seeking: After the holistic shift has deepened, healing decisions are initiated by primary respiration and its potency, and an inertial fulcrum and related patterns and history may clarify. As this occurs, potency, fluids, and tissues begin to organize around that dynamic as a unified field. All other issues subside as this particular pattern and fulcrum clarify. As this occurs, the forces that generate the fulcrum and pattern are now suspended in a unified field and naturally seek balance and equilibrium. This natural process of seeking equilibrium is the heart of this first phase of Becker's three-phase healing awareness. As an inertial fulcrum and its pattern clarify—potency, fluids, and tissues will commonly express eccentric motions and

As the holistic shift deepens, potency can now shift within its wider field to make healing decisions.

fluctuations within and around the inertial fulcrum. These may be sensed as energetic pulsations, fluid fluctuations, and tensile tissue motions within and around the inertial area, all seeking balance. These indicate that the forces within the fulcrum are “working their way toward a state of balance” or dynamic equilibrium.^{15,16} This will have a multidimensional quality to it with all three bodies involved (the physical body, the fluid body, and the tidal body).

Phase Two — Settling and Stilling:

In this second important phase, the state



of balance is attained and the practitioner may sense that the entire field of potency, fluid, and tissue settles, stills, and comes to balance within and around the organizing fulcrum. All sense of tensile push-pull ceases as the inherent forces come to balance and stillness is accessed. It is a state of dynamic equilibrium between the potencies centering the disturbance and the inertial forces maintaining it and is not static, but is an alive and dynamic state of interchange. The state of balance is not just a local phenomenon. Classically, it is described as a *systemic neutral*, a settling and stilling in all three fields of potency, fluid, and tissues. Becker

wrote:

*A still, pause-rest period, the potency, is reached, at which time all motion apparently ceases ... When the pattern goes **through** the stillness, a change takes place within the potency. “Something happens” as a result of this change in potency. This is the corrective phase of the treatment program.*¹⁷

Becker, as did Sutherland, continually oriented the practitioner to the role of stillness. He stressed that, at the heart of all inertial fulcrums, there is a stillness that centers both the inertial potency and the unresolved conditional forces present.¹⁸ When this stillness is accessed, a dynamic equilibrium of forces is attained and there is a change in the function of potency—from protective density, to a healing activity—in both the inertial fulcrum and its pattern of disturbance. As this occurs, the healing function of potency comes to the forefront and conditional forces are dissipated back into the environment. Ideally, the conditional forces that were present are fully resolved and all that remain are the biodynamic potencies of the Breath of Life. Sutherland also emphasized the importance of stillness as he oriented practitioners to the inherent stillness in the Tide. In accessing the stillness, the potency of the Tide naturally manifests.¹⁹

Further, in the state of balance, the action of primary respiration in general is now oriented to this particular inertial fulcrum and pattern, now uncoupled from all other inertial issues. This generates, in essence, a new fulcrum around which the whole system is poised. As the state of balance is accessed, potency can then shift from its inertial protective function, to a more dynamic expression of healing and resolution. Also occurring are changes that take place in the inertial potencies present in the fulcrum *and* in the bioenergy field as a whole. It may seem as though the inertial fulcrum is now freely suspended in all fields.

As this occurs, *something happens* and potency is freed to act beyond the containment of the conditional forces in the inertial fulcrum, and other levels of healing process can then be initiated. The practitioner may perceive many kinds of phenomena during this phase. As introduced earlier, these may include:

(1) a drive of potency in the fluids toward and through the inertial area, classically called “fluid drive;”

(2) a welling-up and permeation of potency

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Becker, R. (1997). *Life in motion*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

¹⁹ Sutherland W. G. (1990). *Teachings in the science of osteopathy*. Portland, OR: Rudra Press.

in and around the inertial site that may have a soft, yet powerful quality, with a sense of filling and expansion;

(3) vector-like movements of potency toward and through the inertial site;

(4) systemic expressions of potency such as surges and shifts of potency in the fluid and physical bodies;

(5) surges of potency rising through the fluid midline of the neural tube;

(6) local expressions of potency within the inertial area, sensed as heat, pulsation and expansion;

(7) conditional forces being resolved, leaving the body as heat, vibration and vector-like clearings;

(8) processing of nervous system history and activation as heat, vibration and tingling in the client’s system;

(9) a deepening of the state of balance and the emergence of field phenomena and healing processes mediated by the Long Tide; and

(10) a deeper settling into Dynamic Stillness from which multifaceted healing processes emerge.

In this process, both Sutherland and Becker encouraged practitioners to orient their attention to the *potency* in the system. It is the potency that has the power to maintain balance and to compensate for unresolved traumatic forces. It is also the potency that has the power to resolve and heal these issues. Becker wrote:

*My attention, as a physician using diagnostic touch, is on the potency within this patient because I know that within the potency is power and many other attributes around which the disease state or the traumatic condition within the patient is manifesting itself. I know that if a change takes place within this potency a whole new pattern will manifest itself, usually towards health for the patient.*²⁰

An awareness of these kinds of biodynamic changes gives the practitioner a wealth of information and is humbling. It is not we who do the healing; it is the unerring forces from within. If practitioners are able to sense the changes in the bioenergy or tidal fields, they will also sense how the

²⁰ Becker, R. (1967). *Diagnostic touch: Its principles and applications* (Vols. I-IV). Carmel, CA: Academy of Applied Osteopathy Yearbooks, p. 161.

system has been able to reorganize its fluid and tissue relationships after the resolution of conditional forces. This is an extremely important clinical awareness to cultivate.

When the conditional forces in the inertial fulcrum are resolved by the action of potency, and phase two is complete, the practitioner will commonly sense another settling. It may also seem as though the entire tissue field settles and expands, as it no longer has to orient to the conditional forces that have been resolved. This heralds the start of phase three.

Phase Three — Reorganization and Realignment: Phase three is one of re-orientation, reorganization, and realignment. After the end of phase two, motion is again initiated. Potency now shifts to its organizational function and the potency-fluid-tissue fields, freed from the forces generating the inertial fulcrum, will begin to reorganize and realign to natural automatic shifting fulcrums and the primal, notochord midline. The practitioner may sense many kinds of motions at this phase and it may even seem chaotic as the whole field begins to re-orient. These may be misinterpreted as new inertial patterns emerging, but it is essential that the arising motions are not engaged with and the reorganization-realignment process is allowed to complete.

As potency expresses this third phase of Becker’s three-phase awareness, the body’s cells and tissues will reorganize and realign to natural fulcrums and midline, and tissue motility will be expressed with greater harmony and balance. For instance, at the end of phase three the practitioner may sense that the motility of bone and membrane is in a more harmonious relationship to the SBJ, Sutherland’s fulcrum and the primal (notochord) midline. As the reorganization process is expressed, the practitioner may sense a surge within the primal midline as cells and tissues are folded embryo-like into a new compensated form. An awareness of this reorganization process, and the new relationship of tissues to natural fulcrums and the primal midline, gives the practitioner important clinical information as to how the tissue field has changed and reorganized.

At the end of the reorganization phase, a further settling may be experienced along with a surge of potency and clarification of the fluid tide. An awareness of the quality of this surge, and changes in the strength and qualities of the fluid tide, again give the practitioner further important clinical information as to how the system has resourced itself and can now manifest its potency. ♦

**It is not we who do the healing;
it is the unerring forces
from within.**

BIODYNAMIC YOGA – AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING AND GROUP DYNAMICS

Michelle Anderson, MS, BCST, CYT-500

Michelle Anderson is a yoga instructor, writer, Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapist, co-owner of Studio Be Yoga, LLC in Boulder, Colorado, and a faculty member of the International Yoga Therapy Institute. She is a lover of all kinds of movement and energy modalities, amateur naturalist, and outdoor enthusiast. For more information on her work, visit: www.studiobeyoga.com; www.biodynamicyoga.net www.internationalyogatherapyinstitute.com



I remember when I first felt the presence of a BCST practitioner in a public yoga class. The effect in the room and in the field was dramatic, deep, and palpable. I had already been aware of the power of the Group Breath, but this day was different. I finally spoke to this influential student possessing great gravity, whom I had been seeing in class for maybe one year, and asked, “Were you doing something in savasana today? It felt like the whole room was surfing on the same wave.” Scott Zamurut then proceeded to give me the 10-minute explanation about how he had been tracking his midtide during the class and was using BCST principles in his yoga practice. I asked, “Do you always do this?” “Most of the time,” he said.

Hmmm. Why had I not noticed until that day?

A few weeks later, another student approached me and said she was studying BCST with John Chitty at the Colorado School of Energy Studies. She asked if I would be willing to be her “guinea pig” for some practice hours. I said yes, of course! She knew I would be able to communicate the subtle energy aspects of the practice and that would help her greatly in her studies. My first session with her was my first ever, and I was instantly enthralled! I had a similar feeling to what I might experience from a 3-hour intensive yoga asana and pranayama session. She had given me a great gift - the

experience of a clear being!

The following fall, I started a course of study with Scott. A few months later, I found out that my beloved and graceful mentor/teacher was dying from liver cancer. She was receiving treatments from John Chitty. When I told her I was studying the work, she was so happy and gave me her deepest blessings. The next few years marked a time of intense energetic and spiritual change and wisdom transmissions in the field, and it has altered my path significantly! I feel that I am becoming a visionary teacher and healer rather than simply an instructor, and we are creating something completely new!

I am continuing my studies with Scott and others, and incorporate those studies into my teaching. Since I am a yoga instructor and studio owner, my main challenge has been how to integrate this into my public work, which is primarily group oriented and not based on individual sessions. Now I am telling people about the possibility of joining healing yoga classes informed by BCST principles and based on my scientific background and my 25 years of yoga study. My classes are now co-created by the students and what they bring into the field. Because the field is always new, my sequences and methods are also always new and different, since they are a response to the people in the room. We never do the same class twice! I have two groups of students now: those without major physical concerns or illnesses who attend my more classical asana classes and explore dynamic movements of strength and flexibility, and those who desire a slower practice or who are recovering from injuries, illnesses, and trauma who benefit from my therapeutic yoga classes.

I invite much more dialogue than is typical in a yoga class where everyone is expected to sit down and be quiet. We do get very quiet, and we also laugh and sing and appreciate one another’s humanity. Through this verbal and energetic dialogue, we build trust and each student’s full being is allowed to come into the room. After class, I ask them to share any insights or ask questions. I acknowledge all of them for what they bring to the class.

I am a scientist first, and I am engaging in a process of critical thinking and problem solving with this unique skill set. And it is so much fun! Here are my thoughts on how the BCST principles influence a much greater sphere:

I. The group organism is greater than the sum of its parts.

BCST principles give my students and me validation and understanding of something we have always known: being in a class elevates you to places you would never go alone. Our observations and experiences benefit from BCST so that we are actually teaching and responding to the life force energy/breath of life, not only of individuals but also of the entity that is created by the group.

II. Can I observe what each person is bringing into the room/field?

It is very important to communicate with each student, either through conversation, eye contact, facial expression, or physical contact. The modes of dialogue

connected to the class because I believe we all have the desire to experience life’s full intensity in bodies and minds that are more clear and free. It is not about ME and what I can do, or about my accomplishments and stories. Teaching from the field gives me the same benefits of quiet mind, stress reduction, pain relief, emotional release, absorption into bliss, and concentration that each student experiences, tenfold!

• **Observation, pacing, sequencing, and stamina.** My classes are taught through observation of what individuals’ systems are actually able to take in and process, and paced in such a way that the nervous system is not overwhelmed with instructions and actions. Too much information too fast tends to numb the system and deaden it to experience. It



Physical adjustments must be done without surprising anyone or taking them out of their body.

I list are in order from least to most subtle, and used in that order for new students. Continuing and regular students who are clued into the process need the least amount of communication, and will often volunteer information and ask questions that then direct the group class. The result I hope for is that everyone feels that the class was exactly what they needed, and I was able to speak directly to them and their experience in the moment.

• How can I make this person feel connected and included today?

BCST principles have opened my perception greatly and have made me a much better instructor both in skills and compassion. I am teaching yoga because I sincerely desire to offer my knowledge to ease humanity’s suffering and to share the delight of living. I try to make each person feel included and

causes peoples’ awareness to leave their body and attach to the teacher rather than be grounded in their own physicality. In the yoga asana practices, we cannot miss any of the tiny steps that take us from posture to posture through the sequence of the class. The sequences build stamina in the nervous system and steadiness in the mind and physical body that allow the students to stay with sensation longer. They are then able to watch it transform, calm their breathing in the midst of discomfort, have their memories of fear and injury transformed into safety and empowerment, recover lost parts of their embodied experience, and observe their Breath of Life directly. They are able to find and maintain their midline!

• **How do I know the system is responding?** I go with my gut, and when I

have doubts I try to remember to trust in the practices! As I observe my class, I watch for a variety of subtle cues: sweating, color and shine of skin, bathroom breaks, water breaks, people “checking out” and doing their own thing, laughter, breath sounds, talking out, asking and responding to questions, physical shaking, willingness to observe a demo or participate in partner work, quiet moments of understanding, changes in the quality of air and light in the room, and probably a million other subtle things. I usually have a loosely formed class plan and an idea of what direction to go, but the best classes are those with no plan! Those are the classes where the Breath of Life is the teacher.

• **Multiple layers of being.** In the group class setting, it is very important to remember that each person may be working on multiple layers simultaneously and to trust that their system is doing what it needs for their greatest health. This means that individuals will hear and see instructions differently, some will miss parts and nuances altogether, some will be able to follow and some will not, and a few may not even be aware that they are capable of perceiving these layers: physical (spine, fascia, circulation, nerves, viscera, joints, bones, cartilage), mental/emotional (memories, trauma, fear), and spiritual (ancestry, past life karma, experience of the divine).

To name these layers allows the individual to relax into their experience, trust their own process, and believe that they are “doing it right.” The pacing of the class allows most students to experience a stillpoint after their process. Occasionally that Stillness comes very early in the class and so directs the pacing!

With all the layers and complexity that individuals bring, I have learned that it is not always wise to give voice to everything I notice. It is not a kindness to tell them information their minds are not ready to process, it can be overwhelming to their system. I have learned to trust the silence. I only speak about 30-50% of what I see. It is a daily practice for me to trust which parts I do name, and it’s usually best to keep the references connected to physical and mental layers. A simple look or nod can provide validation for those with refined perception who are working on more esoteric layers.

III. Safety is paramount

Over the years, I’ve realized that the person who arrives the latest or who always migrates to the corner often has the biggest story to tell, the most trauma in their system,

and possibly the least desire to engage or be seen. They may also need the most help, and the best way to reach them is to not overwhelm them, but not to ignore them either. With these students, I usually try to connect with them once or twice during class and just make sure they feel safe. Over time, they open more to receiving help and contact.

There are also very sensitive people who come in full of fear and trauma and unpleasant memories of other yoga classes. Sometimes their systems show me so much information that it is overwhelming to me. I have to acknowledge that their life force might be asking for help but their mind and emotions might not be aware of it or ready for it. These are the most difficult students for me at this time, as I have to filter what I see and my actions accordingly. I have learned that it is not the most compassionate act to remove their struggle or experience. With these students, I just try to communicate



The best classes are those with no plan! Those are the classes where the Breath of Life is the Teacher.

with their Breath of Life in the field and love them there, trusting that it will percolate through the layers. Creating safe public space is a challenge, and I have to allow that some people do just want a work out while others want to heal their soul. The good thing about yoga asana is that it is relatively easy to make that physicality work for both desires. The pace allows me to observe if the nervous system is adapting and the mind is processing and assimilating information. Simply having time and safe space to feel and process naturally allows for trauma resolution.

Physical adjustments must be done without surprising someone or taking them out of their body. I always try to ask, “Can I give you an adjustment?” and I wait for the answer. I look for signs that their system adapts to the adjustment and takes it in, and I’ll often ask “Do you feel that/ does that make sense to you?” Generally, a person’s field will tell me if they are receptive to contact or not, so that helps me decide if and when to interact in that way.

I am very grateful to all my teachers and I will always be an eager student myself. I am excited about expanding my private healing practice and developing this approach to yoga and teaching for many years to come. I could call this article “All The Things You Don’t Learn In A Yoga Teacher Training,” because you don’t! In the modern yoga business, I fear that teachers are not learning critical thinking skills or relational skills. Offering this service to humanity is part of my spiritual practice, and I am grateful to everyone who shows me their light. ♦

Imagine...Peaceful Healing

**Imagine ‘Biodynamics’
On everybody’s lips
A yearning for bioenergy
And healing from fingertips**

**Imagine settling deeply
I wonder if you can
Inhalation, Exhalation,
A holistic treatment plan**

**You may say I’m just a healer
But I’m not the only one
I hope someday you’ll join us
And our healings will be as One**

**Imagine no inertia
And healing in the Now
Find your primal midline
Let me show you how.**

**You may say I’m just a healer
But I’m not the only one
I hope someday you’ll join us
And our bodies will live as One**

Thank you, John Lennon, for your inspiration to all of us. I hope you can appreciate your words adapted to a healer’s dream for today.

**Gerry Clow, RCST®, RPP
Bowen Island, BC**

BCST IN THE BUSINESS WORLD AND BOARDROOM

Mimi Ikke-Khalsa, RCST®

Mimi is a RCST® and BCTA/NA Approved Teacher working in the Washington D.C. area and currently serves as the BCTA/NA Interim President. In 2012, she started her own school, Heartwaves Healing Institute (HHI), to offer the beauty, grace and simplicity of Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy to the world. Mimi loves taking the biodynamic practices of presence, relational fields, holding space, and supporting integration into her home life as a wife and mother of a nine-year-old girl, her volunteer life as the co-chair of a charity organization supporting alternative gift fairs, and into her corporate life as the owner and chair of the board of the energy conservation company left to her upon her mother's passing. To learn more about Mimi or Heartwaves Healing Institute please visit www.heartwaveshealing.com



I was touched when my mother asked me in 2012 to take over her place as the Chairwoman of the board and majority owner of her energy efficiency company. This was a business she had started when I was just eight years old. It was like a younger sibling to me, I had watched it take its first few breaths, early steps, and eventually blossom into a thriving, profitable venture that provided many “green jobs” to great people across three states. My mother loved her “youngest child.” It was her legacy. It was something she created from scratch, by herself, at our kitchen table. She had put her heart and soul into building this company and she believed deeply in its mission: to green the country, one house at a time, by conserving energy, improving the comfort and safety of homes, and educating people on how to save money and live with less environmental impact.

This was a mission I could get behind. When my mom asked if I would chair the company's board and take on the key leadership role, I did not hesitate. I did not waver. The answer just burst out of me: “Of course mom, I would be honored.” At this point in our journey together, my guess is I would have said yes to anything she asked.

She had recurrences of ovarian cancer for over 18 years, and was finally succumbing to the wear and tear that the many rounds of chemotherapy had on her kidneys.

It was my heart talking that day, and I've never regretted it. But by the time my brain caught up, it had plenty of questions and concerns: “What were you thinking!?! You are a Biodynamic Craniosacral therapist. You have no business training, you have no significant board experience and you have no idea what it takes to lead a company of almost 100 people. They are all counting on you to make sure this works. Their livelihood depends on you doing this well!”

I was under a lot of pressure. My dad had just recently passed, and my mom was coming to the end of her life. Most of the medical decisions and estate responsibilities had been placed squarely on my shoulders. I was feeling unqualified to also fill my mother's shoes at the company. They seemed just way too big.

How was I going to face the Board of Directors, a group of extremely successful, well-educated, business-savvy people? What would I have to offer? How was I going to present myself to a whole company of employees as a credible leader? These were the questions that weighed heavily on me.

It took me a while to muster the courage to take on the responsibility of true leadership. Thankfully, I realized that if I approached it as a session, I could trust the skills I had honed over the past decade to support me. I can confidently say today that it was my training in Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy, and the underlying practices of our work, that got me through one of the most challenging transitions of my life. Today, the company has almost doubled in size and profitability, and provides nearly 200 full-time positions. I attribute much of our success to the following four universal practices found in every BCST session.

Practice #1- Practitioner's Neutral

I knew that in order to be of any use to anyone, I needed to figure out what value I would bring to the table. What was special about me that I could offer to the conversation? My mom had always said that I had a good “feeling for people,” that I could quickly tell if things were going to work out or not. I knew that my gut and my heart were my best tools. I also relied on humility: the ability to easily say, “I do not know. Let's

find the best person to answer that question.” And that is what I set about doing. I looked to others with complementary strengths who could support all of the areas which were not my forte.

I had to be willing to be the chairwoman of the board, the majority owner, and the face of the company and lead with assurance and confidence. I had to be able to articulate a clear plan of action and let folks know that I was at ease in my new role. I knew what I needed to do, and it took a fair amount of faith to get me there. I knew I would have to rely upon those around me, to help keep me on task: the board members who had supported my mom for 25 years, the president who ran the company day-to-day, and the leaders in the company that kept things humming.

I had to be brave, clear, open and honest, and I had to be alright with making mistakes. The one thing I knew the most about from my training as a holistic health practitioner was how to look at a system and assess all the parts that needed to shift to attain greater health.

Practice #2 - Negotiating Right Relationship

It was my relationship with the president and CEO of our company that was the most important support for my venture into this new position. Eileen McGinnis had come into the business to succeed my mom as president just a few years earlier. Eileen is a smart, rational problem solver, who loved my mom and knew how important it was to help me make this work. She was also very aware that less than 30% of all family businesses survive when being handed down to the second generation, and she was committed to our success.

Since Eileen had once been a professional speech writer, she made it easy for me to sound good when addressing a crowd. To prepare I would read all of the great things she would write for me ahead of time. Then keeping the relevant points in mind, I put down the paper, looked everyone in the eye, and spoke from the heart. This allowed the employees to see my authentic self. Eileen and I made a great team, right from the start.

I knew that in order to be successful in the company, I had to start off on the right foot. I requested that anytime I came to the office, there needed to be some sort of employee appreciation event with favorite foods served, so that the team connected my presence with a sense of fun and satisfaction.

I also knew that folks would have lots of questions for the new owner, and that I had to take the time to meet each person, face-to-face, and give them the chance to get to know me. I traveled to the various offices two to three times a year to meet with all the staff. In addition to meeting individually, I also instituted senior staff

retreats and training sessions. This gave us a chance to cultivate a common language, establish common company values and create our agreed upon goals. This one-on-one approach over the last five years has helped in cultivating right relationship with all of the staff, especially the senior leaders.

Practice #3 - Finding the Health

From years as a Biodynamic practitioner and teacher, I know there is an inherent health at the core of everything, and that if you can relate to that health, abundance and ease, it will support the whole toward better balance. I set about finding where the company strengths were, and keeping track of where there could be helpful additions or changes made. It was obvious from the beginning there were many things that needed to be done, inertial fulcrums of sorts that needed to be brought into a state of balance. So I let the inherent treatment plan unfold and worked methodically, step-by-step to support the health in all aspects. A big piece of this was a paradigm shift from a place of fear and secrecy to one of faith and transparency.

This has been the hardest and most important part of redirecting the flow of energy from the negative to positive. I needed to ask each employee to be willing to bring their personal best, and to clarify for themselves what are their most special attributes that they can bring to the job. In taking this step inward, people became more clear about who they had been expected to be and who they really were. By showing my own limits and shortcomings, it freed people to actualize their potential as well as facing their limitations. I made it an acceptable fact that we are all good at something and that no one needs to be good at everything. This seemed to take an artificial pressure off of the process and, as folks got to know me better, a positive understanding was developed. Our team knew that I was looking to support them, and genuinely meet them where they were.

Practice #4 - Holism

I was struck in my first round of one-on-one interviews how much infighting happened among the employees. Different departments would blame other departments for slowing things down, making mistakes, or causing problems. There was a general lack of trust, and ill will in the company. The folks working in the company did not see that they were all allies, on the same side, working toward a common goal. They could not see the symbiosis in their relationships, and the implicit need for mutual respect, support and cooperation to make things work well.

There were two important gaps in the organization. One was an under qualified

financial person and the other was a marketing and business development person which was a missing piece of the puzzle. Filling this role was something that my mom had never prioritized. Creating new hires in these positions was crucial for the company and for myself.

At first, I set about finding a competent CFO that could provide reliable financial reporting and forecasting for the company. The company had outgrown the woman who had been doing our accounting services. It is impossible to have a healthy company if you do not have clear and accurate financials and forecasting. Good decisions on budget are one of the keys to financial viability. Our new very experienced CFO was a great addition to the team, and provided just what we needed to move forward.

The next position fell into place when I went to a trade convention in the energy field and met a marketing and business development specialist. He soon became a consultant for the company, leading our senior staff retreats, and eventually becoming a full-time employee.

What really stands out in my memory was our first senior staff retreat. In preparation we were required to read, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. This was pivotal for me, because it outlined how to build an effective and well-functioning team. It referred to a pyramid of the five traits that cause dysfunction, and from that it was easy to extrapolate the five key ingredients for a well-functioning team. No surprise to me that the foundational trait of a well-functioning team was “trust.”

This book, and the information contained within, has greatly helped me in my own experience as a leader on the Biodynamic Association board. Learning how to work well together, to really trust each other, to disagree respectfully, to hold one another accountable, and committing to our common goals are the keys to success in any group. Our senior leadership team also worked together to understand more about our emotional intelligence, how to be an effective manager. We learned the art of knowing when a position needed to be terminated, and how to effectively and compassionately let someone go.

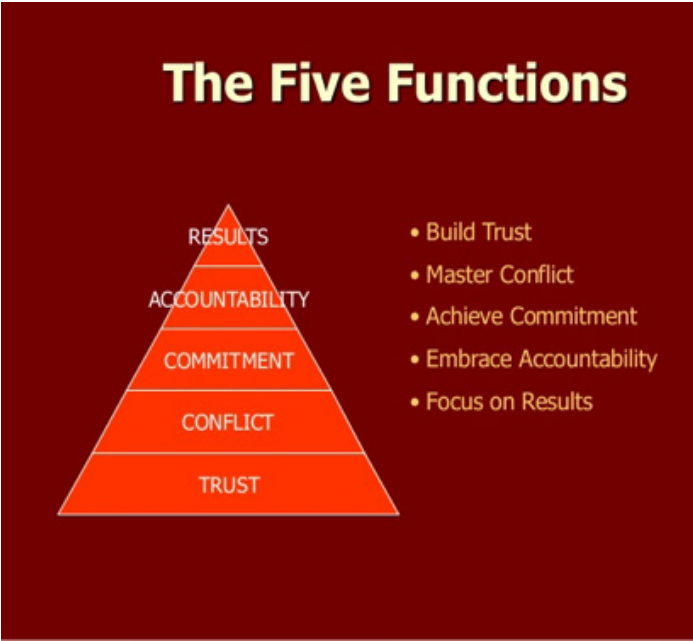
In a later training, I suggested the use of the book, *The Four Agreements*. In this book, Don Miguel Ruiz helps to educate how we, as humans are domesticated by our families, cultures, and society in general. It also offers four simple to understand, but hard to implement agreements on how to avoid some of the most common pitfalls in interpersonal communications. These agreements are: be impeccable with your word, do not make assumptions, do not take things personally, and always try your best.

In addition to the ongoing cultural shift brought about by these retreats, an understanding of how each of us affects the whole company helped lead our employees to a sense of connection, interdependence and camaraderie that was key to the company’s health being restored. Instead of problems staying in the shadows and festering, people

were able to be more effective problem solvers and collaborators. It has been wonderful to watch this maturation process of a company from the beginning and it has been very rewarding to see how much healthier the whole of the corporate system has become with the application of these holistic health practices.

These basic BCST practices perfectly prepared me for this new corporate world. My mom wanted to keep the company small and management was never her strong suit. My choice to invest in people, their training and improving their environment has really strengthened the workforce and the company as a whole.

My intent was, and remains, to give people the tools they need to do their jobs well and reach their potential. In return, people have given their loyalty and commitment to the company. An additional benefit from this experience is that I brought many ideas I learned from my new work world back to the BCTA/NA, such as succession planning, clear and transparent financials, team building based on trust, and the knowledge and practice of discerning when services need to be provided by an outside professional firm instead of by volunteers. I believe these lessons learned from the corporate world have profoundly improved the strength of our association and I’m deeply grateful for this life experience.♦



Majesty

Hold my hand

I'll hold yours

Hearts in tow, we peer curiously around, then throw open the door
to another reality and tiptoe through

Time stands still

And we wait

Then gently and silently we plunge our hands into the past

Slowly, slowly extricating the sparkling jewel of the now

Your being is like balm for mine as we alter the fabric of life forever

I look up to see the future set free of the clenching grip of fear and
confusion

Beams of our joy streaming in all directions

Sunshine melting our bones

And just then a mourning dove takes flight

Lifting with her the pure light of my heart

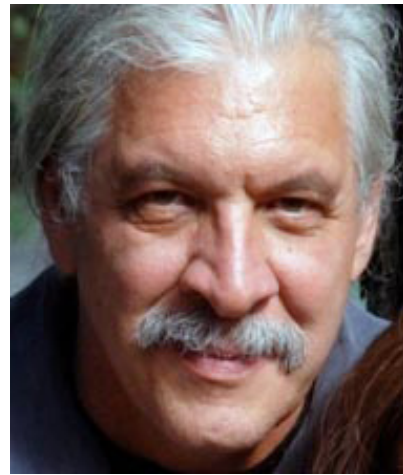
Julie Aha



BIODYNAMIC CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY PRINCIPLES IN RELATIONSHIP TO AYURVEDIC MEDICINE

Donald Ravidas VanHowten

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We may only scratch the surface of these two healing methods in an attempt to offer some ideas as to their relationship. That being said, let me start with the most important relationship of all in healing with another. **“Being present”** for the expressions arising from the tide or in Ayurveda, being present listening to the various pulses. Both of which signal a state of balance in the client’s system, as well as listening with no intention. This enables the information within the system to be expressed with clarity.

To compare these two methods is interesting as they hold many of the same principles. At the same time, both systems are vast. Ayurveda, for example, is about 6,000 years old; it was developed by Holy ones meditating deeply on the principles of life. It has been called the Mother of all healing. For anyone to compare in a short article these methods can be limiting for both. But my task here is to show similarities in principle and practice, and possibly inspire open-mindedness by recognizing the shared principles and the firm foundation upon which these two methods are established.

In Ayurvedic medicine, one may “read” the radial pulse for clues as to the

constitution and imbalances in the system. In the Biodynamic cranial practice, we observe the mid and other tides that present themselves within the Breath of Life. In both systems, the practitioner observes the *wisdom within* for self-correction. Also, the Breath of Life via the tide and/or pulses perceives the observer! This takes place in pulse reading as well. There is something about listening in on another system without judgment or any intention to fix that awakens inner wisdom in response. The healing begins with this awakening. Spirit observing the practitioner is unique to both methods. We must remember that this “conversation” is so very intimate and profound. And we must be aware we are being observed! “Here’s looking at you, with love, Divine Mother!”

The Inherent Treatment Plan

Following on the quality of “being present” of being clear with no intention to fix or alter the system, let us look into treatment. This quality of being, for both the Biodynamic and Ayurvedic therapist, creates an environment for information from the client’s system to express itself. For the inherent treatment plan to emerge in BCST, the same is true as an Ayurvedic practitioner listening to the pulse expressing its deficiencies and excesses. A different but similar inherent treatment plan arises. The recipient is given touch that does not interfere with the system, whether a hand on the neck and sacrum, or six fingers on the radial pulses. Yet the non-invasive contact offers support for the expression of the system’s needs. The inherent treatment plan is revealed. The transformation has begun, and we are simply present.

Holism is a very important principle in biodynamic therapy, and it is kept in mind with regard to Ayurvedic medicine as well. In short, both are not so over focused on the symptoms; thus holism is naturally occurring.

In Ayurveda, the radial pulse is a major tool for observing patterns of imbalance. Of course in BCST, we wait and listen for the tide to express itself, thus avoiding symptomology. Both methods are interested in balance of the system brought about through a deeper wisdom from within the client.

In Biodynamic cranial, the practitioner may consciously open themselves to the entire system. When “reading a pulse,” it is not so much feeling for something, right or wrong, but rather waiting for the expression of wholeness to reveal a constitutional and elemental need for balance or rebalancing.

Whether observing the radial pulse or the tide, the information revealed comes from a complete inner evaluation of the entire system.

Dr. James Jealous, D.O., one of the foremost teachers and developers of the Biodynamic method speaking about the development of the embryo said, “...this source of life awakening comes from another a greater mind...” This statement not only relates to the development of the embryo, but also to the sustaining of health throughout life. For example, the mid-tide is said to bring us into life, the tide heals as needed and takes us out of the body, all governed by this “greater mind.”

Personally, I do not think about mind but the inherent wisdom invested within each of us directly from Spirit. Considering what takes place as the tide presents itself, we are literally and directly in “touch,” with the Divine Breath Of Life. Similarly, Ayurveda considers that all healing also arising from the Divine.

Healing Occurs In The Present Moment

The above principle of Biodynamic therapy can be thought of as shifting energies, fluids, and tissues re-organizing due to tide influence. Or thinking of the present moment being the only moment in life NOW. We are fortunate to have found these methods that embrace Spirit at its purest. Like BCST, Ayurveda affirms that *healing occurs in the present moment* from within through the grace of a higher force, call it Breath Of Life, Tides, or Prana (as it known within Ayurvedic medicine).

As a practitioner of both methods, I notice that neither one of these healing methods indicates “we” the practitioner are

the reason for the improvements in the client. It is the return of Energy, vitality, Prana (life force), order, rehydration, movement, and increased awareness brought forth from within that heals.

Energy Organizes Form and Function

The image in **Figure 1** relates to the Biodynamic Cranial Therapy principle, **“Energy organizes form and function.”** This image from Ayurvedic Medicine shows a similar developmental process. It was the very first offering in my Ayurvedic training in 1981, depicting that it all begins with cosmic energy. Cosmic consciousness is depicted in the image as lines of force progressively building the human form above. Energy activates the being progressing in form through ego, individual consciousness (chitta), reasoning (bubhi), mind (manas), and finally body.

Although this illustration is looking at the origin of the being, it also validates the same principal...in this case the energy is referred to as cosmic consciousness.

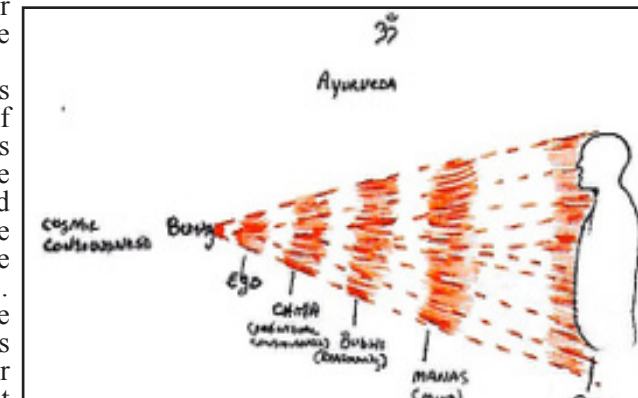


Figure 1. Energy organizes form and function.

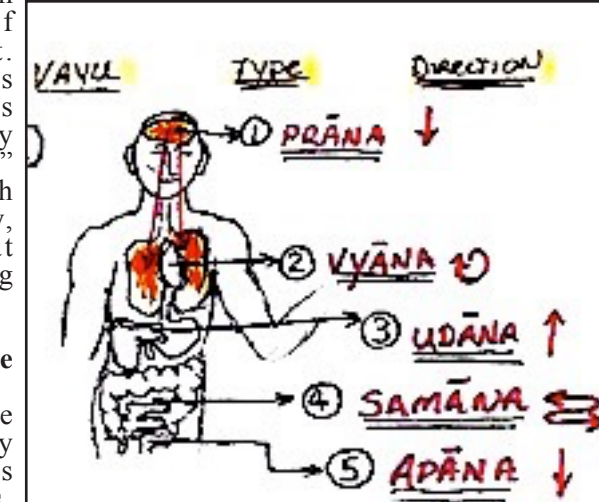


Figure 2. The Five Pranas

Breath Of Life, Tides, and Prana Pulses

Continuing with the idea that energy organizes form and function, let’s look at this energy in its many forms (**Figure 2**).

Prana, the flow of life force as described in Ayurvedic medicine, is also similar to the various tides in Biodynamic Cranial. We may wonder at the wisdom of the Tide, which may begin to suddenly address a location in the body of the client that is somewhere else other than where our hands are making contact. Of course, this is the wisdom of the Breath Of Life. But also, it is related to the flow of the five directions of movement of Prana, described in Ayurveda.

In Ayurveda, life force is said to enter the brain moving downward. This force (Prana) nourishes the senses in the cranium: sight, smell, hearing, taste, and the sensation of touch in the skin. Prana governs all *downward flow of life force*. Prana is then

broken down into the following aspects of itself in its distribution of life force in the human form.

When Prana moves downward entering the lungs, the life force changes to a circular flow called **Vyana**, which governs all circular movement in the body. For example, we cannot even imagine making a circle with our arm, finger or eyes...for that matter any part of our body without the activated subtle flow of Vyana. Notice how often one might rub a sore joint in circles with awareness. It can set in motion the grosser tissues circulation of fluids so that the tissues reorganize and the healing begins once more from the energy that made the form.

The flow of life force shows a different directional flow as it moves into the diaphragm. Once there, it is called **Udana**, governing all upward movement, such as standing up, opening the eyes, leaving the body at death, and so on. All actions that move upward, even memory, is brought forth by the uprising of the Udana directed flow of vitality.

As Prana enters the gut it is known as **Samana**: a linear pattern of movement like that of the small intestine. One's ability to shift one's weight from right foot to left, the ability to shift from right brain to left, for the small intestine to move in its coiled manner within the body, are all governed by Samana. Even shifting the eyes side to side, finishing a delightful bit of food then licking across the lips, is due to Samana. Once again, this vital energy is very subtle but without it, the gross energetics cannot function efficiently.

The fifth directional flow is **Apana**, which governs all downward flow, elimination, sitting down, vitality to the lower body, the ability to ground swallowing, inhalation as the diaphragm must move downward to draw breath into the lungs, etc.

The point of sharing all this in such detail is to offer a greater clarity of the relationship between Ayurvedic understanding of energy and how it applies to Biodynamic Cranial Therapy. I believe that the wisdom of the Breath Of Life activates and is activated by these five directional flows to assist the healing process as needed in our Biodynamic Cranial Therapy.

I also feel that when the tide shifts finding a location of some inertia, it is likely the Tide is acting on or being acted upon by the five vital directional forces of Prana.

Whether this Life force or Prana is resonating in the field of fluid, tissue, bone, or a more delicate energetic field, both of these methods are beneficial and sustainable. They both address the energy body, the elements, tissues, fluids, and inspire re-organization through *holism*—another common principal shared by both methods. In the Biodynamic method, we open ourselves to the whole system in treatment while maintaining the

contact. In Ayurveda, investigating the client's lifestyle is considered part of the wholeness principle of the being.

Movement: For life as we know it to exist at all, there must be movement in cells, tissues, fluids, everything. It is a basic characteristic of life. In BCST, we are interested in observing the actions of the tide relative to movement within the body. We could say, that which in not moving is not truly living. The same is true in Ayurveda. Although touch is used in many different methods, it is a touch of awakening as opposed to intent to fix that is offered from both Biodynamic and Ayurvedic practice.

I would like to share a subtle internal movement and healing method in Ayurveda. The technique combines **Mudra** (a precise orientation of the body that unifies body mind and spirit) and **Marma** (a healing method similar to acupressure). You might have fun combining this exploration with our Biodynamic method. The contact we are making the connection with is based on the same wisdom within that initiates motion. This exercise is lung-related, but as mentioned earlier, it relates to the wholeness, the entire being, nervous system, fluid system, tissues, and awareness. As a Biodynamic therapist, please use the same protocol preparing yourself for this exploration. Feel your tide then engage the fingers in the mudra/marma as described and wait for the inner transitions to arise.

Mudra-Marma Treatment: This lesson is a hands-on self-exploration of subtle movements of the forces of life within. It is very gentle once again, not “fixing” but rather letting the wisdom within re-order and often inspire balance, fluid motion, and cleansing of the body. The lesson also addresses emotions that may be harbored in the various lobes of our lungs. Please look closely at **Figure 3**.

One lung at a time is explored. The other hand, on the side opposite the lung being addressed, is lying palm down beside you on the table. Begin by lying on your back find your Tide and begin...

You may enjoy observing the tide from time to time as you explore this lesson.

1) Addressing the top lobe of the left lung. Contained therein may be fear and nervousness, a Kapha tendency. **Contact: tuck your left thumb into the palm so that it touches the base of the little finger. Fold the rest of the fingers over the thumb. Breath softly the breath will tend to direct itself to the upper lobe of the left lung.**

2) The middle lobe of the left lung. Contained within sometimes there may be anxiety, a Vata characteristic. **Contact left thumb and index finger; fold**

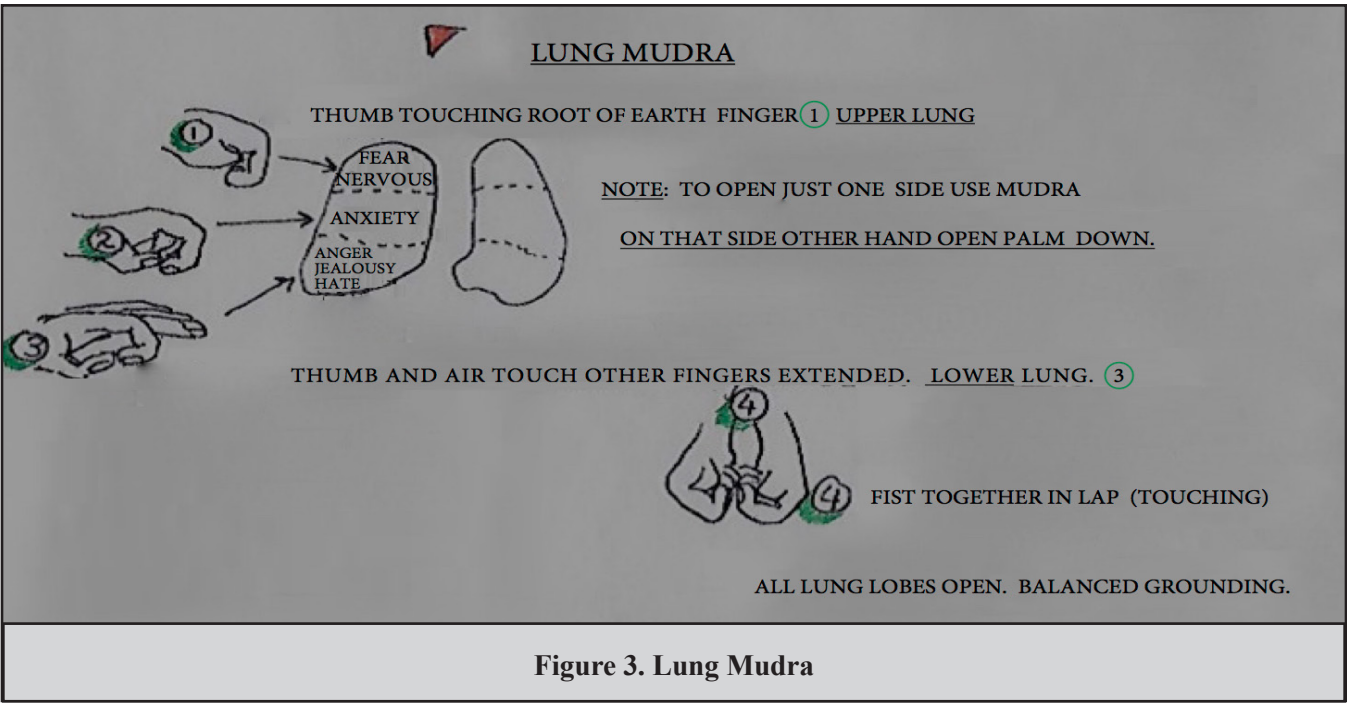


Figure 3. Lung Mudra

the rest of the fingers inward toward the palm. Let the breath come and go naturally. You may feel the breath primarily in the second lobe.

3) The lower lobe of the left lung. Contained within may be stored anger jealousy Pitta (fire) emotions. **Contact thumb and index finger; extend the rest of the fingers softly.** The breath will tend to flow easily into the lower lobe of the lung. Once more I invite you to note the Tide response.

4) Balancing all lobes and grounding. **Rest your folded fists on your lap, knuckles touching.** (You could explore all of these in seated position as well). With the opposite palm at rest with palm down, the lung on that side will come to rest with the breath moving very softly.

Midline Clarity & Function

Both Biodynamic Cranial Therapy and Ayurveda have a vested interest in the midline. After all, it was and is the location of growth and development of the embryo into the fully developed being we are now. It is from the midline that we tend to heal from the inside out, as we grew from the midline out embryologically from our beginning of life. In the Biodynamic method, we await re-organization at the midline as a focus for centering and anchoring function.

In Ayurveda, the midline is recognized as the location of a powerful spiritual fluid—the ultimate spiritual fluid that nourished all tissues. Also, as the being awakens, this fluid begins to rise up toward the “higher centers.” The yogis first discovered chakra energy centers in the spinal midline in deep meditation. They found that these centers

nourish growth and awakening via the spinal energies. Yoga was inspired by the relationship to the midline and the energies contained within. Alignment of the entire physical system has much to do with the midline and spine. Functionally, our daily movements, as we go about our tasks when we are well-organized arises from the inside out. We could note that all movement may be generated from intention, activating the life force in the spine and then radiating out toward the world functionally.

Stillness

Both Biodynamic Cranial Therapy and Ayurveda have strong relationships to Stillness. It might be said that the “launching point” for BCST therapeutically comes from the depths of stillness. The practitioner and recipient may both benefit by establishing an aura of stillness before during and after treatment. When the Tide pauses, stillness is present there. The depth of wisdom for transmutation begins the healing.

Ayurveda sees stillness also as an essential quality for chanting, the space between sounds, and space after chants. Stillness is very necessary for reading pulses. When we eat, stillness and silence are highly recommended. Out of stillness we came into life, and we enter stillness at the end of life. In very deep meditation, one of the main qualities is resting in stillness.

In my opinion, it is best to complete this offering in stillness and silence. I hope you derive some benefit from the sharing and upon the last word read please enjoy stillness; take a dip in the infinite.♦

SUPPORTING THE PROCESS OF DEATH THROUGH ENERGETIC ASSESSMENT

John Mramor, MA, MT, RCST®, CLT, CR, RM

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The sequence of events inherent in the release from biological life is exceptionally powerful, awe-inspiring and singularly informative. Revealing this journey and its components can be extraordinarily useful for the hospice team, commonly comprised of spiritual, social work, medical and therapeutic arts professionals.

The information commonly garnered during an assessment can be utilized to:

1. Reveal issues that are preventing a patient from transitioning (“hanging-on”);
2. Provide guidance concerning the direction/pathway/process;
3. Calm unsettling fears/paranoia;
4. Confirm patient “feeling” of a local/near-by presence (or numerous presences), either currently in the room or having visited recently;
5. Validate medical assumptions, without testing in hospice, pertaining to active troubling somatic issues;
6. Categorize a patient’s current functional placement in the death process (usually prior to observable physical findings);
7. Prepare family/friends for active involvement in the process.

The primary purpose of this article is to describe the energetic events that occur during the process of dying, the common complications which may arise, how this information may be useful to the hospice team and to provide energetic

terminology associated with the dying process. Be advised that even though human energetic anatomy is a complex arrangement of intercommunicating, multi-layered processes, each with a different purpose, most therapeutic interfacing discussed in this article occurs within the essence of the heart chakra (aka, Ch4, heart center, fourth chakra) or while communicating with the primary essence of the patient.

The sequences/stages that ensue are presented in a linear fashion. This is done primarily for ease in comprehension, for death does not normally follow a straight line trajectory. It is messy and encumbered with peaks and valleys, retreats, deviations, discontinuity and fraught with any number of emotional, spiritual and social issues. Therefore, elements inherent in active death may appear enmeshed with those elements common to pre-near active death. This situation can be confusing, even for the seasoned professional. It is only through careful analysis, knowledge of the patient’s journey and meticulous observation that a proper determination can be made regarding what stage a patient is actually experiencing given the variables present.

The terminology presented in this article was created by the author. Each term attempts to conceptualize the events that occur in each stage. A definition is provided when the term is first presented. Attempting to describe subtle energetic occurrences is a fragile and challenging task; the terms are not perfect.

Pre-Near Active Death

Bridging

The first sign of the dying process is called bridging. This can be envisioned by the therapist within the heart chakra quite early, in some patients, many months prior to a definitive physical decline and/or other energetic changes. Put simply, it is a transpersonal construct that is manufactured by the patient. It is utilized as a mechanism that assists the patient in accepting death. This energetic bridge assists the patient in moving from a body-centered focus to that of a spiritual focus. Bridging is a non-threatening, easily understood process for people to use to “cross over.” It is the initial step that once taken, triggers the sequencing involved that assists the patient in detaching from the body. Regardless of the type of death experienced, for the person to be birthed back into source material (the

substance of our origin), bridging must occur.

The majority of bridges are based upon items or experiences from the person’s psychoemotional/social history. Most often, they are constructed of images from favorite hobbies, things that have fascinated a person or have made life on earth comfortable and secure. When viewed within the heart center, the person is commonly present, either engaged in the construct, proudly exhibiting the bridge to the therapist or at a distance from it, protectively involved. Also, a person is seldom on the far side of the bridge, unless they have migrated through it and are ready for the next stage to occur. Rarely is the patient absent from the scene. If this is so, it is normally due to:

1. A dysfunction of some type (most likely fear based);
2. A bridge that was constructed much in advance and is now “in storage” awaiting transport;
3. A reversal has occurred and the patient is no longer hospice appropriate.

Bridging is best viewed using ankle contact or placement of the hands within the fields near the feet. When contact is made, it may be possible to communicate with the person. This is performed telepathically.

The most fascinating thing about bridging has to do with the diversity of images utilized. This therapist has seen crystal sculptural caverns created by a corporate lawyer who adored collecting art; a kaleidoscope of amorphous ethereal colors designed by a nuclear physicist; the actual control bridge from Star Trek recalled by a graphic design artist who loved the series; a complex string of equations wound around in such a way that they created a tube-like affair that stretched far into the distance, created by an electrical engineer; an English garden nurtured by a grandmother who liked to work outdoors. *The main purpose of the bridge is to set an atmosphere of security and safety, allowing the person to experience a sense of serenity during the transition from body to source. The bridge is an invitation back to our true home.*

Therapy or assistance in this period usually has more to do with the act of encouraging a person onward or instructing them in the process. Patients may:

1. Be a bit anxious or confused as to how to begin the journey; this especially true

of people who have not often experienced death (“new souls”) and are perplexed as to the process involved;

2. Be reluctant to leave, finding themselves torn between family/earth and the beckoning of spirit/heaven;

3. Be faced with the slow decline of the body, frequently a result of dementia-related or neurological diseases. In these trajectories, the author has witnessed numerous patients simply becoming fatigued or impatient with the slow decline. They can become detached, absent from the dull progress and/or engaged in fretful wanderings in and out of the body. Some are satisfied with

just waiting, watching the lugubrious physical deterioration with the utmost patience. It is common for most to become disconnected, and this is when negative emotions, like angst and sorrow, become imbued within their being.

In all of the scenarios above, it is quite helpful to energetically resonate with their heart chakra. Offer encouragement and, especially with those reluctant, listless or naive souls, provide

instruction as to what should occur. Loving kindness and reassurance blended with hope and peppered with prayer will create an environment that typically encourages a person to move forward on their own over time.

Systemic Outflow

Bridging ideally leads to systemic outflow. This is a process by which the field surrounding the physical heart engages in an expansion that acts as a loosening agent for the bond connecting the soma to the soul. Initially, this expansion moves through the entire body, much like a wave, eventually flowing outward through the auric layers, and then beyond to dissipate and resolve. Occasionally, this process is preceded by a softening of the field which can be easily misinterpreted as systemic outflow, especially as it mimics the wave-like dimension. However, there are two important differences:

1. Softening does not move beyond the chest;

2. It can be a lengthy process, often up to a month or more. Systemic outflow normally occurs over a shorter period, is an intense, decisive experience and definitely encompasses the entire human mechanism.

Normally, once this process is

complete, the next major series of energetic events transpire without much time intervening. However, like bridging, some people desire preparedness and the author has witnessed systemic outflow occurring much before near active death engages. This is most common in cases of neurological and neuromuscular diseases or any disease process that unfolds over a long period of time. If it is observed that a person is experiencing impatience, sadness or any number of other emotional/social issues during this time, best consult a social worker or counselor to assist them, preferably a professional well-versed in transpersonal psychology and techniques appropriate for people who are unable to process material verbally. If no one is available, then supportive presence interventions are useful or astral realm interfacing during which a dialogue can take place that emphasizes the importance of remaining within the proximity of our source material.

Systemic outflow is best evaluated within one of the fields near the feet. Here, it is rather easy to feel and observe the mobilization of energy outward from the heart and through the tissues. It is not uncommon to view spectacular flows, while simultaneously feeling the movement itself pulsing through your hands and body. When observing systemic outflow, the chest and extremities are particularly accentuated as the flow of energy mainly moves through these areas. Systemic outflow does not rebound or return, for once enacted, it determinedly continues onward and outward.

Do not attempt to contain or interfere with this process, and definitely do not entrain or resonate with the mechanism involved. Allow it to occur unimpeded. For a closer perspective and assessment, making direct contact with the heart center will not cause harm, but it is best to stay outside the etheric field.

Implantation and mobilization are two therapeutically helpful techniques that assist patients having issues with motivation, direction and level of energy. Motivational issues typically occur due to psychodynamic problems. Direction is often muddled by confusion, fear, sadness and depression. A depleted energy level is easily identified by a barren/empty heart space; an exhausting terminal illness or a lifetime of struggle will easily drain the heart, precipitating a death

that seems to falter and rebound, moving forward one moment and halting the next. Any patient can easily engage all three issues during the dying time; it can be absolutely normal and not necessarily something for the therapist to be concerned about. That is why re-assessment and observation are helpful from session to session, to determine if the problem has become intractable and a pervasive feature of the patient's experience.

Implantation involves the energetic placement, using visualization techniques for guidance, of a holographic image of the systemic outflow process actually occurring through the patient's system. Once

embedded, this will serve to empower, encourage and fuel the heart's energetic system. With subsequent session work, supportive resonance with gentle amplification will stimulate the patient's release mechanism. Once this region has experienced critical charge, and the patient has allowed for a shift towards healing and release, then systemic outflow will occur.

Mobilization is less frequently employed. This technique serves to boost a stunted or temporarily stalled systemic outflow process. It involves coupling with the ailing process and encouraging it to resume forward momentum. It is

exceedingly rare when the patient takes the cue upon the first encounter. Usually, this is an ailment that requires periodic sessions, gently guiding the patient onward. Often, the reason for this issue has something to do with a familial complication or fear. Less often, it is related to a somatic disease process that has slowed. If it is due to a decelerating health condition, then it is best not to attempt assistance; allow the patient to make a reversal or maintain a suspended systemic process. Interfering will only cause confusion, disrupting an already questionable journey. Simply provide supportive presence in this instance.

There is an interestingly rare phenomenon associated with systemic outflow that the author has had the privilege of observing. Its appearance and reason remains a mystery and it is always detected immediately upon contact with the heart center. There is a strong sense of protection and attainment correlated to it. This phenomenon is presented as the representation of a flame (or occasionally as a flaming religious symbol, like the cross)

The phenomenon is presented as the representation of a flame within the physical heart itself.

Once encountered, the viewer is honored with the intuitive sense that the bearer will require no assistance, that all is well, and that the process will transpire smoothly and expediently.

within the physical heart itself. Once encountered, the viewer is honored with the intuitive sense that the bearer (patient) will require no assistance, that all is well, and that the process will transpire smoothly and expediently. The impression the author senses upon seeing this phenomenon is that of having met an ancient and sage soul who has traveled between "heaven and earth" so often that there is likely no need to repeat it anymore. From a sociological and psychological perspective, the people who have this heart-related "symbol" have been rather ordinary citizens; not wealthy, intellectually prominent or in any manner, auspicious: a flower shop attendant, a public school nurse, a homemaker. Also, and this is a commonality with all studied, the remaining death-related events and journey proceed with little to no need for assistance, support or presence.

Near Active Death

Uncoupling

Uncoupling is comprised of five processes that together signal an advancing journey. The word uncoupling has been chosen to represent the processes involved as it invokes the concept of two separate systems loosening their connection. These changes appear prior to observable near active physical signs and symptoms, and can continue once they are observed by medical staff. The main purpose of this stage is to allow the heart opportunity to accumulate a critical amount of energy. Once this has been achieved, a person is free to engage active death and begin the process of separating from the body. To fuel the heart center (Ch4), the following changes occur.

A. Ch4 becomes magnetic and attracts energy. This can easily be palpated, without interfering, by touching the ankles and feeling the impassioned flow towards the heart. It easily takes precedent over every other flow in the body's energetic anatomy. If visualized, one can observe this energy simply moving into a darkened space that never seems to be filled, much like a black hole. It can be an overwhelming experience, often pulling the practitioner towards it or capturing energy through the practitioner's body. This draw includes all distal aspects of the body from Ch4, i.e., the heart pulls energy inward from every distant point.

B. The Ch4 normally draws energy inward. However, during this phase, the draw is substantial. Even novice medical staff have palpated this during the author's sessions. No matter where in the field of Ch4 an observant hand is placed, the pull has a strong magnetic draw.

C. The structure of Ch4 begins to change. The author has identified four distinct occurrences: **1. Horizontal plane chakral spin rebounding; 2. Vertical plane**

rebounding; 3. Vortex wall deterioration; 4. Ch4 stagnation/freezing.

Spin rebounding occurs when the normal directional spin of an energy center begins to change direction, repeatedly, as if it simply is unable to decide which way it wishes to go; this can involve varying rates of speed in addition to stopping for brief periods and then resuming.

Vertical rebounding occurs when the center sinks inward toward the body, either in whole or in part; if in whole, it usually seems to disappear for a moment once "absorbed," only to reappear suddenly intact (in other words, it does not move upward from the body once having moved inward); if in part, it typically moves downward at an angle, the most declined area restoring itself eventually through a gradual upward movement.

Wall deterioration involves a part of the vortex structure giving way; for some reason, this occurs most often and is most noticeable in the lower left quadrant of the vortex wall; it appears as if the wall is melting, drooping down towards the body; this often occurs with rebounding, with spin still active through the affected region, even though it may be somewhat disturbed by the deconstruction.

Stagnation is less often encountered. This involves the complete cessation of movement, even though other changes may be manifest and ongoing. The heart center palpates as a solid entity. This is not a normal, "healthy" end-of-life process, for it signals a disturbance or an issue that should be evaluated and assisted. Stagnation can come and go. Sometimes it resolves on its own, but most likely the patient will require encouragement and a supportive intervention over time in order to inspire the center to mobilize and continue onward.

D. An unusual shift takes place within the auric fields: "massing." This change identifies the enormous amount of energy absorption transpiring through the heart center. A massing or aggregation of the auric fields occurs between the head and the waistline. This palpates much like a bubble. The author usually assesses this change by initiating palpation at the crown center on the leading edge of the causal field, following the shape while proceeding distally. Typically, the causal field will seem to expand upward/outward until a sudden and dramatic shift down towards the body occurs at the waistline. From this level to the feet, the auric fields are quite close to one another. The purpose of this change in auric structure is due to the vacuum-like magnetic potential of the heart center as it paradoxically draws large quantities of energy inward (drawing even the lower portion of the auric field towards it) while simultaneously expanding the field outward

(as a reflection of the substantial amount of energy it is storing). The heart center is preparing for a kinetic event.

E. A strong connection builds in momentum between the fourth and sixth chakras, which this author identifies as the heart/mind connection (h/m connect). Similarly, the same type of connection initiates between the third and fourth, thought of as the lower self to the higher self (Ch3/Ch4 connect). The h/m connect often palpates as an arc, following somewhat the shape of massing. Ch3/Ch4 does not arc, but instead can be felt as an appreciable internal flow from one center to the other.

Active Death

Auric Dispersion

Once the heart has accumulated a critical amount of energy, those energetic systems associated with physical life and the interplay between soul and somatic functioning disperse and/or collapse. They are no longer necessary. The heart center becomes supercharged, releases its bond with the soul and in the process, gradually weakens. Eventually, the soul rises from the body while remaining attached to the kundalini. At the moment of physical death, the kundalini “explodes,” completely detaching the soul from the body. Once the soul is free, traces of certain energy systems remain palpable for up to 30 minutes, but these are useless remnants of an elegantly designed creation.

There are five main components of this stage. Each are easily assessed. They form the core diagnostic of the event taking place: **A.** Dispersion of the auric fields; **B.** Thrusting of Ch4; **C.** Exceptional flow into Ch4 with no diversion; **D.** The imbedding of the functional mind/heart into source material; **E.** The separation of the soul from the body (kundalini release).

A. Unlike the “bubble” created by massing, auric dispersion initially manifests as a broadening of the distances between each separate field. Thereafter, the entire auric structure commences to move further and further away from the body. Eventually, the causal or outermost field expands to the point that palpation is beyond reach with a patient in supine position. During detachment, the fields have dissipated and are no longer present.

B. Ch4 becomes a vibrant flood of outward thrusting energy. Avoid direct contact. It should not be contained. Access it directly only to determine its formation. Spending lengthy periods within the heart center creates a sense of holding, imposing or pushing that may not be the intention of the therapist, but nonetheless is experienced by the person releasing. If for some reason a desire to communicate with this region

becomes imperative, do so from a distance, preferably with hands suspended over the feet. This process identifies, substantiates and finalizes the release of the bond securing soma to soul.

C. As in other stages, the heart center continues to draw energy towards it from distal regions. However, in this stage, there is no diversion. The energy is not absorbed by the center or utilized for other purposes. It simply flows to the heart region and then proceeds outward through what used to be the vortex.

D. The most important sequence of this stage involves the person’s connection with source material (aka, our true reality/heaven/ the energy of God). This is otherwise known as “crossing over.” Through the previous stages, one event that has not yet been discussed is the movement of the heart/ mind towards acceptance of physical death. This is often observed during session work, especially during the uncoupling process. Usually, a person is seen moving towards a distant light source, alone; less often, as part of a group. It is a symbolic journey, significant of a person’s willingness to leave all behind and return home. The practitioner is capable, and sometimes invited, to journey alongside or behind the person towards this light. However, a true boundary exists once the light is approached. At this point, the person then approaches, embeds and couples within their own, personal light structure, with the practitioner nearby, but disallowed. At times, this causes a brief period of stress as the person invites the practitioner to accompany them. However, the joy and fulfillment that is experienced quickly dispels the tension. Once a person is embedded in the light structure, there is no turning back. They are whisked away towards all that is and the next step occurs. By way of note, the mental activity of “life review” often occurs during this period.

There are times when an escort (guardian angel, soul group member, previous relative or friend) will be present. This occurs for many reasons: fear, sadness, having lived through a traumatic life, exhaustion, mental illness, isolation, yearning for a loved one who proceeded them in death. The escort serves to assist and protect the person through the journey into source material. An escort typically appears as a person enters this stage, but the author has observed them as early as pre-near active death.

E. The final process involves the detachment of the soul from the body. Some practitioners have observed this occurring through the crown chakra, some believe it is through the heart. The author has witnessed neither of these. Detachment occurs within the kundalini. The exact mechanism remains a mystery. Evidently, the strongest attachment site is the last to release. The best position

to observe this is by standing close to the feet with arms outstretched and palms facing the patient. The energetic structure of the person is seen sitting up from the body, with attachment remaining at the hips. When death occurs, the soul is simply released from the kundalini and becomes no longer visible.

Complications

There are many complications that delay or make death a struggle. Tethering, anchoring, blockages, hovering, trauma, various manifestations of pain, medical extension of physical life and evil itself all serve to create problems during the dying time. There are methods to overcome these, but they are beyond the scope of this article.

Case Study

The author was approached by a nurse case manager. She presented a patient who was dying. The primary issues involved a prolonged dying process and suffering for a reason that could not be discerned. “I’m at the end of what I can do.” The patient was non-verbal and in a semi-comatose state. She asked the author “to do his thing” and then to present the findings to the team.

With the team’s knowledge and support, the author conducted the assessment. He discovered: 1. That the patient was a victim of prolonged, violent physical and sexual abuse; 2. She did not want to die until she

experienced unconditional love; 3. That she was in active death sequencing, but that blockages, hovering and severe trauma were anchoring her.

Once the assessment was complete, the author was surprised to find the patient’s two sisters waiting for him immediately outside of the room. They were informed by the facility staff that the author was present “to help figure out what was wrong.” Concerned about the information and how the sisters would react to it, the author paged the hospice social worker who was present in the facility. She was informed of the situation and joined the author in conference.

Once informed, the sisters began crying. After a few moments, they confirmed that the patient had been abused for years. She was tortured in the basement by her husband and another person. They presented details. The social worker was exemplary in counseling the family once the author was finished.

A plan was devised for the whole hospice team to engage. Each member, in their own manner, using their own techniques, provided unconditional love during visits. The end result was that there were plainly visible signs of peace, comfort and joy penetrating the patient’s entire being within 24 hours of this intervention. She died two days later, a changed, radiant person, clearly evident to all who visited her. ♦

1+1 = 3

Nuit, Hadit!

The infinite breath

Implicit

Explicit

Implicit...

Humming

Thrumming

Looks like one at a glance

But slow it down,

Each pulse elongates,

The space between opens

The in-between

where that 3rd presence is

Unwinding into Her:

Holding, showing, revealing...

Everything, everything, is dancing.

Woven together by that which holds the space we dance with(in).

Always

beneath our experience is the presence breathing us alive,

we can rest in this and be transformed.

No matter how far we go along our convoluted questing crookedness...

We can all ways re turn home to ourselves.

Joseph Saine

Breath of Angels

I hear your voice
on the Breath of angels
no words to speak
only the sound of your love
reaching out to me
we will meet in the Open sky
throw your arms around me

it's time to Move on
it's the Birth of a new Song
it's time to let go
it's all that I know

I see your Face
light in the mirror
my smiling eyes
are filled with your Glory
you gave me a world
full of color
to paint my Story
on the ruins of Today

I gather my Prayers
lay down my sword
I cannot keep fighting these wars
the battle of my soul Falls to rest
in the kingdom of Surrender
I am Blessed

Harmony Eden Oltman

IT'S TIME TO PLAY!

Robert Gardner, RCST®

Robert Gardner is the father of six kids and has been engaged with Qigong, Tai Chi, and Meditation since 1996 both as a student and as a teacher (Sifu) with his own Kung Fu and Tai Chi school in Arizona. He is also a certified Qigong Healer. He published his first book last year on the subject of energy healing entitled, *Is That Even Possible: The Nuts and Bolts of Energy Healing for the Curious, Wary, and Totally Bewildered*.



As someone who came to the world of cranial work from a slightly rougher neck of the woods (aka - martial arts), I've always been on the lookout for a more active way to employ the powerful tools that Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy has to offer. And, as those of you reading this well know, as soon as you start looking for something, you invariably find it.

It began with this experience, which I quote from my book, *Is That Even Possible? The Nuts and Bolts of Energy Healing for the Curious, Wary, and Totally Bewildered*:

... About a year ago, Justin, one of my teenage Kung Fu students started having trouble breathing during the class warmups. He was naturally very active and quite the athlete but had apparently overdone it a little before class. I could see that his face was flushed and that he was desperately trying to get a deep breath. So I had him step off to the side while the rest of the class continued their exercises.

Justin already knew that I did energy work so he waited patiently as I simply held his ankles (in Listen mode). Shortly after making contact, however, I got the distinct impression that his lung meridian needed a kind of immediate jumpstart. So I got up and pushed my thumbs into a couple of acupuncture points on his chest. It seemed to help, but I could tell it wasn't quite what he needed. Then, sure enough, there flashed into my mind an image of exactly what I

ought to do. The idea sort of startled me. "I think I need to punch you, right here... Is that okay?" "Ummm... sure."

I could tell he was a bit nervous about the prospect of getting clocked by his Kung Fu teacher, but he assured me it was okay. So I decked him. Hard. Ramming my knuckles into those points on his chest while simultaneously being careful not to break anything. Immediately, he sucked in such a draught of air that you would think he had never breathed before in his life. His face returned to normal almost instantly, and he jumped right back into class without a worry or complaint.

I've since had a lot of time to ponder on this incident. What strikes me about it (pardon the pun!) is that it just sort of happened in the middle of playing warrior games. Then, when it was done, we just moved on and kept playing.

For years now, I've observed how serious the healing arts have become. Despite countless articles about the healing virtue of play, roughhousing, and joyful physical movement, when people enter a therapist's office it's all straight faces and bracing for the inevitable.

"What if this could be different?" I asked myself. "What if we could actually play and punch and wrestle ourselves into wholeness with the same kind of care and awareness as in a normal cranial session? Is that even possible?" As luck would have it, my own son taught me the answer to those very questions.

PROD OR PLAY?

Josiah is a very determined nine-year-old, which not only means that he does some pretty incredible things, but also that when things don't go his way he tends to explode with anger and frustration—kicking walls, punching his siblings, scratching, you name it. To put it mildly, my wife and I were a bit concerned about this turn of events. Our nightly powwows turned into brainstorming sessions for how we could help our otherwise amazing son let go of all that pent up anger and frustration. He wouldn't sit still for a cranial session or any other form of therapy. We couldn't talk him out of it. Sending him out for a walk or bike ride only stalled things. What was left?

The way I saw it, Josiah's muscles and bones had been marinating in an anger chemical cocktail for quite some time. I

certainly didn't want his whole life to take on that flavor and for him to just become an angry person. So I knew we needed to address both the energetic as well as the physiological side of his emotions. We had to get the blood moving, but how?

Well... we could do a deep-tissue massage. That only brought tears. Or we could wrestle! And it turns out that I could put more body weight on him while rolling, sitting, noogying (of course), pinching, and climbing than I ever could with regular massage. And you know what? He was laughing the whole time! He had shifted his emotional state AND gotten the massage he needed all while playing a game. And the remarkable thing is that this particular "play therapy" did far more to help him stabilize his emotions and let go of his anger than any cranial session he had ever received.

Now, I readily admit that this approach seems to run counter to Sutherland's idea of never applying force to the system. In fact, it pretty much deliberately contradicts it. But so did punching Justin in the chest. Yet it worked.

Once, during my cranial training, Scott Zamurut had us listen for a tide, then massage our client's feet, then listen for a tide again and notice how it had changed. In every case, shifts had occurred and trauma had been released. These occurrences suggest something rather obvious but worth stating: we are physical beings as much as we are energetic and spiritual beings. All the parts are intertwined like a braid. Which means that if you have the right intention, you can't help but heal all the pieces when working with any one of them.

The nice thing about roughhousing and playing with the intention of healing is that there is no required outcome. No one is "forcing" the Breath of Life to get out bed and get to work. Play acts simply as an invitation much like a therapist's hands do. Plus, it's a lot of fun and works really well with squirmy elementary school boys who would rather dive roll over a massage table than lie down on one.

THE BRAIDED WARRIOR IS BORN

Since that breakthrough with my son, my wife and I felt that more families needed these tools in their homes, so we created—The Braided Warrior as a way of honoring of the three parts of ourselves and of teaching others how to play in a healing way. In a few short months, I have publicly taught over a hundred different families to play with their kids in ways that not only help them release their pent up emotional and physical traumas, but that also teach kids how to be aware of energetic sensations and develop their natural abilities to heal and help others heal. I'm doing it because I would rather give them the

tools while they are young than wait for them to grow up, turn 35, and suddenly discover they have some serious baggage to deal with.

My other concern is that with our increasingly technological society, people don't touch anymore. Kids will stand next to each other in groups and text rather than talk. They interact on Facebook rather than in person. Boys, especially, are being drawn into video games and pornography rather than healthy human interaction. And this disconnect from what it means to be in a body on the earth where there are other bodies around leads to very extreme behavior. Without the ability to express themselves through physical connection, touch is quickly becoming polarized as either sexual or violent with little to no middle ground.

These games are meant to help us reconnect so that we don't lose sight of our humanity as technology continues its forward march. I created to them (in my own sort of sly and conniving way) to do three things:

- 1. Teach kids some of the principles of energy healing and bodywork in a fun and engaging way.
- 2. Help the kids actually heal in the process.
- 3. Get families bonding together through playful physical contact so that the family can heal and be a stable place for the children AND adults to grow and develop as human beings.

What follows is a set of instructions for three of the games I have taught in my seminars that have opened parents and kids up to more healing possibilities at home. I invite you to try them out. They have been a springboard for lots of profound discussion with my own kids about life and how things really work. They have also spawned some spontaneous healing work that my kids have done on my wife. (Now THAT's a perk if there ever was one!)

HEALING GAMES

Because we're working with kids here, it's useful to remember that weird or abstract energy terms can be a little difficult for them to grasp (unless you're using Star Wars terminology, in which case, have at it!). There's SO much information to process, odd terms to memorize, charts, affirmations, anatomy, visualizations, and healing techniques to use that I myself have at times blown a few neural fuses and lost track of the pure joy and (dare I say) fun of healing. There's something so beautifully simple about the process that gets lost somewhere between "This is how it works..." and "Does that make sense?" I can't tell you how many times I've seen my kids' eyes glaze over when I start sharing what I've learned. They still want to learn

GAME ONE: Cement Boots
(shared by Robert Gardner)

Let me warn you that this game works with some very physical energy – meaning the I-push-you-and-you-push-me kind of energy. The stuff your kids do all the time anyway (if they're boys at least). We are going to help each other learn to deal with a bit of unwanted and unexpected pressure in life in way that's fun and that your kids will enjoy rather than just giving them a presentation or lecture on the subject.

The recipe is fairly simple: take a little bit of massage work, sprinkle in a few ground rules, and "Presto!" Your kids (and you) will start wiggling out pent up emotional wounds and creating greater spiritual and emotional stability without it feeling like the bite-your-lip-and-deal-with-it kind of healing work. In fact, you'll probably giggle about it at some point.

As a final note, there are LOADS of variations on this game to play that heal in different ways and develop different skills. This is probably the easiest one to start with, but feel free to experiment. Have fun with it. Just make sure that both players are on the same page before you start. No cheap shots allowed, kids... or parents!

MAIN IDEA

Don't move your feet. Instead, use your body movement to wiggle free of the effects of your partner's push without taking a step.

SCORING
(If you're into that kind of thing)

1. The player getting pushed receives one point for each time they stay on their feet. (We want to reward the successes, not the failures.)

2. First player to 100 wins.

HOW TO PLAY:

- 1. Player One stands comfortably upright.
- 2. Player Two pushes on Player One's body trying to get him/her to move at least one foot out of place while Player One uses body movements to wiggle free of the push.
- 3. Do this 10 times. Then switch roles.

VIDEO DEMONSTRATION:

Sometimes it helps to SEE the game in action. So I put together a brief video to recap what we just covered.
You can find it here:
<https://youtu.be/seBI1IzBFA4>

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. In the beginning, you'll want to start pushing in the shoulder region. That is the easiest place to start. Once you've gotten the idea, begin pushing on the stomach, the legs, the head and neck, and finally the back.
- 2. Use gentle and consistent pressure when pushing. This is about finesse. You want to move them with the smallest possible physical gesture, and they should escape with the least possible physical movement. As you push this way, you'll develop the capacity to "see" where your partner is a bit stuck and would be easily pushed. This is a critical skill in healing work.

– just not that way. You can see it in their faces:

“Skip the lectures, please. Can we just get on with the COOL stuff?”

Fair enough. I feel that way as an adult most of the time. We spend so much time explaining stuff and trying to wrap our brains around it that we never get to the understanding that comes from just doing it. The process typically goes like this:

*EXPLANATION first –
then UNDERSTANDING –
then EXPERIENCE*

With kids (and me), I’ve found that it’s usually best to go in reverse order:

*EXPERIENCE first –
then UNDERSTANDING –
then EXPLANATION*

So that’s what we’re going to do here – skip right to the experience. **Check out the pages with game descriptions.**

IT REALLY WORKS!

About a month ago, a mother who had attended one of my seminars cornered me and told me how her son had come home from school in a really depressed mood. They had been playing the games I’ve described at home, so when she asked him what was wrong, he responded, “Some of the kids at school dented my bubble” (“bubble” being another term for personal space or the energy field around the body).

Naturally, the mom melted and went to help her son. Instead of just hugging him, however, she also ran her hand over his “bubble” and popped the offending dent back out. Immediately, her son felt better. He then turned to his mother and said, “Mom, your bubble’s dented in a few places, too. Let me fix them.”

You should know that I hadn’t taught them how to heal each other in my class—only to play. And playing led them to discovering their own natural capacity to ease each other’s suffering.

So when I talk about playing, it isn’t just because it’s a fun distraction from the more important things in life. Playing, in my book, is one of the most overlooked healing modalities on the planet. I’m aware that might feel irresponsible or downright silly to those of us who spent our childhood learning that you can’t play until the chores are done. The problem with that viewpoint, however, is that as an adult, the chores are never done. So we miss out on the profound healing, bonding, learning, and discovery that comes from some good, old-fashioned goofing off.

Hopefully, you’re itching to try this out. My guess is that just reading this has spawned a few of your own original ideas about play. Good! That’s my intention. Now go put those ideas into practice. Play! I want to hear about the questions you have and the results you see from this approach. And if you’d like me to come and train you, your friends, your colleagues, or the strangers at the bus station, just give me a holler at bob@thebraidedwarrior.com.♦



Bob Gardner playing with his boys.

GAME TWO: Shiver Me Timbers
(shared by Robert Gardner)

Now we’re going to work on developing the right kind of touch—the kind that maximizes healing results by amplifying your ability to sense what’s going on through your hands. Try relaxing your hands and placing them lightly on the other person. You’re aiming for the soft, gentle touch of a feather. At first, this might seem like a pretty trivial point, but you’ll be surprised how this one simple adjustment significantly frees up your awareness. Ged Sumner calls it a “butterfly touch.” I know it sounds counter-intuitive, but the lighter your hands are, the more you will actually feel. With a bit of practice, it will easily double your effectiveness as a healer.

I need to warn you, though. This little game is so effective that I’ve used versions of this technique to eliminate headaches, wipe away bumps and bruises, eradicate stress and worry, and... well... just because it feels so good! Besides, wouldn’t it brighten your day to be able to saunter up to your kid and say with a wink and a gravelly pirate voice, “I’m havin’ a rrrrrrough day, matey. Aarrrr ya free to shiver me timbers?” That alone is worth the price of admission in my book!

MAIN IDEA

Get the other person to shiver in the shortest time possible.

HOW TO PLAY:

- 1. Player One stands comfortably upright.
- 2. Player Two stands behind them and drags his/her fingertips gently from the top of the head, along the neck, and down the arms or back of Player One. You may go as fast or slow as you like, but you are aiming to make them shiver.
- 3. Do this five times. Then switch roles.

SCORING

(If you’re into that kind of thing)

- 1. The player scores one point for every time he or she gets the other player to “shiver.” If you’re really paying attention, you can sometimes get the other person to shiver more than once in a single pass—Bonus Points!!
- 2. Do this for five rounds. The player with the most points wins.

VIDEO DEMONSTRATION:

You’ll find the video recap here:
<https://youtu.be/2BhpcpNIffA>

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. As with the other games, explore and find out what works the best.
- 2. Some people shiver a lot while other people tend not to shiver at all. It depends on the person, the day, their mood, and a mess of other factors. Not to worry. This is a game I’d just as soon lose as win. You don’t need to shiver to reap the benefits.
- 3. Sometimes there just isn’t anyone around who can “shiver your timbers” for you (be careful how you use that expression in public). Fortunately, you can do this one on your own. It’s easiest if you use your right hand on the left side of your body or vice-versa. Go down the side of your face and all the way down your arm. (Pro tip: try softly dragging all 10 fingertips straight down your face).
- 4. No pirate hooks allowed!

GAME THREE: Intruder Alert
(shared by Robert Gardner)

With this game, we're going to work on ramping up your awareness and sensitivity to energy itself. This is really just a listening game—a chance to deepen and refine perceptual skills without needing to DO anything with them but notice. That, for me, is one of the core principles of BCST and truly profound healing work of all varieties: listening without judgment or fixing.

At first, you may only be able to feel your partner's hand when it's literally touching your skin. That's okay. It's a starting point. From there, you begin to notice the body heat from their hand when it's a few inches away. Then, after a bit of practice something shifts, and you start to detect their hand when it's farther away—almost like you know where they are aiming before they get there. It's like the air suddenly gets thicker as they've entered your personal space. It's difficult to explain the sensation, but you'll know it when it comes.

This little game develops a critical awareness needed for deep healing work. But it also helps you to read and navigate other people's intentions toward you throughout the day. AND it helps you pick up on the still, small voice of spiritual promptings and deep intuitions much earlier.

MAIN IDEA

Accurately guess where the other person's hand is before it touches you.

SCORING

(If you're into that kind of thing)

1. You score one point for every accurate guess.
2. First player to 20 wins.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Player One stands comfortably upright with eyes closed (or blindfolded if you're a peeker).
2. Player Two starts with his/her palm a couple feet away and brings it slowly toward to any area on Player One's body.
3. Player One calls out where the hand is as soon as he/she detects something.
4. Do this five times. Then switch roles.

VIDEO DEMONSTRATION:

This is probably the most difficult game of the three to describe.
So here's a video to help demonstrate:
<https://youtu.be/6S6DqQxI7LU>

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. Some areas on your body are naturally way more sensitive than others... your face and hands, for example. So you might want to start with the head (coming at it from different directions, of course) before targeting other areas in the body.
2. The palm of your hand projects more energy than the back of your hand. That's why I had you start with it. Once you catch the knack of detecting your partner's palm, you can increase the level of difficulty by having them use the back of their hand and then just a finger.

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