

Energy Medicine and the Cutting Edge of Nervous System Research

New Models for Medicine

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The awareness is simple at first: I am here. In New Mexico. It is...Breathtaking? Simple? No, not simple. It's wild and alive. I feel ignited by its purity, the dialectic and extremity of it all. It's hot and cold, soft and spiky all at the same time.

I climb out of the tent into the emerging light. The children are still asleep, sort of. I'll just go for a short walk down the dirt road.

Moccasins?

Sneakers?

Moccasins?

Sneakers?

Duh Merrill, moccasins.

I tie the supple second skin onto my awakening feet and climb up out of the tent and into the circle of trees between two running streams that we call a campsite. But I still have this simple idea: this is beautiful.

Then, I remember. I remember to say "Hello." Hello to the wildflowers, the grasses and their tufts of seeds, the struggling cacti and their summer flowers, the piñon trees and their fallen branches. The larkspur, the

phlox, the wild mint, the oaks, the rocks, and the butterflies. Just a hello, and suddenly I feel their aliveness. Their breath intermingled here with my own. And what was an idea a moment ago is now a sensation: joy, connection, aliveness, and excitement. The idea that "this is beautiful" has been transformed.

Now, the beauty is deep and rich and in my body. The excitement is increasing, and my challenges—that the bed was too soft and the pillow too big, that I'm tired and anxious—start to let go. The places that are tight and stuck and uncomfortable in my body, I see them now. I can move them, and stretch them, and breathe into them instead of resisting or being mad about them. And because I let myself feel, breathe, and accept them, I can let them go.

If we can't let those places go, we can't really even feel—ourselves, our bodies, or the pulsation of life in the landscape around us. If we can't let go, then it doesn't really matter what we eat or how we exercise or what medicines or tinctures we take. We aren't able to receive them. First, we must be able to feel. We must be able and willing to feel it all.

I stop, somewhere along the quiet road. Everyone, except a crow and a squirrel and a beetle crossing the road, seems to still be sleeping. I let my feet go down into the ground. Then my knees, hips, sacrum, spinal column, left shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand. Pause. I feel already so different in my left side. Heavier. Let go. Right shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand, face, eyes. I pause again. Feel. The achiness is still there. But so is the excitement to see what is just off the trail up the dirt road. The hum of the cicadas is growing, so I'll walk up that way.

Excitement, joy, aliveness. I am reminded of walking into a room where I know somebody, and love him. The feeling that drives me to seek the company of a beloved. A drive toward all social life and relationship.

Now, I propose this: that this human connection, and the bliss that comes with it, is actually possible here too, outside. In these wild, untamed landscapes where trees plant themselves.

"Plant themselves?!" Remi, my six-year-old exclaims. "But how?"

Their parents drop their seeds into the ground. The soil receives them. And the rains and snows water them until they're standing there like those enormous Butterscotch pines (that's what we call the Ponderosa, for the sweet, burnt milk scent in its bark) you see all around you. They're very different from the domesticated trees we live with, I tell him.

That makes him quiet for a delicious moment.

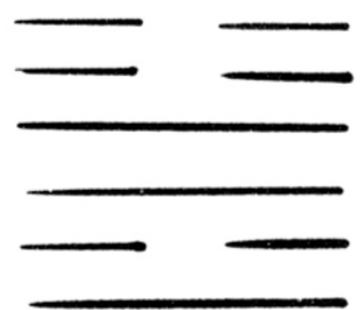
That's the way we find our way to silence in the best of times. "Listening," I call it. Not the effort of meditation or "being quiet" where sometimes, when we are learning, we "try" and we block out stimulation, activity, and distraction around us. We become rigid in the idea that these are distractions. No, this is the listening where we, quiet and open, feel into, and then feel from our ears, our hearts, our skin. We notice and pay attention to these sounds and stimulations around us. And then, we shift our observation from those things

we can see and hear to the silence. We listen to the silence. And we listen with our ears, our hearts, our skin, our bodies. This is "meditation." And where the magic lives. And, if you're a mother, the delicious relief of grace and quiet.

Relief that it's quiet.

And grace of knowing that your kids are engaged with that which is holding them up. The Force that is feeding and breathing life into us all.

This symbol from the I Ching offers just the right reflection for these moments of simple grace.



I Ching #55 Abundance

Abundance is the Symbol of grace and prosperity. It indicates a time of great clarity and energy to encounter even the greatest of tasks. While the Symbol abundance suggests a time of advance and progress, one is reminded that in human affairs, as in nature, abundance will give way to its opposite. Use this time to observe and practice how your inner nature lights the way and illuminates the path not just for yourself, but for those around you as well.

MEDICINE AS A FLUID SYSTEM

The emergence of Quantum Physics has completely overturned what we once thought to be true about the atom—the most basic building block of all living matter, including the cell of a body. An atom, once

thought to be a fixed, discreet particle of matter, is now believed to be matter in motion. It is not fixed and unchanging, but rather moving and fluid. It fluctuates between states of being...particle and wave. Hence, the atom is a state of being within a spectrum of potential. This very concept overturns how we see matter and challenges the basic premises upon which modern medicine is conceived and practiced.

Older forms of medicine, however—including Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, Yogic practices, Homeopathic Medicine, and forms of energy healing such as Therapeutic Touch and Medical Qigong—are based upon this very reality, that matter has the ability to completely transform itself, and states of illness that we believe are fixed or finite are not really fixed at all. Which means, in any given moment, the body is a potential, and illness is simply a state.

Quantum Physics also suggests that there is an entire spectrum for intervention, from the most physical intervention on a material level, such as a surgery or strong drug, to intervention on an etheric level, such as prayer or off-the-body touch. This is the spectrum I see that runs from Earth Medicine to Energy Medicine, with modalities on both ends and some that meet into middle:

EARTH	TRANSITIONAL	ENERGY
Food	Bodywork	Prayer
Plants	Acupuncture	Intuitive/Mind Healing
Supplements	Homeopathy	Vibrational Healing
Root	Plant	Flower

What is happening in the space between wave and particle? What influences something's ability to transition from one state to another? What shifts pure potential into matter or back again?

Quantum Physics also offers explanations within the field of physics. What happens within the human body is another ripe terrain for observation, psychology, medicine, and all of the fields that intersect it.

New Science on the nervous system, pioneered by

Stephen Porges, also overturns our entire view of how the human nervous system works. His theory, the Polyvagal Theory on the nervous system, suggests that it is the observer, the human being, and one's consciousness that is at the center of what is occurring in the autonomic nervous system. The theory long held and respected in the field of science and allopathic medicine is that there is a stimulus perceived by a human system and, as a result, a response. S - R is the abbreviation for this. What's missing is a link between the stimulus and response. The traditional model suggests our response is automatic. A perception by the nervous system that has the power to alter heart rate, blood flow, digestion, and reproduction, and our ability to move or not move has no intermediary. It is purely biological and created by threat. Porges, however, puts us back in the middle and suggests it is our perception of threat that creates this alteration in our biology. The abbreviation looks like this S - O - R, where O is the observer, you. His work is groundbreaking in that it reorganizes the science to put human perception back into the equation. It also suggests that the body, not the mind, is perceiving its environment. So his theory gives the body an intelligence that was removed in our prior understanding of the nervous system and the medicine we have designed to treat it.

Furthermore, our perception is based on prior experiences with safety or danger. This suggests that experience can be held as a memory in the cells, an idea which validates Somatic therapies, and the life-altering experiences we have when memories, including traumatic ones, are addressed and cleared on a cellular level. Porges's work has profound implications for how we practice medicine and implement therapy today. €



Learn more about author Merrill Page by visiting: www.EarthMedicineTaos.org

Reference:
Porges, Stephen. The Pocket Guide to the Polyvagal Theory: The Transformative Power of Feeling Safe. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2017.