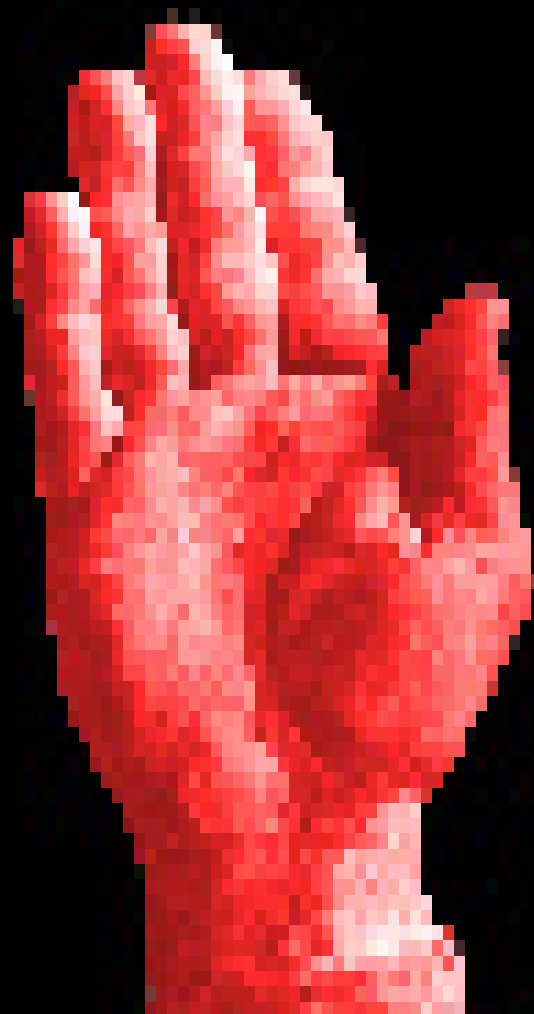


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Editorial

The cover of this issue of the Journal is a Hand. This is a symbol of the fact that we are manual workers; we work with our hands and hands have been consistently undervalued in our culture. Perhaps not only in our culture: in every one of which I can think, the lower status (and earnings) are given to the manual workers and the higher status to those who work with ideas.

This is particularly relevant in the UK at the moment. The Labour Party, formed to support manual workers, fell drastically in popularity as people started to aspire to higher status. The New Labour party's recent popularity owes a lot to their change in status, accepting the middle class values and distancing themselves from the 'merely' manual.

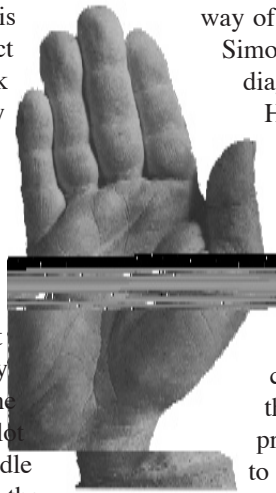
Body Therapy has always had a fairly low status amongst the complementary medicines, probably because of its manual, sensual and intuitive basis.

The original purpose of this Journal was to try to elevate the status of Shiatsu and other Oriental Body therapies within the cultural framework by giving a forum for the ideas behind our work to be presented in a fashion that was worthy of respect. Lately I have been rethinking this purpose. Who are we trying to woo, to convince or to gain respect from? Doctors and politicians come immediately to mind but they are firmly convinced of the pre-eminence of Ideas.

Maybe with our (worldwide) movement towards strongly theoretical training courses, our insistence on learning both Western Medical theory and Chinese theory, we are being like the New Labour Party: changing our presentation to gain higher status with the culture rather than working to educate and transform that culture.

Many of the articles in past issues have specifically addressed this. Peter den Dekker's article "In Search of Style" in Issue 5 was a brilliant analysis of why Traditional Chinese theory has limited application to Shiatsu since it deals with objective diagnosis rather than the more immediate and intuitive diagnosis that is the strength of Shiatsu. Alice Pitty's article on Embodiment, in Issue 4, put forward the view that bodywork is the female aspect of spiritual practice. Maddie Parisio's article "Healing the Earth" in the same issue tackled the question of how much we have become enthralled by the idea of intervention in therapy. She suggests that we have lost track of one of the original themes of Shiatsu: *trusting the client's own healing process*. She suggests that a therapist's role should be more as a supportive witness rather than an expert manipulator.

In this issue she writes on this theme again in a short article on her work with autistic adults. Neil Gulliver picks up the torch in his article on diagnosis, passionately showing how diagnosis need not be a theoretical process, distancing the practitioner from the client, but rather a



way of seeing each other at a more profound level. Simon Fall gives a view of Shiatsu practice and diagnosis which transcends the intellectual and Henry McGrath's article on Movement Shiatsu suggests that healing is a developmental and evolutionary process, implying that people's troubles are *part of their healing* rather than something to be overcome in order to get 'better'.

All of these themes emphasise the Hand rather than the Mind: they all give value to contact, support and intuitive perception of the client's life process rather than analysis of a present problem and an intellectual plan of how to 'improve the condition'.

In many ways, as Alice Pitty's article in Issue 4 implied, the Hand (and the physical realm) symbolises the traditionally female skills while the Mind symbolises the traditional male role. Throughout history, but particularly in the last three hundred years, the Hand and the Female have been devalued. The 19th Century philosophers identified the female archetypes with the 'base' and 'animal' aspects of humanity and the male archetypes with the 'upwardly striving' and the spiritual. They did not invent this view but they confirmed the disrespect that society shows for relationship skills, sensuality, contact and intuition. A large section of the women's movement has tried to raise the status of women by saying that they could equally well fulfil the male roles, which is clearly true. Only a minority still fight for raising the status of the traditionally female roles.

Are we unconsciously following this trend in the way we teach and assess Shiatsu and other body therapies? In America, both the Massage Therapists and Oriental Body Therapists have spent much energy distancing themselves from the sexual connotations of touch. They have done so by emphasising 'clinical' technique and theory as we have also done in Europe. I feel this is a missed opportunity which simply confirms the cultural ascendancy of Mind. Instead we could give more value in training to quality of touch, personal clarity and relationship skills.

I do not want to undervalue the Mind; the high quality writing in the articles I mentioned needs this and objective assessment can be a touchstone of reality in the mutable world of intuition. However, I feel that the pendulum has swung a little too far in that direction and want us to question why. I am excited and encouraged by the many articles in the JSOBT which seem to be doing just that.

Bee Palmer

The Witness

by Maddie Parisio

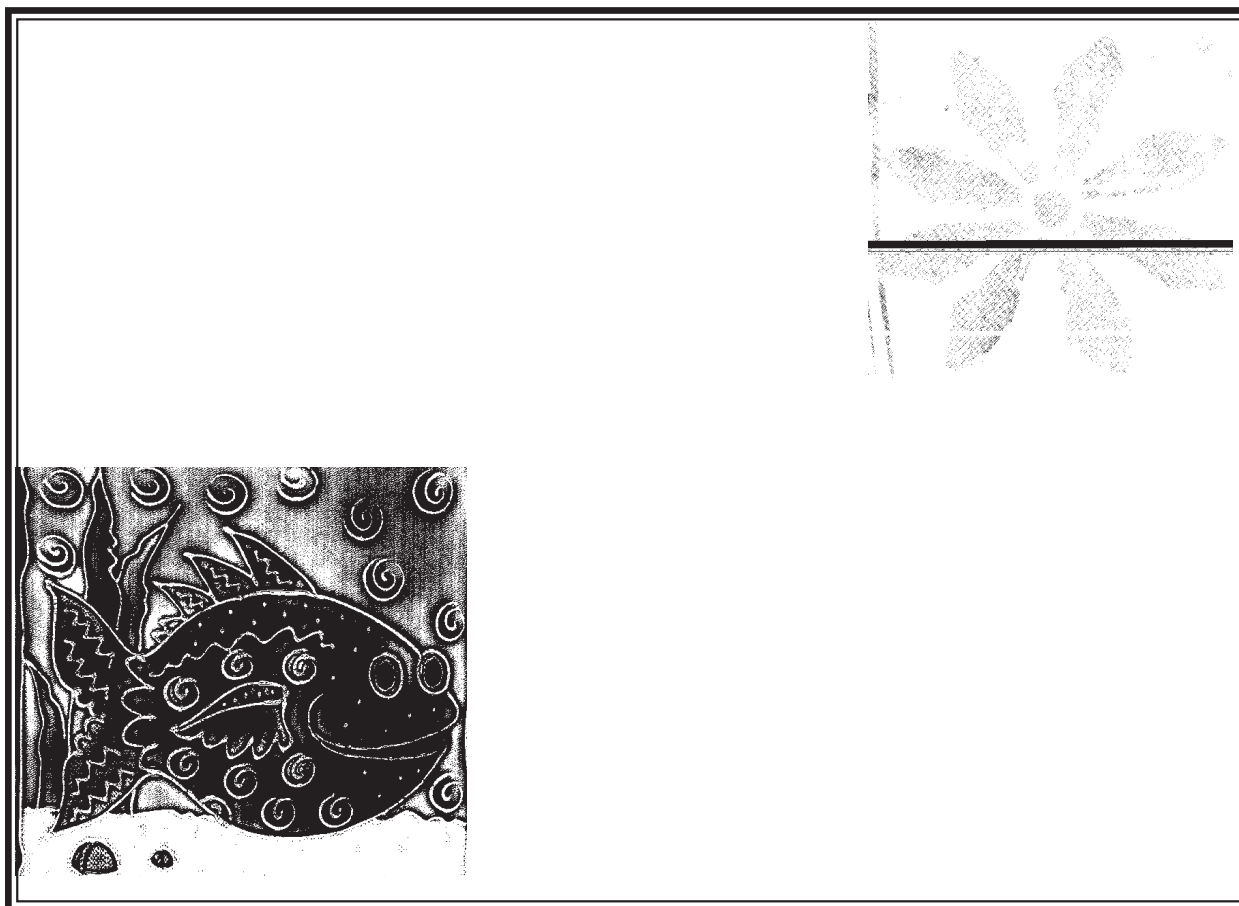
For twenty months now I have been visiting her, week after week. It was my project to discover something about Autism, I don't know why, but it just fascinated me. Over the twenty months we have both benefited; I would have preferred it that she could say for herself what her benefits have been, but if I asked her, she would no doubt reply "nice", her stock answer to questions about things that give her pleasure. Beyond that I could make big of the fact that she says she misses me when (on two occasions) I have been unable to go.

Armed with all the enthusiasm of a student-on-research, I first arrived in her life to explore her abilities... Could she already jump through hoops and if not, could I discover the Shiatsu terminology or technique to empower her shadow, better her contact skills or even make her feel good? Instead, she started to teach me. She taught me frankness, how to say no when she meant no, how to feel pain, how to be spontaneous, how to cry and how to experience confusion. All these things have humbled me before her abilities. I have lost my desire to make something happen in our sessions, and increasingly feel that to be with her each week is a life- experience I couldn't miss now.

On my part I am learning to do nothing and it is

hard. It is hard not to try and be creative with the session, hard not to try and find stimulating things to do, hard not to see if I could crack through this Autistic brain and get a normal response. But what I do is of great value to her, otherwise she would have told me not to come - I can trust that, there are no niceties here. I am growing in empathy with her feelings, a young woman living in an institution; sometimes it feels like a prison to her. Being with her teaches me to listen, sometimes with my ears, sometimes other senses, I am learning to witness, not to qualify or categorise. I am learning to acknowledge her early fears and confusions as they rise before her time and time again in her efforts to understand them. I am learning not to try and make her feel better, how could I make her feel better after all she's experienced? She will not deceive me, so I will not deceive her with false hopes. I am there for one hour each week and she knows that in that time she can be herself, no need to please or try to act normal. I can witness that.

The hardest thing to tolerate is my total passivity; I cannot make her love me or tell me her secrets, I have no achievements to be proud of. I simply go there week after week and sometimes she says goodbye when I leave.



Diagnosis : The Journey of a Lifetime

by Neil Gulliver

Diagnosis is a clarifying and simplifying process: a matter of distilling essence from detail. It need not become a daunting intellectual mire which confounds us the more we think about it. Let diagnosis be a quest which leads us to the centre: to a person's soul, their life journey and destiny. This quest involves discovering how to meet other people and learning how to meet yourself. For a compass we have the universal laws of change, of Yinyang in it eternal polar dance.

The purpose of this article is to create a sense of order and perspective in 'diagnosis as process' rather than to present a mass of diagnostic information. What follows is in note form for easy reference, whilst the material is not necessarily in priority order. Many areas are touched on, such as Nine Star Ki, which may inspire further study or indeed further articles on this endlessly fascinating subject we call Diagnosis. The word itself comes from Greek 'dia' = across, through, into; and 'gnosis' = knowing, mentally seeing, perceiving. Diagnosis simply means 'seeing into,' perceiving and knowing deeply in time and space. Time: from the present moment we can access past influences and future possibilities. Space: Yinyang polarity reveals itself in bodily balance and compensation pattern, e.g. upper/lower, front/back, self/right, superficial/deep, etc. In its original holistic sense diagnosis is the art of seeing each other more profoundly, with compassion and without judgement. We can see a person's courage, strengths and (possibly yet unrealised) potential. Diagnosis is not about seeing what is 'wrong' with people.

Before going further, one priority is to mention 'Constitution' and 'Condition.' Our Constitution embodies those qualities and potentials with which we were born, our energetic and physical inheritance whose factors have been determined by the past. 'Condition' refers to our present condition of general health, attitudes and functioning, including pathology if any. Our energetic constitution is a relatively fixed entity, whereas we can change our health condition at will - often fairly quickly - for better or worse! Our physical constitution is still becoming embodied until early adulthood. We may build upon our constitution by maximising our health. (Indeed we may pass these improvements on to our offspring.) Or we may fritter our constitutional strengths away with unhealthy lifestyle and self-denial.

Yet it must be allowed that some individuals need to make a few demands on their constitution while gaining some necessary soul experience. E.g. those of us who go through drugs or alcoholism to experience the shadow of the world. No blame, so long as we are able to learn and grow and have the courage to remedy 'mistakes.' Oriental teaching placed greater emphasis on the assessment of a person's constitution. Native vitality, willpower and the ability to initiate change (yes, we are talking mainly Kidney

Jing here,) will have a great bearing on how quickly and with how much assistance a client may heal. Even in acute or life-threatening situations, assessment of constitution is at least as important as assessment of pathological condition, if not more so.

The diagram below offers an overview of how Shiatsu treatment and diagnostic process can work together. In practice you may need only a few selected parts of this scenario for any particular client, but familiar areas of your diagnostic ability may acquire a more holistic significance within this larger perspective. Sections 1 to 5 denote a path of physicalization to the point of a hands-on Shiatsu treatment, while 5 to 7 moves onward and outward with enhanced energy for the future. The numbering is for convenience and does not imply a strict linear order, whereas energetic and physical aspects always interact. The spiralic form is used to suggest the often cyclical nature of change, and the term 'client' denotes 'one who receives Shiatsu' whether on a professional basis or not. The listings in each section are not intended to be exhaustive or final.

1. Energetic Constitution

Life destiny and the soul's agenda. Astrological birth

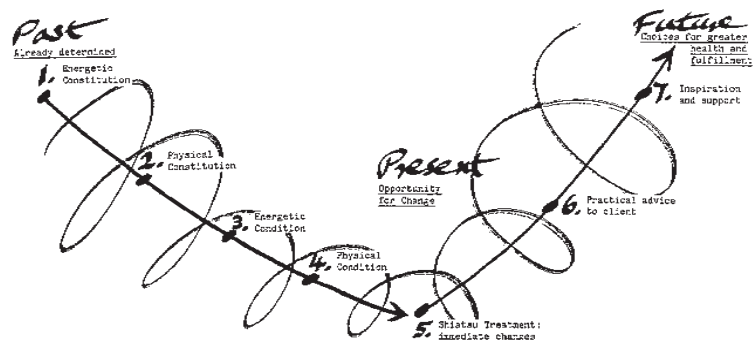


chart (Western). Nine star Ki analysis (Eastern). Chinese 'animal' archetypes. Numerology. Personal, family and racial Karma. Placement of hair spiral to left or right. Elemental balance. Male/female balance. Some familiarity with basic Numerology or Nine star Ki will yield useful guidelines within a couple of minutes.

2. Physical Constitution

Male or female body. Physiological and genetic influences from parents and ancestry. Native climatic and dietary influences. Skeletal structure and facial proportions. Structure of eyes (especially irises, ears and teeth). Potentially weaker or stronger organs body systems may also be reckoned by reference to an astrological system.

3. Energetic Condition

Vitality of Ki, movement, verbal and facial

expression. Sense of identity, and purpose and direction in life. Capacity just to 'be.' Mental clarity, focus, level of consciousness.

Cultural and religious thought-forms. Quality of auric field. Pulses. Orthosympathetic/ parasympathetic balance. Personal attitudes, e.g. adventurous/fearful, trusting/ suspicious, optimistic/pessimistic, grateful/complaining, clear insight/delusions, empowered/victim, relaxed/uptight. Find ways to ask you client 'What is your dream?'

How do you see yourself in five or ten years from now?' Check what they say and how they say it.

4. Physical Condition

The ten thousand things musculo -skeletal pain and stiffness, pain and malfunction of organs and various body systems, signs of symptoms showing in : posture, face, voice, movement, gesture, skin colour, fingernails, eyes, tongue, etc. It is at this dense physical level that diagnosis can seem complex, fragmented and confusing. Here we may easily become lost in a pathological morass and fail to meet the essentially O.K. person within.

5. Shiatsu treatment happens!

Fairly quick energetic and physical changes such as relaxation, revitalisation, re- alignment, re-empowerment, re-connection with soul impulse, ortho-para transference, deeper breathing, emotional release, client feels nurture and approval, intense experience of the present moment and its potential The 'Shiatsu experience' can be a turning point from which the client can emerge empowered to release symptoms so clearing the way to personal fulfilment and enjoyment of life. Why settle for less! Of course, a series of treatments is often needed to reinforce this turning point. Every Shiatsu treatment is a pivot in time between the forces of the past and the potential of the future.

6. Practical Advice

Seize the moment! With your guidance, after the treatment is a good time for the client to gain power and opportunity. Self-healing and self-nurturing advice is usually best if kept simple: breathing, meridian stretches, dietary adjustment, movement, positive affirmation, visualisation, practices from: T'ai Chi, Yoga, Meditation, Qi Gong, Do-In, etc. Come from your own personal experience of what works. Give advice in a friendly and supportive way that makes practical sense to the client. Don't overwhelm: give only a little each time, but be sure that if your recommendations are followed the client will experience beneficial results. This reinforces the message that the client can generate and maintain improved health. The effective Shiatsu practitioner knows how to give advice, seeing how this creates health and freedom instead of the client becoming a routine therapy slave. Giving advice requires 'subtle means.' Frankly, it's the sales department! You're selling self-belief and the capacity to trust the natural order of the Tao.

7. Inspiration and Support

This is perhaps the greatest gift a client can receive

from a Shiatsu session. Inspiration tends to happen implicitly, and perhaps non-verbally, through the conduct of the entire session including the healing space created by the Shiatsu practitioner. Inspirations is very much coming from the fiery Heat & Hara combination and will happen if the practitioner is in love with life. Your every action and thought is charged with knowing that your clients are ready to raise their level of health and happiness and that they have within them the means to do so. Inspiration works by energetic resonance, so don't worry about having to say something stunningly 'spiritual' or Satori-making to your client, but then sometimes you just might!

Don't forget to let your clients inspire you. Their courage, suffering, patience and capacity to bear hardships in life will sometimes far exceed your own experience. So give acknowledgement and support for this, so that their energy may be released from coping to creating, thus transforming stress into vitality. Diagnosis, like Shiatsu, is always a dialogue.

Additional Notes on Diagnosis

* The greatest challenge in diagnosis does not concern knowledge, but openness of heart: getting ego and judgement out of the way.

* Nevertheless, there is no excuse not to master the knowledge side of diagnosis. Apply yourself to the scriptures!

* Having taken time to study, put yourself in a state of emptiness and trust that with any client at any time the appropriate insight and information will come to you. Let it come; don't chase it away.

* Everyone we meet is in some way a reflection of ourselves. Diagnosis is meeting yourself in other people. You've never met anyone you didn't diagnose.

* Create the right space in which to let your clients be and speak their truth, accepting fully who and how they are. Relax your desire to immediately 'get it right' by having a client swiftly typed into a syndrome. Focus on your client's uniqueness, not their type.

* Decide to like every client you meet. Let diagnosis begin with whatever first calls your attention, e.g. voice on the phone, way of entering the room, handshake, posture, style of dress, colours, mannerisms. The simple observations plus the client's own 'story' will always give you a working start.

* To perceive movement, be still: to perceive imbalance, be centred; to perceive past and future, be present; to perceive speech, be (mostly) silent. . Look and listen from the centre of your body.

* Should there be something you don't like about a client, probably that 'something' is unacknowledged or unexpressed within you. (Projection principle.)

* If you have a certain unresolved health problem you may attract a string of clients with a similar condition, thus challenging you to sort yourself out as well as them! (Reflection principle.)

* Know your own boundaries at any time. If you honestly feel that your diagnostic/ therapeutic ability has

become blocked with a certain client, then refer to another Shiatsu or health practitioner.

* Energetic diagnosis in Shiatsu is relative. The practitioner perceives a client's energetic condition in relation to his or her own.

* Energetic diagnosis has a significantly subjective component. Two practitioners could obtain differing Hara diagnosis from the same client: the client's body is saying that it needs somewhat differing treatment from each practitioner.

* Energetic diagnosis is like dowsing: have in your mind a clear intention as to which sector you are diagnosing in, e.g. Kyo/Jitsu, back areas, Yu points, organ function. Tune your perception into one or other of these 'wavebands' and your hands and (inner) eyes will respond appropriately. Approach diagnosis in a focused way and you will get a focused result.

* The art of diagnosis did not originate from books or classrooms. It began when people were living fully within the natural order, the heavenly and earthly cycles, and observing patterns of change such as the seasons, weather, plant life, animals, individual and collective human behaviour, sickness and health, historical and political movements.

* Spend time outdoors developing your powers of observation and imagination. Diagnose the landscape, trees, fields, rivers, flowers, villages Imagine change in terms of minutes or millennia. Diagnose a cityscape: streets, buildings, neighbour-hoods, communities Can you perceive imbalances, blocked energy, 'cures'?

* What is the future of our high-tech consumer culture? What are our most critical choices and their consequences for human health and life on earth?

* Diagnose attitudes around cancer, AIDS, schizophrenia, MS crime, drug abuse, war, famine, environmental destruction Observe the health condition and mentality of politicians/officials/institutions as they respond to such problems.

* Diagnose the seeds of health, creativity, love, truth, compassion, justice, peace in whomever you can and encourage their growth, not forgetting yourself.

* Practice the 'Way of Diagnosis' to raise your awareness of the world and your power to respond in a healing and loving way. The art of diagnosis is too great and too much needed to stay shut up in books and clinics. If ever you feel your practice diagnosis is becoming a bit narrow and congested, feel free to open a few windows and let in some fresh air.

Neil Gulliver has been studying Shiatsu and oriental philosophy for twenty years and is Principal of the East Anglian School of Shiatsu. He is a founder member of the East West Centre, Shiatsu Society of British School of Shiatsu-Do and is a visiting member of the Society's Assessment Panel. He is teaching a residential course in diagnosis (See display ad)

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Shiatsu as a Spiritual Practice

by Simon Fall

This is the first part of a serialisation of Simon Fall's book, "As Snowflakes Fall". The book is available from Hazlewood Press, PO Box 106, Newton Abbott, Devon, TQ13 7YN

SHIATSU - TRUE PRACTICE

Has anyone ever asked you to describe to them just what shiatsu is? It is a question that should always be with us and, as the years pass, we can observe that no matter how our answers change the question remains in some way unanswered. What is shiatsu? We might not be totally convinced that we have encapsulated everything that it means to us as we give variations on replies like: "It's a Japanese form of". It may lead to other questions in an internal dialogue such as "does it exist separately from me?" Let us befriend the question and allow it to be our guide.

As we learn more, our definitions will change, either becoming more sophisticated or more simple, depending upon which side of the see-saw we are sitting on at that moment. Perhaps if we stood over the centre of the seesaw, feet equally weighted on either side, we would find the perfect definition, that single concise phrase which would neatly summarise everything! Perhaps not. There is so much that we do in shiatsu that could be called healing or massage or visualisation or anything else.

I have never found a definition that can totally hold the experience of shiatsu. And that is not surprising since, as Taoists and others have said for centuries, the essence of a thing is unnameable. It is easier to describe what something is not! Nevertheless, to further our understanding and development, it is a very useful exercise.

There are obviously standard definitions of shiatsu which cover the literal meaning, past and present context, how it operates and so on.

I am certain that if we go beyond the initial undisputed facts, our personal world picture will start to describe shiatsu in terms that reflect our own interests. For example, we may describe it as part of a hands-on tradition, or based on traditional Chinese medicine, or as a vehicle for releasing emotions, or as a healing aspect of martial arts, or as movement therapy, etc. My own current definition is that it is a constantly evolving personal relationship with our higher Being.

We are all led to shiatsu along different paths. One common reason is that we are looking for a career that does not deal with destruction, is personally rewarding, involves helping people and is beneficial to the broader community, etc. With this in mind, we somehow come across shiatsu (or homeopathy, or organic gardening....), check it out and it seems to fit the bill. "This is my agenda." Or perhaps we have received shiatsu and found it so helpful we are inspired to find out more for ourselves. So we start our studies, find that it is a huge discovery and become greatly interested, or find that it is just not for us at all and leave it.

Whichever path brought us here, it is important to acknowledge that we have begun a relationship with shiatsu, and that whatever shiatsu may be, it includes oneself.

Having begun, we continue our study and practise and possibly become a qualified therapist. If we are really learning, then we have started to change, but we must know that it is not possible to learn and practise shiatsu in a linear way - it does not work. We may start linear but if we do not change then what is happening to our energy? If Shiatsu is supposed to help energy move, why is ours not moving?

I have used two words here that may need further clarification. Firstly, "change". What I do not mean by "change" is "become something or somebody else". I do not mean that we are not good enough as we are and that is why we should change. Changing means looking further into exactly how we are, finding out more about experience by deepening it. The practice of shiatsu is a vehicle for travelling this inner road.

There is a philosophical dictum which states that what happens on the inside is reflected on the outside. In other words, who we are in ourselves affects what we do in the world and how we do it. This, in turn influences those we come into contact with and the mutual resonance that takes place in such meetings. If our practice of shiatsu does not allow us to let go further into ourselves, does not help us peel back another layer of resistance (illusion) to the experience of life, then it will not allow the recipient to do so either and the resonance will remain at a more superficial level. Thus, how much we are learning with shiatsu can be seen by how much we change.

The word "linear" I also use in the context of depth. There is a popular notion that a line begins with our birth and continues to its end at our death, and that the experiences we accumulate on the way are like dots plotted along the line. Perhaps the more experiences we have, the fuller our life will be and so we endeavour to fill our life with lots of dots, as if this is the purpose of life. It is possible to carry this mindset into shiatsu so that the more techniques and theory we bring into it, the better our shiatsu will be. Then we practise our shiatsu like we live our lives, constantly adding things in an effort to get the most out of it. This is what I mean by "linear". Part of the concept of a straight line is that it goes somewhere else.

There is another view, a circular one, which influences movement or attention to come back to the same place. Here there is no single beginning or end since one end represents another beginning as part of a continuum. This is evident to our senses in such an obvious way as the passing of the years. In our culture we have imposed a

calendar on this process and can say that this is 1995 and it began on January 1st and will end on December 31st. Other cultures have a different number to denote the same time and celebrate New Year on different dates. The fact is, though, that whatever number anybody gives to an Earth revolution at any particular time, the world keeps turning, coming back to the same place in the same sequence. Is there a beginning or an end to this as far as we can see?

When learning shiatsu we all start at point A, but that is not at the beginning of a line - it is anywhere on a circle. Through true practice we will keep returning to point A, finding it in a different place each time. But it is not point A that is changing - it is us. The process of deepening our experience alters our perception. When we set out from A with the intention of getting to B, whether A to B represents a shiatsu course or a shiatsu treatment, we are missing something on the way, and whatever shiatsu is, we are not practising it, although we may still become qualified therapists. This applies of course to all aspects of life whether we are talking about sex or football or shiatsu. Having a destination means that we may miss the journey.

This is very important. Take stretching as a practical example: to know how to stretch we need to know how to do one stretch very thoroughly - so intimately that we can almost imperceptibly change angle and balance in order to tune in to a completely different experience or shape. When we can do that we are practising shiatsu and can do any sort of stretch anywhere. The technique is the response, is the intention, is the technique.... It all flows into the circle and energy moves. This is true practice because in order to learn this one stretch we need to understand other things not ostensibly related to stretching. Deep things about listening and movement and so on. These things have to do with principle; this one stretch embodies the principle of stretching and as we practise the principle it brings us around to ever-deepening layers of understanding. So there is a lot to learn in this one stretch.

Now it is possible to learn lots of stretches of all kinds without actually knowing how to stretch properly. We might know many things about stretching but not know how to stretch - like skidding across the surface from one point to another, unaware of the depths and spirals at any place underneath. This is what will happen if we stay linear. We could amass a whole battery of stretches, or any other technique or even theory, and still not know the "how" of them. So although we have the outer form of shiatsu, it is not shiatsu. Consequently, we will not change or discover more of ourselves, and neither will the recipient.

It is good when people's questions prompt us to look at what we are doing. I am saying that there is no essential difference between the "what" and the "we". Shiatsu is not any one thing at any one time, and neither is the person practising it. So then, how do we define the essence of shiatsu? Undoubtedly, it involves enthusiasm, an open heart and mind. Intention, respect and diligence in practice are always required. Without these personal qualities there is no shiatsu - but of themselves they are not it. Make a list of all the things you think shiatsu is and then cross them out. What else can you say about it? Write

that down and then cross it out too. Continue doing this for the rest of your life.

DIAGNOSIS

There are many forms of diagnosis used in shiatsu. Some deal more directly with the condition of the internal organs, for example, facial diagnosis, and others more directly with the flow of ki in the meridians, for example, back and hare area diagnosis, as well as the awareness of the meridians themselves and how they affect our movement. There is diagnosis according to the Five Transformations (Movements or Elements) model which relates aspects of behaviour to a particular quality inherent in a natural element such as Fire or Earth. One may also diagnose from body posture, eyes, tongue, pulses, hands, feet, tsubo, etc.,

Conventional definitions of diagnosis emphasise the disease rather than the person, for example, the dictionary describes diagnosis as "the identification of a disease by means of its symptoms". There is a broader, more holistic sense of diagnosis than this which incorporates the idea of seeing without looking. In order to do this we have to develop:

- *our sense of Hara, through practice, breathing and movement;*
- *our personal clarity, through adopting a less ego-centred view*
- *our perception of the unconscious mind.*

The conscious brain filters out much of the input we receive so that we may function at an everyday level. However, this process also inhibits our creative potential and intuitive eye. Seeing without looking may be enhanced by various forms of spiritual exercises such as yoga, Qi Gong, meditation practice, etc.

Although it is necessary to learn correlations, signs and symptoms, diagnosis does not simply consist of staring at people and running off a checklist of minutiae against which we can determine a person's condition! This may well become self-projection and not seeing what is there. True diagnosis is not looking to see something but waiting for something to be shown. A client's entire life history and future potential is sitting there in front of us waiting to be seen. We cannot have "eyes to see" if we are not empty of our own preconceptions.

Generally we learn technique first, because it is important to gain immediate hands-on experience in order to become comfortable with bodywork and root our studies in practice before theory. However, the moment a person walks through the door, an ordered process begins which occurs quite naturally. It is this

- A. *Diagnosis: observation, "feeling"*
- B. *Intention: deciding what action to take*
- C. *Technique: action, putting A and B into practice.*

As long as we are open, we are diagnosing. We diagnose all the time, often unconsciously, as for example when we shake someone's hand or observe a mannerism. The art is to become aware of the observation and then to understand it in a wider context. We base our intention

upon the diagnosis, i.e. this is kyo (diagnosis) ... it needs our support (intention). Then we employ relevant techniques.

Sometimes we may find it difficult to diagnose using methods we have learned yet we may have a strong feeling that we want to work a certain area in a certain way. We may be attracted to this for no apparent reason. Here diagnosis and intention happen simultaneously and we need to trust this intuitive experience. Our analytical minds, trained by a lifetime of Western education and thought, will often attempt to block the intuitive flow, but that first voice is the one to listen to whether or not we understand it intellectually. If diagnosis is not clear and we cannot decide what to do, then we simply set about working with an open mind and see what happens. Remember that this process, A-B-C, is not static but a manifestation of ki itself. Diagnosis and intention are happening all the time. We cannot "do" it but can participate in it.

It is important also to be aware that we are not simply concerned with "what is diagnosis, and how we do it." It is more a matter of "who is there and how are they?" Each person is a collection of sensual/physical, emotional and mental aspects which have manifested together as a human being in this place at this time. Each collection has a personal karmic history and is here to learn to give expression to its underlying spirit whether this is held consciously or not. This is something we should not forget when someone comes to us for shiatsu, whether the presenting symptom is tennis elbow or acute depression.

Whilst diagnosis focuses upon an individual's personal process, we must understand that in its fullest sense it also includes the relationships we have with the world we live in and how they influence our thoughts and actions. Otherwise we do not see the whole picture. Inside reflects outside, outside reflects inside; we are the mirror. We are able to see, for example, the condition of an internal organ by observing the corresponding area on the surface of the face or body. This principle however, is not confined to the relationship between inner and outer body but extends to all levels of connection between the human organism and its environment, including its past development and future possibilities for growth. Awareness of this during sessions allows the shiatsu to operate at a deeper level.

Perhaps I can shed some light on the reflective principle of diagnosis by relating an experience I had on a recent car journey. I was moving along very slowly in a traffic jam on London's North Circular Road. I had plenty of time to read a sign which proclaimed that this particular two-mile stretch of road improvements was being carried out at a cost of £37.2 million!

This set me off on a train of thought, based on the realisation that there was obviously something awry in priorities here. Musing about transport policies put me in mind of the famous Dr. Beeching who, in the early Sixties, drastically cut rail services, giving impetus to the motorway building programme. I am sure the time is not far away when most will regard that decision as misguided, but Dr. Beeching was rightly addressing an imbalance between use and provision. We can look back now and say that his

solution was short-sighted, that more roads mean more cars and that the role of public transport, particularly railways, needs to be expanded at the expense of private car use.

But now where are the tracks that used to go to all the stations? Where are the stations? We almost need to start from scratch since so many lines were dismantled. This is a problem we have now which has arisen from a problem of thirty years ago, when the opportunity to respond with farsightedness and imagination was not taken. Of course, this is contentious since one may argue that a new motorway programme was seen as imaginative at that time, but what is interesting to note is that Dr. Beeching chose to uproot something that only needed repotting or pruning to encourage future growth.

It was a reflection of the way we looked at things then - if it did not work properly it was removed and replaced by something else. Or perhaps nothing else. Surgery was what we resorted to in society, and whether it was a branch line or a gall bladder, it came out! Today we have another opportunity to review the way we do things and the signs are more hopeful when we see what is now being reflected. The growth of complementary health care is a good example of a new desire to find other ways in which we can respond to health challenges before considering surgery.

Attitudes towards hysterectomy, for example, have demonstrated our wider views about the planet; woman is the microcosm of Earth. This operation has been widespread over the past few decades although it seems to have decreased a little in recent years (I have no statistics on this, just antennae!). There is a problem (how was it created?) so we take it out. Now, what is this "it"? *It is* where we came from in a very real sense, *it is* what sustains us, keeps us alive. *It is* our Earth, and without *it* there is no new life. We can look around for a moment and expand the vision of our diagnosis. What are we doing to planet Earth? What does Mother Earth do for us? Why do we feel so far from Her that we destroy her? And why do we not see that in the process we destroy ourselves?

At last we are beginning to see this and ask questions, and there are organisations of dedicated people from all walks of life striving to protect and put back the respect and feeling for Earth energy. At the same time conventional and complementary medicine have taken the first few steps in the process of working together helping to create a climate where people are encouraged to develop active awareness of their health and so prevent some of the conditions that presently cause much unnecessary suffering. Just as planet Earth begins to recover, so may the Earth in woman be more respected and we may hope that women will only have their wombs removed if there really is no other way forward.

The reflective principle operates at all levels. I was sharing this traffic jam with a friend who is a hypnotherapist. She uses a visualisation technique which involves the client approaching and entering a house, describing what it looks like from the outside and what the different rooms are like on the inside. This house reflects the subconscious mind and tells her a lot about what is going on for her client. We talked of bricks and mortar houses, and how these too reflect our lives in the same way. Or our cars even. Or our clothes.

Some say that appearances are deceiving but I disagree; it depends upon how we see. It is also crucial to recognise the positive potential of the diagnostic process.

The appearance of our world today is that many things are “wrong” and out of balance. But underlying this is a growing trend, a belated response to the situation, which can lead to a change for the better. If we look at the symptoms and think that things look really bad, and do not look at the possibilities behind them, then we may be deceived by appearances. Just as the warning sign, although significant, is not the most important thing for healing, “what is wrong” is not where we need to focus our energy. The warning sign is saying: “Look, here is an opportunity to change your approach and that will lead to an improved situation.” The longer we ignore the symptoms the more dire they will become, but the chance to do something deep about them is always there (so far). So instead of dealing with all the kinds of pollution separately and piecemeal, we need to re-evaluate our relationship with Earth. It is the same with our Self. The opportunity to feed the potential for growth is “what is right”, and when we comprehend this we are seeing without deception.

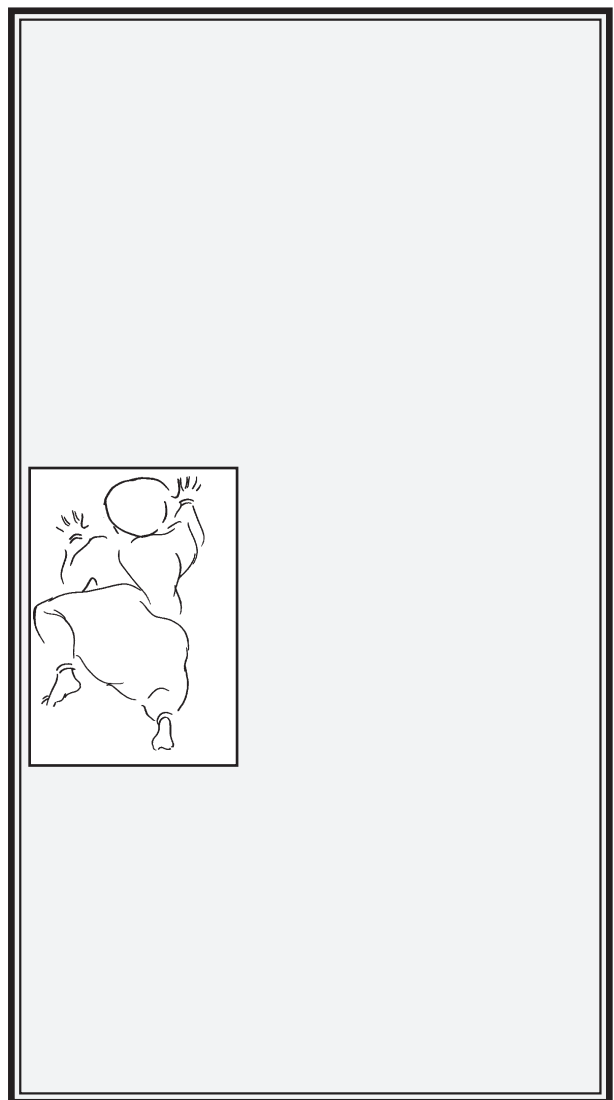
Thus diagnosis is understanding universal reflection, or seeing macrocosmic/microcosmic relationship, and its true worth is about being able to see, and focus upon, the positive aspects. How can we apply this? Well, I have suggested that there is more to diagnosis than knowing what part of the face reflects what organ. That is helpful, but our focus needs more width, more depth. We need perspective. Can we feel how this fellow Being is reflecting both the negative and positive energies of Creation? How much a part of created life do they feel? Let us concentrate on those positive energies, on “what is right”, to help them integrate.

There are so many forms of diagnosis that we use in shiatsu and it can all get a little confusing! “If this means that, what happens then? How can it change?” These forms can be very helpful only if we develop a feel for the whole. We talk about holistic medicine but we must live it ourselves. This is our practice. We must communicate with the elements and all fellow Beings, feel them as we feel ourselves and actively be in Creation. Creation will reply to us, and the more we continue this dialogue the more we will hear. Then we will begin to diagnose more directly, more fundamentally. With this as our starting point we can then utilise all we know about specific forms of diagnosis.

If in our daily lives we look upon all aspects of Creation and all its manifestations in a very personal way we will develop the ability to spontaneously diagnose from the Heart. How does this work? It balances our tendency to conceptualise because it roots our perceptions in our body so that we feel rather than analyse. Having made our observations personal in this way, which means that we have a direct feeling relationship with what is seen and heard, we let go of the tendency to call them ours by taking them into our Heart chakra where they are a part of the ocean of unconditional Love. We can then reflect this understanding and Love back through our touch and presence. This, more than anything, is the basis for accurate

diagnosis and is another important part of our practice.

I would like to add a final word on positivity in diagnosis. If we diagnose someone as having depleted Kidney ki, it is not going to help much if we tell them that their kidneys are whacked and that they need to do this or that to improve them! Better first to say what we feel are their strengths and to reflect these back to them. If we wish people to utilise their strengths rather than concentrate on their weaknesses, we must draw their attention in that direction. Then their Kidney ki already feels much better and they are more motivated to follow any well-intentioned advice. Telling someone to eat aduki beans for their kidneys is very helpful, but saying first that they are Beings of great potential is deeper medicine. It fosters belief in their own power which will accelerate the healing process. What other purpose can diagnosis have?



Qi Gong: a Radical Practice

by Daverick Leggett

Practitioners of Qi Gong often say that Qi Gong is the root of all Chinese medicine. The knowledge of points and meridians is said to have derived from the meditative practices of Qi Gong, through the direct experience of the energy body [1]. With its origins in the obscurity of prerecorded history, and its cultivation within both Buddhist and Taoist traditions and within both martial and medical arenas, Qi Gong is clearly inextricably linked with all aspects of Chinese culture from philosophy to agriculture, from architecture to healing [2]. So what is Qi Gong and what is its place in today's western world?

A Definition of Terms

Qi is most often translated as energy. My own Qi Gong teacher puts it like this: "The purest state of being that cannot be accurately described by any words...the Chinese people call the Qi. It is close to the concept of the Dao in the Daoist tradition or the concept of emptiness or pure consciousness in the Buddhist tradition" [3]. In its broadest sense it describes the vibrational nature of reality, a vision of life and form as the manifestation of subtle energy. "When Qi condenses forms appear" says Zhang Zai [4] writing in the eleventh century AD, defining life as a continual process of the Qi condensing and evaporating. Somewhat earlier Lao Tsu put it more enigmatically like this:

"Just as the world can reveal itself as particles, the Tao can reveal itself as human beings.

Though world and particles aren't the same, neither are they different.

Though the cosmic body and your body aren't the same, neither are they different" [7]

Another translation is breath, the breath of life, the animating principle that has no word in the English language to embody its meaning. The vast all-encompassing cosmic meaning of Qi also finds a more particular expression as the Qi manifests in the human being: we talk of Immune Qi or Organ Qi or Nutritive Qi, referring to the energetic aspect of physical form or function. Both meanings of cosmic breath and its local manifestation are helpful for understanding the term Qi Gong.

Gong is often translated as work. Qi Gong then becomes working with the vital force. Gong has a fuller meaning of the accumulated power gathered through practice. We may talk of someone having gathered strong Gong, having cultivated a reserve of power (something akin to "oomph!" in the English language). The best translation of Qi Gong I can manage that links these meanings together becomes 'accumulating power through cultivating the subtle energy'.

Qi Gong's recent boom in the west owes its success to the decision within China's Qi Gong community to release information which until now has been closely guarded and inaccessible to all but the most persistent westerners. Just as the name 'Traditional Chinese Medicine' misleadingly

suggests a unified body of knowledge and theory (see Peter Den Dekker's article in the last issue), Qi Gong also has many schools and many lineages. One way of presenting such a wide field of practice is to divide Qi Gong into several areas of focus: there are Qi Gong paths to develop physical health and vitality, to heal from illness, to develop martial skills, to cultivate healing ability, to manifest special powers such as aura-seeing, telepathy or creative ability, and to help us on our spiritual journey.

As Qi Gong enters western culture it helps fuel the development of western energy medicine and enriches the work already pioneered here. In this article I intend to highlight some of the principles that are common to all forms and look at Qi Gong's application for practitioners of oriental medicine in the western world. Inevitably in doing this I will be speaking through the lens of my own practice of Hua Gong.

Qi Gong in Practice

In my original training as a Shiatsu practitioner in the early 1980's I was fascinated, like most of us discovering these wonders for the first time, by the sensations of Qi I learned to observe in the meridian system of my clients. My introduction to Qi Gong suddenly opened up a way to directly experience my own energy system alone. This direct experience of the meridians, Organs and Dan Tien has remained my greatest teacher.

Through Qi Gong practices such as the Eight Silk Brocades [5] I could experience the meridian pathway and observe the effects of the meridian opening up. Through a deeper set of exercises for the five Yin Organs [6] I learned to experience the Organs themselves and how they expressed through the whole bodymind. Later, as my practices became more internal, I began to better understand the deeper relationships between the three Dan Tien and the role of the conception and governor vessels. **Qi Gong became the way I could receive an embodied experience of a theory and I suggest that this is one of Qi Gong's prime values for oriental body therapists.**

Many Qi Gong meditations involve stillness, a posture held for a long time with no outward sign that much is happening. Yet these still meditations are often the most highly valued, the deepest kind of work. They are sustained not by physical effort but rather by staying directly in touch with the Qi, resting in the experience of the Qi. The more we perceive ourselves as energy, the greater our power to sustain work that would otherwise take huge physical effort. **Qi Gong teaches us to relax at the moment of severest stress and to concentrate without tension.**

With its apparent paradoxical injunctions "stand still to get fit" or "relaxed concentration" it challenges a way of being based on striving and doing. This challenge is another of Qi Gong's gifts to us. In Qi Gong the most profound practices involve no apparent movement. Both

nothing and everything happens in the stillness and these meditative states are very hard to describe in words. They are more often approached through poetry as in the Hua Hu Ching:

“The superior person settles her mind as the universe settles the stars in the sky.

By connecting her mind with the subtle origin, she calms it.

Once calmed, it naturally expands, and ultimately her mind becomes as vast and immeasurable as the night sky.” [7]

Qi Gong is a way of relating to the world as energy, of perceiving the subtle realm of existence. To practice Qi Gong is not to practice some kind of exercise but rather a tuning in to the subtle level. My own teacher, Zhixing Wang, who I began studying with in 1990, uses the analogy of turning on a radio: when we begin Qi Gong practice “it is as if we turn on the radio. At first we may have the wrong channel or simply interference. So we tune the radio until we have the best, the clearest reception. Then we simply have to stay in tune. This is the essence of Qi Gong practice” [8]

So, what do we tune into? Zhixing describes this as tuning in to the original self, the prenatal self. In doing so we remember our true nature and reconnect to our true relationship with the cosmos. In this state all notions that we are doing something disappear. We enter the non-doing at the heart of Qi Gong to which all our techniques have led us. “Make love with the invisible subtle origin of the universe, and you will give yourself everything you need” [7] says Lao Tsu, a view which for me touches the essence of Qi Gong.

The Development of Clear Perception

One of the challenges facing us as bodyworkers is the development of clear perception. The command of the Delphic oracle to first know ourselves is vital to our work as healers. So often we are unable to fully see our client, mistaking our own projections for true objective seeing and at worst end up treating ourselves rather than them. **Qi Gong, through leading us into a direct knowing of our own energy body, enables us to distinguish ourselves from our client** at the energetic level and to be clear with our boundaries.

Special exercises may also be chosen to develop our healing abilities. The basis of these is the clear perception we have just been talking about. We can also learn how to move energy into the hands and emit healing energy during treatment. The source of healing energy is generally considered to be impersonal, drawn from the cosmos rather than the self, but that is not to say that the practitioner has no role. The clarity and quality of the practitioner’s presence are pivotal. Whether or not we choose to study Qi Gong for healing abilities, our healing abilities will be improved regardless because of the strengthening of our Qi, the clearing of the meridians and the deepening of our perception.

Another aspect of treatment that has attracted much discussion recently is the issue of negative energy. Many Qi Gong practitioners speak of the negative energy that

practitioners can take on from their clients and of the need to maintain a practice of clearing our selves after work and maintaining awareness during treatment. Negative or sickness energy is sometimes referred to as Bin Qi.

Many questions are raised by this and many of our unresolved feelings as practitioners become attached to this idea. From my own experience both as a Shiatsu therapist and as a Qi Gong practitioner I would like to offer a few comments. In a simple sense, nothing can attach to us without hooks to attach to, just as pathogens need fertile ground in the body. The more we are clear the less difficulty we are likely to experience here.

The most profound hook that ‘negative’ energy can attach to is, in Ram Dass’ words, “the idea that we are doing something” [9]. Around all these complications of ego we may come away from a session feeling that we have been drained or that we are somehow contaminated. When I have had these feelings they have often been tied up with my own attachments to certain views of myself as healer i.e. I have become attached to something, not it to me.

With that proviso, I do believe there is value in cleansing practices. Frequently the experience of tiredness many practitioners experience after giving treatment, which they often put down to being drained, is actually caused by the energetic residue of their work still clogging up their system. What is needed here is not rest but cleansing and Qi Gong provides one of the most effective and practical cleansing tools available to us.

It is worth mentioning one or two other causes of feeling drained after giving treatment. Tension is the main one, restricting the full flow of our energy during the work. Awkward posture and restrained breathing are common too. A lack of clarity about where we end and our client begins may also be at the root of many problems ascribed to “negative energy”. Perhaps most deeply our unconscious feelings towards our clients may also cause us to feel drained. When our hearts cannot open we feel tired. Qi Gong offers us both the ability to perceive these subtle interactions and a tool for clearing our own energy bodies.

Helping Ourselves

But how worldly is Qi Gong? Does it encourage us to retire from ordinary life to develop our powers in temples or monasteries? In *The Secret of The Golden Flower* some of the most profound Daoist practices of circulating the light in our bodies are discussed. “When there is gradual success in achieving the circulation of the light, a man must not give up his ordinary occupation in doing it” [10]. The book instead encourages being in the world whilst advocating a certain discreetness and silence about one’s practice. The goal of individual achievement is seen as a way of liberating all of humankind from suffering.[11]

Lastly Qi Gong offers us a practical tool for helping our clients. Or more correctly, it gives our clients a way of helping themselves. If we aspire to empower our clients on their healing journey Qi Gong provides a gift we can offer them. These days I invite my clients to join my Qi Gong class. It is one of the ways they can become more active in their own healing and it has the bonus of working

out a lot cheaper than Shiatsu sessions!

It is my belief that we need to strongly counter the personal and communal disempowerment at the heart of our western culture. The current medical model too often creates "patients" too keen to give away responsibility for their own wellbeing and a medical profession as keen to absolve them of it (and a pharmaceutical industry very happy with the way things are).

Many of the early mistakes in providing aid to developing countries grew out of the same mind that, in the apparent act of giving, still sought to hold on to, even strengthen, its own power. Now, rather than creating new forms of dependency, intelligent aid projects seek to give people the means to help themselves. A truly radical and empowering medicine must do the same thing. Qi Gong is one of the ways that this radical reawakening can happen.

Footnotes and Bibliography

[1] In Qi Gong the points are seen as portals of energy exchange between ourselves and the cosmos and the meridians as the pathways through which consciousness inhabits the body

[2] In China every hospital has its Qi Gong department. The Qi Gong therapists give healing treatments to patients, some of them specialising in one area such as eyesight or cancer. With the support of government, masses of documented research supports Qi Gong's power to improve conditions as deep seated as AIDS, brain injury or MS. Patients are also prescribed Qi Gong exercises as part of their rehabilitation programme.

[3] The Qi and the Dao, Zhixing Wang, Yin & Yang magazine Issue 1 Spring 1997

[4] From A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy quoted in Giovanni Maciocia's Foundations of Chinese Medicine

[5] For details of this form please refer to Lam Kam Chuen's The Way of Energy published by Gaia or Dr Yang Jwing-Ming's The Eight Pieces of Silk Brocade published by YMAA

[6] I refer here to a set of Qi Gong movements brought back from China by Giovanni Maciocia

[7] Hua Hu Ching, the Unknown Teachings of Lao Tsu, translated by Brian Walker, Harper San Francisco

[8] From a conversation with Zhixing Wang. Zhixing Wang is the founder of the Hua Gong School. Originally initiated and trained by Qi Gong masters Zhang Hong Bao and Shi Song, he has been teaching in the West since 1989.

[9] How Can I Help?, by Ram Dass and Paul Gorman, Rider Press

[10] The Secret of the Golden Flower, translated by Richard Wilhelm, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

[11] Lao Tsu reinforces this view in the Hua Hu

Ching: "You won't have to hide away for ever in spiritual retreats. You can be a gentle, contemplative hermit right here in the middle of everything, utterly unaffected, thoroughly sustained and rewarded by your integral practices. Encouraging others, giving freely to all, awakening and purifying the world with each movement and action, you'll ascend to the divine realm in broad daylight."

Daverick Leggett teaches Qi Gong in South-west Britain and occasionally in Europe. Regular classes are available in Bristol, Cardiff, Totnes and Lyme Regis and occasional courses in Gloucester and Glasgow. Daverick is a co-director of the Centre for Oriental Medicine in Devon, England.

Details of the centre's Qi Gong courses including a Qi Gong Summer Camp in August 97 can be obtained from The Centre for Oriental Medicine (JSOBT), 47 Fore Street, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5NJ tel: 01803 868282. Details of the Hua Gong School can be obtained from Chinese Heritage, 15 Dawson Place, London W2 4TH



A Personal View of Movement

Shiatsu

by Henry McGrath

I have recently graduated from doing my third year of study with Bill Palmer in Movement Shiatsu. Before starting this course I was feeling increasingly stuck in my shiatsu. One of the main reasons I had been drawn to Shiatsu was because it cut through intellectual theorising with simple human touch, but was feeling increasingly alienated by ever more techniques and theory. Somehow the original joy and spontaneity were being replaced by another set of ideas.

Although the past year has been difficult in the sense that many of my ideas about Shiatsu have been challenged, I feel that I have regained something of “the beginner’s mind”!

The shiatsu I had done before seemed to be concerned with removing “blockages” to recreate the “model human”, whereas the Movement Shiatsu I have done seems to be concerned with evolution of the human being along an uncharted path. For me this is much more exciting as we are exploring the unknown rather than working towards a fixed model of “perfection”. It also allows room for many different paths, as the more different paths people follow the more enriched we all become. Like evolution, there is much trial and error: the evolutionary “blind alleys” (the dinosaurs) and the sudden unexpected breakthroughs (such as the eye).

Like evolution, Movement Shiatsu is very much a learning process. Bill talks about meridians being pathways along which we learn to inhabit our own bodies, and I like very much the idea that consciousness somehow explores matter (i.e. the body) through the meridians. I have heard of Qi being the bridge between mind and matter, and this seems to fit in with what he was talking about.

Indeed, Movement Shiatsu has allowed me to make sense of the meridians at last. I can integrate them into my own experience, and integrate what they are saying more fully with other information from clients. Following on from the above paragraph, I imagine the meridians as “feelers” going out to explore the body, collecting information about how it can be moved. As the information is sorted out the mind structure develops in tandem with the body. Over time the information flows solidify into patterns, both in the structure of the nervous system and in the thought/emotional processes. In order that we don’t have to spend lots of energy calculating the most efficient way to move each time (in the higher brain), we develop more and more fixed, automatic movements and reflexes (in the lower, reptilian brain).

However, what may be an appropriate movement at one time may cease being appropriate at a later date, and we may end up using outmoded ways of moving. For example, in what Bill calls the Earth phase of development, a lack of support may produce a constant stretching of the stomach

meridian as the baby tries to reach out for what it is not being given. While this behaviour may be appropriate for the baby, the pattern may solidify into constant tension, which may continue to exist long after they individual has grown up and is able to feed himself. Similarly, on the emotional side, the individual may end up with a yearning for the unattainable, instead of finding other ways to satisfy himself, and enjoying what is attainable. For me this is the crux of Movement Shiatsu: to give the body/mind new possibilities of organising itself.

As I mentioned above, this is not trying to force it into the “perfect mould”, it is giving it the freedom to explore its own new paths, or indeed to decide it wishes to stay how it is! In this case, for example, we may use Earth touch to show the body/mind that support and nourishment can be obtained in other ways, and that it was not the reaching out by certain muscles that produced the fulfilment. Based on this new information, the body/mind may decide to adopt new strategies for gaining support.

Of course, the reprogramming gets harder with age as patterns become ever more solidified: I imagine certain avenues for change becoming more and more overgrown with weeds until the path becomes very hard to find!

I have been particularly able to relate to the work we have done on the shadow. While my intellect “knew” that the concept of “kyo” related to the unseen, it brought it to life for me when it was related to the unconscious. It is those parts of ourselves that we are not in contact with, that we have not integrated into our personalities. It is those parts of the body we do not live in, those parts of the mind we like to think we do not have (anger, lust etc.). Once again this brought the meridians to life for me: they are not some ancient abstract text, but larger than life Jungian archetypes! They feel more like long lost friends now!

Another thing I’ve gained from Movement Shiatsu is the idea of clients taking much more responsibility for their own development, instead of collapsing into my arms once a week and being patched up until next time.

Beforehand I would rarely speak while giving a treatment as I felt it disturbed the flow. Now I find that getting the client to do certain things for themselves gives a tremendous sense of self empowerment: such as breathing to a certain area, or feeling for themselves how they are not letting go an arm. The client is no longer reliant on me to transmit some mystical force! It is also more fun for me to share my knowledge with people, rather than them looking up to me as some sort of guru with secrets.

Most importantly, it is helping the receiver to expand their consciousness of their own process. For example, one woman was amazed at the connection between her mind and body: she had very tight rhomboids, and also repressed

anger at her husband, but had never connected the two. When I was working the muscle I asked her whether she thought there was any connection with her feelings for her husband: when she saw the connection she was at last able to release! She was so excited at learning about the mind/body connection, she went away like a child with a new toy: and it was HER toy, not mine! I feel that if we explain to people what we are doing, and relate it to their own experience, the more they can do for themselves, and the more shiatsu is demystified.

Finally, Movement Shiatsu makes me feel even more so that intelligence/consciousness resides in every part of us, rather than just in the brain. Dethlefsen & Dahlke

suggest that it may be contained in each cell's nucleus, and Zohar even suggests that electrons may be conscious! I feel that with bodywork we are educating the cells directly, showing them new possibilities, rather than just teaching the brain. Certainly the brain seems to have a function of absorbing information and rationalising it, but I feel that the cells have their own capacity for reorganisation, and that there may well be other structures which also do. If chi is "intelligent" then intelligence must exist in inanimate objects also: maybe we are part of consciousness rather than consciousness being part of us!.



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CONTACT: SEED, Smokey Hole, Uplyme, Lyme Regis, Dorset. DT7 3SJ. Tel: 01297 442523



Healing M.E.

by Oliver Cowmeadow

NAMING THE ILLNESS

First we need to clarify the naming of this illness. The most widespread is ME, or myalgic encephalomyelitis. Myalgia refers to pain in muscle, and encephalomyelitis to inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. The name Chronic Fatigue Syndrome describes the predominant symptom. It has also been called Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome, as it often begins after a person has contracted a cold, flu or other virus. However ME often begins without previous infection, so this name is rather inappropriate.

ORTHODOX RESPONSE TO ME

At first ME was very slow to be recognised by orthodox medicine. This was probably due to the large number of symptoms, which vary a lot between afflicted individuals, and to the lack of obvious measurable physical changes or pathology. Unfortunately, because of this, ME sufferers were often told that the problem was “all in their head”, and many were prescribed with antidepressants or other mood-altering drugs, or psychiatric treatment. Likewise the press often depicted ME as “yuppie flu”, with the implication that the illness was caused by overindulgence or a lack of will to work. Yet those with ME generally knew it was a physically based illness. The severity and persistence of the physical symptoms were just too strong.

Thankfully ME is now being taken more seriously. Some scientific evidence for a physiological basis is emerging, and the widespread and common occurrence of ME is forcing greater attention. However it is still an illness which largely baffles orthodox medicine, which has come up with little in the way of effective treatment. This has meant that many sufferers have turned to complementary medicine, where many have found greater understanding and relief from the illness.

I have found that a combination of shiatsu, dietary and life style advice, and simple counselling effective with many people, and wish to report my understanding of the causes of ME and a healing strategy in this article.

TYPICAL SYMPTOMS OF ME

There are a wide variety of symptoms with ME, and for this reason it is aptly called a syndrome, meaning a pattern of symptoms. The wide range of symptoms is one reason for the difficulty of the orthodox medical approach in understanding the illness. The orthodox approach works better where symptoms are focused in a particular organ or part of the body, so that a treatment can be worked out to help with that particular part. Oriental medical theory is much better equipped to understand these varying symptoms, and therefore is able to come up with definite treatment strategies. Here I want to go through the most common symptoms of ME, and in the next section see how we can make sense of them using Oriental medical theory.

Chronic Fatigue

This is the most obvious symptom of ME. It can vary in intensity from unusually great tiredness, to having to sleep for 12 to 16 hours a day and not having the energy to walk more than a few yards. It can be difficult for non-sufferers to imagine what this feels like, especially as those with ME very often don't show any obvious signs of being ill. For many sufferers it feels like that period after the fever of flu has gone, and you are left feeling totally washed-out, with an aching body, and no energy to do anything. However for someone with ME this state may go on for months or years, rather than just weeks.

Muscle Weakness

This is also a very characteristic symptom of ME. The muscles seem very weak, and a sufferer is limited in what they can physically do in a day. If a person over-exerts him or herself, they pay for it afterwards in feeling much worse, often for days. It may just be walking an extra quarter of a mile, or staying up a few hours later than normal. This is a very frustrating symptom, which can lead to a lot of worry and despondency, and the feeling of great limitation.

Psychological Symptoms

Part of the pattern of symptoms of ME is a range of psychological problems. Typically sufferers are depressed, and easily sink into despondency and despair. Their mood can swing greatly, often following the rise and fall of their physical symptoms and energy levels. There is frequently a tendency to worry, and sufferers often seem preoccupied with themselves and their illness.

I would say that these psychological states are very much part of the illness along with the physical symptoms, but are also created or exaggerated by sufferers' reaction to the illness. It can be very difficult to accept and cope with the loss of energy, requiring cutting out a lot of activities and pleasures from life, and frequently difficulties in earning money. The experience of walking on a knife's edge, where one little overexertion, wrong food or drink can make you feel worse for days is liable to make people worry, examining how they are feeling and all their actions in what might seem morbid detail.

Other common symptoms include:

Aching joints, bones and muscles

Headaches

Poor concentration and memory

Feeling cold, both at the periphery and deeply within the body

Swollen lymph glands

Digestive disorders such as constipation, diarrhoea, colic, irritable bowel syndrome, and Candida overgrowth

Skin sensitivity

Feeling overly sensitive and vulnerable

Numb or tingling limbs
Lowered immunity with susceptibility to viruses both before and during ME
Allergies
Insomnia
Lack of sweating and/or sudden sweats
Lack of coordination
Poor balance
Frequently the onset of ME follows a period of great stress or emotional strain

ORIENTAL DIAGNOSIS

When I first came across this kind of list of symptoms, it excited me to see just how much Oriental theory threw light on what is happening. Here is my analysis.

Depleted Kidney Energy - as shown by:

fatigue
increased need for sleep and rest
aching bones and joints
poor concentration and memory
feeling of cold deep within the body
depression
despair and despondency
insomnia
poor balance
onset after great demands and stress
lowered immunity

Depleted Triple Heater - as shown by:

aching muscles
skin sensitivity
feeling oversensitive and vulnerable
feeling cold
swollen lymph glands
numb or tingling limbs
lack of or excessive sweating
allergies
lowered immunity

Depleted Spleen Function - as shown by:

weak muscles
tiredness
digestive disorders
worry
preoccupation with self

Small and Large Intestine Problems shown by:

digestive disorders
poor concentration
allergies
lack of coordination

My touch diagnosis of clients with ME confirmed this diagnosis, with the Kidney and Triple Heater meridians

generally being extremely deficient. The Spleen was generally deficient, and often Lung too. Often there felt to be very little Ki in the head as a whole (explaining the thinking difficulties). The Small Intestine, and sometimes Large Intestine meridians and hara diagnostic areas were frequently deficient, and on palpation the intestines felt weak, hard and blocked. Clients usually felt deficient over their whole body, and hara was weak, although sometimes the Liver and Gall Bladder meridians were excess (especially in the type of person who had pushed themselves to be very busy over a long period of time). Ki over the whole body usually felt sluggish and not flowing well. Clients also felt very sensitive to touch, and were vulnerable to strong pressure feeling invasive and painful.

THE CAUSES OF M.E.

Overall the picture with ME is of depletion and lack of nourishment. The majority of clients I have seen had clearly been pushing themselves beyond a healthy level of energy output for years, often with high levels of stress. This resulted in deep burnout, and great depletion of Kidney Ki. A few clients didn't have a history of over-activity or stress, but still had greatly depleted Kidney Ki. This was generally due to recognisable causes, such as many late night parties, regular recreational drug use, and poor diet. In particular a diet with many extreme Fire foods like tea, coffee, sugar, sweets, alcohol, soft drinks, and processed foods, and a lack of good quality Water and Metal foods like whole grains, breads, pastas etc., fresh vegetables especially root vegetables, beans, mildly salty soups, and good quality animal food such as fish.

I feel the deeply deficient condition of Triple Heater is due to the great depletion of the Kidneys. Along with the depletion of Kidney Ki is a depletion of Essence, which is stored in the Kidneys, and in Original Ki which is derived from Essence. One view of the Triple Heater is as an avenue for Original Ki to move to all the organs and meridians of the body. With insufficient Original Ki, the Triple Heater function is weakened, and the whole body is starved of Ki. This results in the fatigue, muscle weakness, inability to think clearly, and many of the other symptoms of ME.

Another view of the Triple Heater is that it has the function of "letting out", in particular letting out Defensive Ki from the Upper Burner to the skin and muscles, and Nutritive Ki from the Middle Burner outwards to nourish the whole body. Those with ME are clearly lacking in both Defensive and Nutritive Ki, due to the poor functioning of the Triple Heater. Furthermore, when the "letting out" function the Triple Heater is not working well, blockage in the flow of Ki around the body occurs, which I found to be characteristic of the those with ME.

The lack of energy and weakness is a clear indication of weak Spleen function. The overexertion, or lack of healthy food and drink, will obviously create this kind of Spleen imbalance. In some of my clients with a history of overexertion there was an underlying lack of self-esteem and self-value, and consequently they found it difficult to accept or give themselves the nourishment in life that they

needed. In those clients where diet seemed an important contributing factor to illness, there was an abundance of processed foods, lacking in “life force”, and often with a lack of warming well cooked dishes and an abundance of cold drinks, both factors which weaken the Spleen.

ME is frequently accompanied by digestive problems, and a poor condition of the intestines. Such dysfunction of the small and large intestine may well be a contributory factor to ME in some people, as it is liable to create fatigue, weakness, and a negative or depressed outlook.

HEALING M.E.

Because of the depth of imbalance with ME, I feel that no one single method of healing is usually going to be particularly effective alone. A range of methods is likely to have a greater effect, and here I will describe those which I have found to be of most use.

1. Rest and Sleep

This is necessary

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Experiential Anatomy

by Hilary Totah

Music and rhythm find their way into the secret parts of the soul - Plato

If you had told me a six years ago that I would be teaching anatomy I would have laughed. Anatomy was the bane of my life. Something I had to learn to be a good shiatsu teacher. I found it difficult, boring and hard work ploughing through the anatomy books yet again because what I had read last week had already slipped my mind. My first brush with experiential anatomy was quite a few years ago, doing a course with Bill Palmer I remember vividly, stomping around the room being blood. Using the work I had done with Gabrielle Roth, integrating body exploration with dance and movement, I started to teach workshops myself. The first workshops were simply dancing the fluids, which lent themselves very well to exploring different qualities and feelings. I loved being lymph, clear, direct and knowing my purpose. Blood was earthy, pulsing with vitality, in Cerebra-Spinal Fluid (CSF) I was light and connected to heaven. Then I started to explore other parts of the anatomy - what was the feeling if I let my muscles be the leader in my movement - how did my bones feel, or more interesting still the bone marrow?

And so the idea of teaching this work and expanding the anatomy information began to take shape. Doe Warnes, Moe Casey and I used to meet regularly to discuss and explore our new ideas and share knowledge. It was out of these meetings I had the idea to start teaching an extended experiential anatomy course with Doe. By then I was enjoying all this exploration of how the body works - it is fascinating stuff. For me if I can learn through my own experience, be it movement, touching or feeling, or through visual images, and I enjoy the whole process, then the information sticks. I was sure there were other people like me out there.

So what do we do in our experiential anatomy classes? We have so far taught two modules, one on the tissues and the other on the fluids. The tissues are skin, connective tissue, muscles, bones and bone marrow - going through the layers right down to the marrow. My images from this course - I remember connective tissue - long lengths of stretchy stuff connecting us as we danced, the bone and marrow Doe brought in from her local butcher. After we danced the marrow someone said it felt like a place to regenerate energy, a place of potential journeys. Somebody had the image of a saxophone as we were exploring our spines. That's something we do on the course. We write down the words and ideas people have after we have moved and we keep them to remember. We dance to music, we move, we talk and discuss and most of all we explore images and experience qualities associated with our bodies and the way they work. Then the fluids - synovial, blood, lymph, CSF, cellular and interstitial. For synovial fluid the group choreographed a little dance

of the joints - conducting an orchestra, bowing, windmills. Lymph - we were soldiers, we had a purpose and we were clear. Being a single cell - journeying into space - seeing the stars and the planets, encompassed by the universe.

The beauty of experiential anatomy is that all these qualities and feelings are part of us anyway, albeit maybe not yet brought to awareness. My skin covers me, if I contact my skin it tells me where I end and the world begins, it contains me, it is sensitive and soft. Once we can feel a particular quality we can feel it again and eventually we can make it our own. One of the great pleasures I have from teaching this work is the experience and knowledge I gain about my self, my own inner journey into self-awareness. Dancing and music are for me the way into my soul, my healer and my teacher. If you would like to join us we are starting the Organs on May 13th. and we will be teaching the whole year again starting next November as a series of weekends. Dates are: for 1997: Nov 15/16, Dec 13/14 - the Tissues, for 1998: Feb 14/15, Mar 14/15 - the Fluids and May 23/24, June 13/14 - the Organs. You can contact me on 0171 267 0579.



Contraindications & Endangerment Sites

by Carl Dubitski

Contraindications to Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork in general, and Oriental Bodywork Therapy in particular, present a very broad and varied reach. Some conditions, such as life-threatening emergencies, should never be approached through the manual therapies. Some conditions, such as pregnancy, require advanced training and experience before Oriental bodywork is safe. And some situational conditions, such as clients' under the influence of alcohol, merely require time and a word of caution.

Contraindications also vary according to the hand techniques utilised. Some conditions, such as thrombophlebitis, are totally contraindicated for the fluid mobilising techniques such as European Massage, and relatively contraindicated for Meridian treatment, but require only relative local contraindications for point work. Additionally, certain sites on the body can be Endangerment Sites under certain circumstances, such as the inside of the lower legs during the first and third trimesters of pregnancy, and these sites must be differentiated according to technical approach.

This information is almost exclusively based on common sense and apocryphal information from old nursing and physiotherapy texts. In this presentation I have incorporated the considerations of many different approaches to Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, spanning Traditional Western Massage, Osteopathy, Rolfing, Polarity Therapy, as well as Oriental Bodywork Therapy. I have also incorporated information from such Japanese sources as Serizawa Sensei, Namikoshi Sensei and Masunaga Sensei.

I will divide contraindications into three categories: Absolute Contraindications (AC); Relative Contraindications (RC); and Warnings (W). Absolute and Relative Contraindications will be further differentiated as Absolute Local Contraindications (ALC) and Relative Local Contraindications (RLC). Absolute Contraindications refer to conditions which absolutely preclude Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork intervention, regardless of technique or expertise. Relative Contraindications refer to conditions which require additional specific training, or other considerations, before they are safe for massage and bodywork. With due consideration however, these conditions may be treated. Absolute and Relative Local Contraindications will point to site-specific conditions that preclude, or require great care and modification of technique, for the safe use of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. Warnings refer to those conditions or situations which only require a word of caution and some consideration, as well as considerations regarding sites of potential endangerment.

The information in this report comes from many sources in the Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork community, and contains several appendixes addressing related topics written by different authors. I wish to thank the New Centre for Holistic Education; Nancy van der Poorten of the Shiatsu School of Canada; Ken Slinning of Kikkawa College; Grace Chan of the Sutherland-Chan School; Barb Statler of the Shiatsu Therapy Association of Ontario; Bill Palmer of the Shiatsu Society of Great Britain; Toshiko Phipps; Kevin Roy; Jim Said D.C.; Rick Gold L.Ac.; Bill and Anna Helms L.Ac.; Robbee Fian L.Ac.; Doug Alexander BSc, RMT; Georgette Delvaux Salvesson D.C.; and Elaine Calenda LMT; for their contributions.

“WHEN IN DOUBT- DON'T’

“ABOVE ALL, DO NO HARM”. This advice, originally give by Hippocrates 2,000 years ago, still belongs at the beginning of all health-related studies.

ABSOLUTE CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Medical Emergencies

- 1) *Haemorrhage*
- 2) *Shock - All kinds*
- 3) *Acute, Emergency, Inflammatory Organ Disease (Appendicitis, Peritonitis)*
- 4) *Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA) - Not Yet Stabilized*
- 5) *Diabetic Coma / Insulin Shock*
- 6) *Epileptic Seizure*
- 7) *Myocardial Infarction (MI) - Not Yet Stabilized*
- 8) *Severe Asthma Attack*
- 9) *Lymphangitis (Blood Poisoning)*
- 10) *Acute Poisoning*

Very Advanced or Complicated Chronic Organ Diseases:

- 1) *Advanced Kidney Failure*
- 2) *Advanced Respiratory Failure*
- 3) *Diabetes with such complications as gangrene, advanced heart or kidney disease*
- 4) *Liver Failure*
- 5) *Post - Myocardial Infarction - Not Yet Stabilized*
- 6) *Post - Cerebrovascular Accident - Not Yet Stabilized*

Circulatory Diseases:

- 1) Severe Atherosclerosis
- 2) Severe, Unstable Hypertension

Other Medical Conditions:

- 1) Eclampsia
- 2) Haemophilia
- 3) Significant Fever (101.5 F; 38.35 C)
- 4) Systemic / Contagious Infections
- 5) Encephalitis - When Symptomatic

**ABSOLUTE LOCAL
CONTRAINDICATIONS:**

Acute Organ Disease:

- 1) Any inflamed Organ
- 2) Ectopic Pregnancy
- 3) Ulcers (Peptic, Duodenal)

Cancer:

- 1) Highly Metastatic Cancers - Not Yet Terminal

Circulatory:

- 1) Life-threatening Aneurysms (Abdominal Aorta)
- 2) Oesophageal Varicosities (Varices)
- 3) Phlebitis, Phlebothrombosis, Arteritis

Conditions On or Under the Skin:

- 1) Acute Neuritis
- 2) Frostbite
- 3) Any Local Contagious Condition
- 4) Any Local Irritable Skin Condition
- 5) Any Open Wound or Sore
- 6) Recent Burns or Scars
- 7) Abscesses
- 8) Severe Gout
- 9) Haematoma
- 10) Ringworm
- 11) Cysts or Foreign Bodies
- 12) Scabies
- 13) Cellulitis (Or The Erysipelas That Form)
- 14) Bakers Cyst

Joints:

- 1) Acute Inflammatory Arthritis (Rheumatoid Arthritis, Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, Anchylosing Spondylitis)
- 2) Bursitis
- 3) Acute Dislocation

Other Medical Conditions:

- 1) Septic Conditions
- 2) 24-48 Hours Post Anti-inflammatory Injection Site and Immediate Vicinity

RELATIVE CONTRAINDICATIONS

Bones and Joints:

- 1) Inflammatory Arthritis - Chronic Phase
- 2) Osteoporosis
- 3) Osteomalacia
- 4) Tuberculosis

Cancer:

- 1) Any Cancerous Condition Requires Coordination With Other Therapies

Chronic Organ Diseases:

- 1) Chronic Congestive Heart Failure
- 2) Chronic Kidney or Liver Disease
- 3) Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) (e.g. Emphysema)
- 4) Diabetes, Moderately Severe
- 5) Post- CVA
- 6) Post- MI

Circulatory Disorders::

- 1) Hypertension
- 2) Diagnosed Atherosclerosis
- 3) Anaemia Due To: Sickle Cell; Haemorrhage; Haemolytic; Polycythemic; Leukaemia;

Drugs and Alcohol:

- 1) Anti-inflammatory
- 2) Muscle Relaxants
- 3) Anti-Coagulants
- 4) Analgesics
- 5) Any Drug That Alters Sensation; Muscle Tone; Standard Reflex Reactions; Cardiovascular, Kidney, Liver Function or Personality
- 6) Alcohol
- 7) Narcotics or Recreational Drugs
- 8) Drug Withdrawal

Neurologically Spastic Conditions:

- 1) Multiple Sclerosis
- 2) Parkinson's Disease
- 3) Cerebral Palsy
- 4) Epilepsy
- 5) Neurological signs Such As Numbness and Weakness Need Neurological Referral

Other Medical Conditions:

- 1) Immunosuppression
- 2) Coma
- 3) Major or Abdominal Surgery
- 4) Recent Head Injury

**RELATIVE LOCAL
CONTRAINDICATIONS**

Conditions On or Under The Skin:

- 1) Contusions
- 2) Minor Surgery
- 3) Trigeminal Neuralgia
- 4) Neuritis

Bones and Joints:

- 1) Acute Disk Herniation

- 2) *Chronic Arthritic Conditions*
- 3) *Current or Recent Fracture*
- 4) *Joint Instability or Hypermobility*

Circulatory Conditions:

- 1) *Mild to Moderate Aortic Aneurysm*
- 2) *Any Chronic Thrombosis*
- 3) *Portal Hypertension*
- 4) *Haemorrhagic Disorders and Varicose Veins*

Internal Organs:

- 1) *Chronic Abdominal / Digestive Disorders*
- 2) *Chronic Diarrhoea*
- 3) *Chronic Constipation*
- 4) *Kidney Infection or Stones*
- 5) *Mastitis*
- 6) *Pelvic Inflammatory Disease*
- 7) *Ovarian Cysts*

Pregnancy:

- 1) *Lower Abdomen*
- 2) *Yin Legs*
- 3) *Points (Sp 6; Sp 8; St 17; St 25; St 36; Ll 4; GB 21; Liv 3; Bl 60)*
- 4) *Recent Abortion or Stillbirth*
- 5) *Recent Delivery (Vaginal or C-Section)*

Other Medical:

- 1) *Any Acute Inflammatory Condition*
- 2) *Endometriosis*
- 3) *Flaccid Paralysis or Paresis*
- 4) *Hernia*
- 5) *Pitting Oedema*

WARNINGS

General

- 1) *Extreme Client Fatigue*
- 2) *Within One Hour of Eating*
- 3) *An Undiagnosed Condition*
- 4) *Pain of unknown Cause*
- 5) *Sudden Loss or Gain of Weight for Unknown Reason*
- 6) *A Frequent, or Persistent Low Grade or Intermittent Fever*
- 7) *Night Sweats*
- 8) *Sudden Change In Appetite For Unknown Reason*
- 9) *Undiagnosed Lump or Swelling*

Personal:

- 1) *Practising Beyond Your Scope or Training*
- 2) *When Extremely Off-Centred*
- 3) *When Extremely Fatigued*

Prosthetic Appliances:

- 1) *Pins and Staples*
- 2) *Artificial Joints*

Client Allergies:

- 1) *Oils, Creams, Lotions, Linaments and Other Embrocations*
- 2) *Perfumes and Scents*
- 3) *Cleaning Chemicals*

Emotional or Psychiatric Conditions

POTENTIAL ENDANGERMENT SITES

Nerves, arteries, veins and lymph nodes, as well as some of the more delicate organs, can be harmed by excessive or extended pressure when these target areas lie on, or close to the surface of the body. Great care must be taken when treating these areas.

Limbs:

Axilla (Arm Pit): Brachial Plexus (Lateral, Medial and Posterior Cords) Axillary Artery Axillary Vein Axillary Nerve Lymph Nodes

Medial Brachium (Inner, Upper Arm Between Biceps and Triceps): Ulna Nerve, Median Nerve, Musculocutaneous Nerve, Brachial Artery, Basilic Vein

In some people the Radial Nerve passes through the axilla, and down the posterior side of the arm. In others it is found superior to the Supraspinous Fossa, and then on the posterior aspect of the arm. The Cephalic Vein passes along the medial border of the Deltoid and the lateral edge of the Biceps.

Ulna Notch (Funny Bone): The Ulna Nerve is exposed when the arm is partially flexed.

Cubital Area (Anterior Elbow): Median Nerve, Radial Artery, Ulna Artery, Median Cubital Vein

Femoral Triangle (Groin/Anterior Hip - The Area Defined by the Sartorius, Adductor Longus and the Inguinal Ligament): Lymph Nodes Femoral Nerves Femoral Artery Femoral Vein Great Saphenous Vein

Popliteal Fossa (Posterior Knee): Tibial Nerve, Peroneal Nerve, Popliteal Artery, Popliteal Nerve

Neck:

Posterior Neck: The Occipital Nerve Is exposed at the base of the occiput when the head is hyper-extended.

Anterior Triangle (Outlined by the Trachea, Sternocleidomastoid and Mandible): Carotid Artery Internal Jugular Vein Trachea Vagus Nerve Lymph Nodes

Posterior Triangle (Outlined by the Clavicle, Sternocleidomastoid and Transverse Processes of the Cervical Spine): Brachial Plexus, Subclavian Artery, Subclavian Vein, External Jugular Vein, Lymph Nodes

Shiatsu Assessments & Curricula

by Sue Hix and Tom Litten

At the Rosewell Shiatsu Centre, we have wished, for some time, to design and develop programmes of study and models of assessment that recognise and employ the best contemporary practise from the wider range of academic and vocational education. We believe that we are now free to do this and offer our thoughts and plans for the consideration of our colleagues.

Three circumstances have brought us to this point:

a) during the past year it has been stated that the British Shiatsu Society's Assessment Panel (the Panel) approves in principle, of the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL);

b) the forms of application for assessment ask candidates to state if their studies of Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology (APP) and of Communication and Listening Skills (CLS) were undertaken within the context of their Shiatsu training or elsewhere;

c) the adoption of the policy of evaluating teacher's evidence of achievement as a basis for exempting candidates from the need to sit the Panel's theory exam.

We are, then, resolved to conduct student evaluation on a continuous assessment basis, without recourse to a terminal written examination. We are, further, intent on offering APL on evidence of background in APP or CLS where possible; and to refer students without such background to centres of teaching that are focused on these peripheral aspects of Shiatsu development. If invited, we shall discuss with the Panel other areas of the curriculum where such APL may be possible and appropriate.

Our evaluation of the demands of the Shiatsu Society's anatomy and physiology examination is that the range of the content is the equivalent of a small part of a GCSE or an A-level in Biology, and the level of performance required is that of a "Higher Grade" GCSE or a modest pass at A-level. We have decided to use these parameters as the basis for recognising skills in these two categories. Pathology is a different case, as nobody outside medicine seems to teach/study pathology. We have agreed to accept doctors, acupuncturists, some nurses and to consider any application from anybody else based on evidence.

Clearly, throughout the teaching programme, we must, and will, be aware of students application of this knowledge, to ensure that it is sufficiently understood to inform their practise.

Our evaluation of the Shiatsu Society's demands in the CLS component is that it is the equivalent of a basic Certificate in Counselling Skills, such as may be found at short part-time courses at most colleges of FE. We will consider any such certificate, with support evidence regarding its syllabus. We will also consider any application from persons who have been working with a pastoral responsibility, regardless of certification. Standards in this field are less clear than in the strictly academic APP field, and so we will closely monitor the performance of

the students to ensure that they demonstrate these skills.

We believe that, by expecting our students to acquire their APP and CLS knowledge and skills in another place, we can teach the Shiatsu knowledge and develop much of the Shiatsu skills in two years. This will free us to create personalised programmes of study for the third year.

It is our intention to use this time to encourage our students to spread their studies wide. The intention must be that the process of assessment does **not** become an intrusion into the process of teaching/learning. It is also necessary that the style of assessment model varies.

Some features of the information base of the curriculum are simply matters of vocabulary and location. Short and short-term recall tests are appropriate; but ongoing monitoring of the use of the former and the accuracy of the latter in practical work and written work is required. Much of the interesting work in Shiatsu, as in most things is in the construction of coherent relationships that hold the complex details in place. To attempt to evaluate a student's grasp of the "big picture" by the use of small questions is not helpful. Open questions with time to develop answers, written or in interview, are more relevant.

In all aspects of the theory assessment it is proper to take note of the student's behaviour in Shiatsu practise - this is, after all, training for hands-on medicine and theory that does not manifest in the hands is of little use. So a recognition that the learning has changed the student's behaviour is a necessary component of the assessment of an aspirant Practitioner.

A commonly expressed fear about objectives-led curriculum designs is that they constrain the teacher. This is not so! The trap is to believe that one must "teach the syllabus"; the truth is that if one analyses what one wishes to teach and how one wishes to teach, then the experiences that lead to the objectives will mostly be found. We say "mostly" since only a curriculum that you write yourself will have everything that you like doing and nothing else. It is only at the margins of any mismatch that the "required syllabus" makes any demands on the teacher to make change or accommodate alternatives. Once you have identified the experiences, you have identified where you may find the evidence.

There is a downside. The more open the experience and the more flexible the assessment, so the more closed and rigid becomes the need to design and maintain records of student achievement.

Sue Hix trained at the ISS at Kiental and did some early teaching at the BSS-Do in London. She opened the Rosewell Shiatsu Centre in south Lincolnshire in 1993

Tom Litten trained at the Bristol School of Shiatsu after 22 years teaching with higher degree qualifications in curriculum analysis and design.

Book Review

The Movement of Life in the Five Elements by: *Christa-Maria Hermann*

When Christa-Maria asked me to review her book "The Movement of Life in the Five Elements" I was delighted and also pleased to see that what had started as a thesis for her Healing- Shiatsu Graduation, turned into a complete and mature book. A book that not only speaks on the Five Elements but that looks openly and extensively at the *whole picture*, i.e. life its creation and expressions.

My review of this book cannot possibly give a detailed account of what it covers. "The Movement of Life in the Five Elements" is a book that needs to be read not just as another reference book or a book that will reveal previously unknown information. It needs to be read as a *teaching* for it will truly bring insight, understanding and will transform right to the core of the being, not merely on an intellectual level but on the feeling and direct-knowing level.

How does it do that? Here lies its strength and uniqueness as it leads the reader through a quest, a journey, into an investigation and an opening to all the *big* questions and to some *big* answers! I would like to use the word "unselfish" to describe it. This comes across very clearly and that is why this book touches all layers of the being. It resonates deep in, where "the little self merges with the great *self*" or where "the 'I' dissolves into its Original Source", or where "there is no separation, no duality, that nothingness we experience is like a grain of 'stillness' between the breaths . . . a void that has an infinite creative potential".

The first part of the book, "The Movement of Life" as seen by saints and sages of the East and the West and as seen by scientists is an important section. It is the ground, the earth aspect of the book on which much of the understanding and opening to what follows depend. Here Christa-Maria brings many schools of thought and spiritual practices together i.e. Zen, Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity and expands on where they meet, where they speak the same truth albeit in different expressions. There is much use of quotes and poetry that will help the reader '*feel*' what is essentially beyond the realm of words and reason, which is a state of *being*, a state of *oneness*.

The section on "The Movement of Life through the eyes of scientists" will interest many as it describes simply "how modern physics reveals the basic oneness of the universe, the inner connection between 'things' and how intention/mind determines the properties of a particle". It also invites you to try a little experiment of your own i.e. "that matter or mass is nothing but energy". Further on you'll read "how healers heal with their intention", that "intention, thought itself is energy".

Having read and assimilated part one, the reader is well prepared, should I say "re-educated", to receive the second part which deals entirely with the energy of life and its manifestations through the Five Elements. Each section,

called "Invocation of the Earth, of the Fire, etc." is leading the reader to an understanding, to a place where one *feels* the earth energy, one knows the earth expressions. There is plenty of information, simply described of the function and characteristics of each element. The use of poetry and related personal experiences illustrate the qualities of each element. But here again what I found most inspiring is how one is taken by the hand and shown step by step how it all works. How all this knowledge and information is basically *so* natural, already there in and around us, available to us, not only to use in our shiatsu practice but in our life, our relationships, our everyday movements.

The third part of the book looks at how to utilize this knowledge to heal and re-balance the life energy in us. This section is thorough, systematically investigating each element, giving lots of examples to demonstrate how the imbalances present themselves through habits, postures, breathing patterns, attitudes, behaviour, choice, food, etc. and how to address those imbalances. I found this book uncompromising, well written, and 'loving'; an intelligent book in the sense that it helps the reader to think, to feel and to acknowledge *for herself*. It teaches 'intention', therefore inviting a shift in attitude. This shift in attitude is the principal factor in any healing be it physical, emotional or mental, personal or universal. Given the depth and breadth of the subject Christa-Maria imparted all this wisdom in a very accessible and digestible way. A big thank you and deep respect for her life experience and her generosity in sharing it through this book.

Sonia Moriceau MRSS, January 1997.

This book can be ordered from Christa-Maria Herrmann, Borah Studio, Lamorna, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 6XN (Price £12.50 plus p&p £3.00, total £15.50)



