

# **Energy Awareness and Mind-Body Health**

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## **Becoming Aware of Energy**

Most of us find ourselves feeling up one day and down the next. We may be bored, unfocused, or confused, and sometimes in pain, without really knowing why or what to do about it.

We know that there's a link between thought, emotions, health and well-being. We recognize that what we believe affects our personal reality. We sense that we can develop self-understanding and mastery in order to bring about serenity and balance, to eradicate our inner turmoil and emptiness. But we still feel lost as to how we can consciously and consistently create the lives we desire.

We have all experienced a current of energy or consciousness – a way of BEING. This is a state where everything feels seamless and in sync. We move easily from one moment to the next with a sense of meaning and purpose. We feel peace, joy, a sense of well-being. This state has been called “flow.” It comes from being in our center or living from the authentic self. It feels magical when we find it. Unfortunately, this is often a fleeting experience. A moment of grace in the midst of a life filled with stress, conflict, boredom, striving, emptiness, and perhaps poor physical or emotional health. Learning to manage stress, facilitate change, and create the lives we desire may feel like an added burden.

There are simple ways to introduce this state of flow into our lives consistently. Our personal energy system provides a roadmap for developing our consciousness, allowing us to access our inner wisdom, healing and truth. If we follow this roadmap, we can connect with the deeper aspects of ourselves that provide inner peace, freedom of expression, and health. By understanding how to navigate our personal energy system, we'll find ease, harmony, and inner strength. We learn the difference between effort and struggle and develop an ability to release feelings of conflict. We discover the root of our problems and create positive solutions.

Managing our personal energy system brings about change from the inside out. As a result, we acquire the ability to ride the waves of life gracefully, with resiliency, "stress hardiness," and a balanced spiritual strength that leads to a healthier way of being.

We are continually in touch with our world and others through our energy field. For example,

- Have you ever sensed someone's presence without having seen or heard him or her?
- Have you either been drained or filled with energy after spending time with a certain person?
- Have you ever felt someone staring at you even though your back was turned?
- Have you ever felt a person come too close to you, a sense that they were invading your personal space?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you have experienced the workings of your energy field.

## **The Human Energy System**

Ancient texts have described humans as being composed of several systems of energy superimposed on one another. Only recently has technology been able to confirm this information. We now have a model of human function that embraces energetic concepts, thus providing a more comprehensive way to understand ourselves and create positive change in our lives.

Our personal energy system is composed of several interrelated interactive parts. The ‘organs’ of the subtle energy system are called chakras. There are seven major energy centers or chakras located along the midline of the body. They are approximately in the same areas as the endocrine glands and major nerve plexuses. Chakras are also present at every joint as well as at various other places in the body.

The seven major chakras each contribute a layer of energy to what is commonly called the human aura. Each of the chakras is responsible for a particular physical, psychological, and spiritual aspect of our functioning. They also seem to operate as encoding or storage devices for our life experiences. This may explain why certain types of memories and feelings are associated with specific areas of the body and not with others.

When any one energy center is disrupted or damaged, that field's frequency is affected, resulting in a contraction of energy. These disturbances can be transmitted to other fields, causing them to contract as well. Such disruptions cause blocks, leaks, improper flow, or buildup of energy. A weakened energy field leads to fatigue. Over time, it can cause mental, emotional, spiritual or physical dysfunction as we seek maladaptive ways to cope with the resultant symptoms.

These distortions prevent us from radiating our energetic potential fully and completely. They thwart our experience of ourselves as whole and healthy, thereby compromising our positive capacity for relating to others.

We unconsciously pattern and shape our energy constantly. Our habitual thoughts, emotions and beliefs strongly determine the shapes or patterns of our energy. This affects our biochemistry, which in turn creates change in our physical state. If this process continues, the resulting physical state will affect our mental and emotional state. This can then recycle to influence our energetic bodies in the proverbial “vicious cycle.”

If we understand the characteristics, unconscious patterning, and reactivity of the human energy system, we can consciously intervene to create positive outcomes in our lives. Such an approach can become a fundamental and important part of a comprehensive approach to health of mind-body-spirit.

We have all been exposed to a variety of negative emotional states in our lives – fear, pain, anger, trauma. Often, when we experience these powerful emotions, we are too threatened or overwhelmed to fully process them. This intensity registers in our system. If it remains

unprocessed, it can result in disruption of the free flow of energy through our system. We carry these past experiences forward in time via energy and biochemistry. Coping strategies that were meant only to help us in these acutely stressful events develop into chronic patterns anchored in the psyche and body. These holding patterns shape our energy, create body armor, and ultimately break down our emotional and/or physical health.

Fear and anxiety regarding the future can also dissipate energy and create difficulties in our energy bodies. Understanding when and how we are responding with unhealthy patterns enables us to minimize their effects. We can also adopt methods that build positive energy. A surplus of strong, positive energy allows us to manage difficult life events with more ease and less distress. Learning to transform harmful patterns allows us to live in the present with abundant energy available to be consciously channeled toward increasing peace, joy, health, and happiness.

As we work with our energy field, enhancing its strength and coherency, we're not locked into energy patterns unconsciously. Consequently we can adapt to circumstances and flow with life more easily.

### **Disruptions of Energy Flow**

When we are stressed or threatened, the flow of energy increases to prepare us for fight or flight. If neither is possible or chosen, we override these impulses even though the body has been energized. Repetition of situations that we cannot overcome results in living with an energetic contradiction of activation and inhibition. This results in a frozen intensity known as “tonic immobility” or the “freezing response.” This is not meant to be a permanent condition. It is a defense that allows us to survive and manage in the short term. If trauma or stress is constant or repeated over time, with no safe place to release and discharge the energy, it becomes frozen. A portion of our being becomes locked in the trauma and free expression of energy is inhibited. This happens with overwhelming trauma as well as chronic low-level stress or tension.

We need free flowing energy of both the receptive and expressive elements to live fully. Through this balance, we remain healthy, neither overwhelmed nor empty.

“Energy Blocks” (too many protons accumulating in one place) impede the free flow of electrons through the body. Unblocking and increasing energetic flow allows our bodies to heal. Our inner senses can be used to circulate energy and establish clear, open channels throughout our bodies. Through these practices, we become more able to absorb energy from environmental sources and enhance our supply. This internal effort is a powerful form of maintaining good health. In essence, our energy field is our primary immune system.

### **The Future: Integrating Knowledge**

As a culture, we are moving away from a mechanistic view of the universe toward a broader perspective that incorporates energetic principles. Awareness and knowledge of these principles is beginning to be integrated into medicine, psychology, and our personal spiritual philosophies as the overlap of body, mind, and spirit and their intricate relationship to optimal well-being is better understood.

We are on the forefront of exciting and challenging times in terms of our healthcare system. We can lament the abysmal state that it has deteriorated into or we can take the opportunity to learn and integrate approaches and methods that will catalyze our inner power and provide us with the means to actively participate in our health and well-being.

There is movement across the country in both large and small healthcare facilities to research and integrate mind-body-energy methods into the mainstream. One example is Dr. Mitchell Gaynor, the Director of Oncology and Integrative Medicine at the Strang Cornell Cancer Prevention Center. Dr. Gaynor has written a book entitled "Sounds of Healing." In this book, Dr. Gaynor reports on his experiences, as well as the history and theory, of sound in healing. Dr. Gaynor is integrating the use of sound into his treatment plans for cancer patients. Since 1991, he has been using chanting, music and quartz crystal bowls as a complementary modality to traditional treatments of cancer patients with remarkable results.

Dr. Mehmet Oz, Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Columbia University, is researching the effects of Energetic Healing, Aromatherapy, Meditation and Yoga on surgical recovery. Early research is showing that patients are experiencing more rapid healing and improved feelings of well-being.

Reiki and Therapeutic Touch have been taught to thousands of Nurses who routinely integrate these energetic methods into their healing work. Dr. Dolores Krieger, the developer of Therapeutic Touch, has conducted research at Columbia University and demonstrated the validity of energetic methods to promote healing.

As our world accelerates and becomes more complex every day, we need to find the means to center, direct and manage our lives from a place of inner balance and coherence. Understanding the nature of our energy system provides us with such a means, as well as with a powerful approach to personal growth, mind-body healing and spiritual unfolding.

For more information on these sessions and seminars, or to schedule one for yourself or your group, contact Karen Kallie at Ninth Wave Center for Energy Education, 142 Main St., Suite 205, Nashua, NH 03060, or call (603) 595-9000.