

Remembering the Essential Truth of Who We Are, Part 1

Peter Fairfield, LAc

We are healers and physicians. Now more than ever, it is important to remember who we are and that what we have to offer is greatly needed during this realignment of our world in these crazy and difficult times. We come from an ancient tradition that has survived, adapted and prospered because it has been tested and proven by time and calamity.

In the beginning of some of the old Chinese medical books, there would be a section stating the condition of the world at that time. It was understood that all diseases and ailments would be affected by these influences, and that all treatment would have to take into account the effect of these circumstances. This is certainly true now and can be remembered whenever we stand before a client deciding how to begin.

Our professional skills can profoundly help our clients, friends and fellow humans. But even more important than our medical training and experience is the tradition of all true physicians, which is to have nonjudgmental compassion, a positive intent and an open-minded perspective. These attributes create a foundation for the real healing of humanity, as they allow each person to accept and, ultimately, be themselves. Whatever clarity, sanity and deep caring we can cultivate and integrate within ourselves becomes the anchor and safe haven for those who are in need of us.

Our art is not just to treat the obvious symptoms. Our art is to understand that the body and energetic systems we work with every day both express who we are and are fundamentally affected by the world and the penetrating influences around us. Because of this, our focus on disease and suffering must be superseded by a deeper and more interesting reality. This reality says that, even more primary than just relieving pain and discomfort, is our ability to assist those who come to us for help to experience the innate ease, joy and even pleasure that is the natural biological result of being whole, balanced and connected with ourselves - no matter what is going on around them.

Most of us have forgotten that this powerful sense of well-being is our fundamental biological condition and is, therefore, our birth right. I believe this is the essence of transformation and even spiritual development; the experience and the expression of our own radiance. It must be the ground that all real healing is built upon.

Pain and disease can be overshadowed and even healed by this inner sense of well-being and a deeper acceptance of the life and light that our miraculous universe is offering to us each moment. In fact, who could argue that it is the absence of "life essence" that makes room for pain and disease in the first place? As committed healers, we must remember to cultivate these positive traits within ourselves as much as we can. It is our most important continuing education. Just expressing basic happiness and ease communicates the "sacred" at such a primal level that all other healing is enhanced. Undergoing our own healing to achieve this basic state can teach us so much.

In my own practice, I have treated emotional issues for more than 35 years. I took last year off and

went into all the dark and unhealed places that were left in me. This process was so valuable for me. It brought me to a point of re-examination of all that I thought I knew.

Most of us have been trained to look for the problems or deviations first, but once we get in the habit of seeing the part or parts of our clients that already have the radiance of healthy *qi*, even if it is a very small place - the whole process makes more sense. If they are alive, then the radiance is there and we can find it. Once we refocus our clinical eye to seeing the impediments to the direct experience of this fundamental state of well-being, it will be easier to know what to do clinically. We can then clearly see and interpret a subtler and deeper picture of signs and symptoms that indicate the location and confluence of the specific obstructions, to the experience of this innate primal connection to the quantum universe and the deepest essence of life.

So, we must pay close attention to the basics. When there are conflicting signs and symptoms, our discovery must come from simplicity. When the outer perceptions of our clients are filled with uncertainty, fear, doubt and the rising momentum of public concern, it is more important than ever that we help them to feel solid within themselves, trust who they are and prepare them to hear the inner wisdom that is constantly available when any of us get still enough to listen. From the transformational or spiritual perspective, a lack of these abilities must be considered as an important focus of treatment. Accomplishing this depends on balancing the fundamental physiological structures that connect us to heaven and Earth. Fortunately, our heritage and training have provided us with detailed knowledge of the systems involved in this process. This is something at which Oriental medicine can excel and most of us already have the basic tools to accomplish it.

Over the past 35 years, my own personal obsession has been to research Asian medical and spiritual systems while looking for deeper interpretations of the physiological process of transformation and spiritual development, along with how those systems interface with modern brain and bioscience. As a result of these investigations, I have been able to synthesize a mostly coherent system that is applicable in the clinical setting.

A great deal of this synthesis came while I had a clinic for a number of years in a Tibetan town located in Nepal. While there, I was able to use pulse diagnosis as an investigative tool to "look" at the energetic systems of many Tibetan yogis and lamas. Some of them had done as much as 40 years of solitary retreat. Eventually, I was able to grasp a "pulse of enlightenment," which surprisingly, was not too different from what our literature describes as a "normal pulse" if looked at from a transcendental perspective. I was later able to examine the pulse of several advanced Taoist adepts and quite a few *qi gong* masters.

I mention all this because I feel it is important to keep in mind that our ancient/modern healing system is still alive and ripe for continued adaptation and development. It is only the limitations of our own consciousness and creativity that defines how wide and deep we can go as healers, as a profession and as humans working for a better world. In part 2 of this series, I will go into more clinical detail.

DECEMBER 2008