

Color Light Acupuncture Techniques for Treatment of Pain Associated With Depression, Anxiety & Trauma

Darren Starwynn, OMD, LAc; Gregory Nevens

One of the biggest motivators bringing new patients to acupuncturists is pain. Acupuncture has a well-earned reputation for effective pain relief without drugs, and in many cases, when other methods fail. Yet even traditional acupuncture has its limits - and this became apparent early on in my practice. While the magic of acupuncture banished pain for the majority of my patients, there were always some who responded very little or not at all. For some of these people, even temporary good results would sometimes result in aggravations soon after the treatment. In assessing such patients, a pattern emerged. Most of these people exhibited depression, anxiety or low affect, or had been through major trauma in their lives that apparently was still dragging on their internal energy systems.

In an attempt to solve the frustration for both these patients and myself, I investigated adjunctive emotionally based methods in the hopes they would respond better to my treatments. My search led me to a synthesis of Chinese medicine with Ayurvedic color chakra work. This combination therapy has greatly elevated my level of care for chronic-pain and psychologically stressed patients.

The purpose of this article is to introduce two valuable methods for addressing psycho-emotional conditions in an acupuncture practice. The first is called PNE balancing therapy, and treats a wide range of pain and emotional and disease disorders through the chakra system. The other method is called emotional transformational therapy (ETT) and utilizes color light treatment through the eyes to release some of the root causes of pain and psychological imbalances.

As expressed by the famous equation $E = MC^2$, all matter is simply slowed-down energy. All pain and disease stems from a distorted or incoherent energy pattern within the organism. These patterns are held in place by belief systems and conditioned consciousness responses and are reinforced by poor diet, lack of exercise and toxins. The most direct form of healing is for the patient to change their beliefs about themselves to ones that are more accepting, loving and trusting. However, it is very often hard to make such changes in self-image. If it were easier, the patient would probably not be visiting you! Therefore, techniques such as those described in this article are very valuable.

PNE Therapy

PNE therapy utilizes microcurrent and color light treatment through chakra centers and acupuncture points for root treatment of pain and disease, and enhancement of facial rejuvenation. It draws on principles of Chinese medicine, traditional Ayurvedic color therapy, psychology and spiritual healing.

Ayurveda is a traditional Indian healing system that recognizes the mind-body connection. It uses

healing sounds, gemstones, diet, colors and much more to harmonize and heal the body-mind. Ayurveda also works with seven or more chakras or energy centers within the body to evaluate and treat mind-body disorders.

Each chakra is a swirling vortex of electromagnetic energy and is associated with certain wavelengths, or colors, of light. Each chakra is also associated with an endocrine gland and its associated hormones, a nerve plexus, an organ system and an aspect of emotions and personality. Thus, we can see that chakras are a major nexus point of the mind-body connection.

According to the pioneering work of Candace Pert, PhD, and other mind-body medical researchers, the physical-chemical link between the body and emotions are minute substances called *neuropeptides*, which are messengers that regulate virtually all life processes. Hormones, endorphins and some kinds of neurotransmitters are forms of neuropeptides. By looking at chakra energetics and Pert's work together, we can see an obvious overlap between this neuropeptide network and chakras. Stimulation of chakras and *mu shu* technique¹ are clearly releasing some of these peptides.

PNE Center	Aspect of Consciousness	Endocrine Gland	Body System	Native Color Wave-lengths
1 - Root	Stability, grounded, survival instinct	Gonads	Reproductive	Red
2 - Lower Abdomen/ Hara	Creativity, deep emotions, sexuality, inner child	Leydig cells, Peyer's patches	Genito- Urinary	Orange
3 - Solar Plexus	Personal will, sense of self, aggression	Adrenals, pancreatic islets of Langerhans	Digestive	Yellow
4 - Heart	Compassion, integration	Thymus	Circulatory	Green/ Gold
5 - Throat	Expression, manifestation	Thyroid/ Parathyroid	Respiratory	Deep Blue
6 - Brow	Insight	Pituitary	Autonomic N.S.	Indigo
7 - Crown	Higher consciousness	Pineal	Upper brain, central N.S. control	Violet, White

It is important to point out that the "native color" listed for each center is not necessarily the best one with which to treat it! In many cases, the patient will already have too much of the native color and may need a complementary or balancing color to correct the disorder. For example, many people experiencing emotional turmoil in their lives may have excess orange or red energy in their lower abdomen chakra centers. They will require a balancing color such as blue or indigo to help them "chill" and find more inner balance. Blue is the complementary color to orange, as combining these two colors of light will produce white light.

Chakras are highly sensitive to energetic input - positive or negative. In my observation, many people have internalized the energies of conflict and trauma into their solar plexus center to create diverse symptoms including arthritis, migraines, depression, insomnia, OCD, digestive problems and colon cancer. On the more positive side, loving touch can open the belly and heart centers for a greater sense of well-being.

Therapeutically, chakras are highly responsive to colors of light and sound vibrations. We may

understand the call of the body/mind complex for needed colors as "color hunger." I have observed many people expressing a strong desire or unspoken need for a specific color. As light of that color was applied to PNE centers or acupuncture points on their body, they have often experienced immediate or delayed beneficial reactions such as deep relaxation, mental clarity, increased energy or relief of various somatic symptoms.

Because the use of the word *chakra* may inhibit understanding for some people, I have sought terminology for this mind-body approach that "goes down easier" for Western patients and physicians. I have updated the ancient term "chakras" to *psychoneuro-endocrine regulatory centers*, or "PNE centers" for short. Although long, this name offers a useful means to understand how these energy centers regulate health and well-being on a Western scientific basis.

Diagnosing and treating through PNE centers is the most effective and direct way I have found to access the internal "control panel" for the underlying cause of physical and emotional suffering. Based on my clinical experiences and study of the literature, I am confident that color light therapy is a safe and very direct method to stimulate the release of the "good" neuropeptides that promote physical and emotional healing and well-being. PNE therapy dovetails perfectly with acupuncture, especially treatment of the extraordinary vessels.²

PNE Center Evaluation

The original Sanskrit word *chakra* literally means *wheel* to describe what they look like. These centers have a characteristic spin pattern just like a tornado or whirlpool. There are various methods of reading the spin pattern of a PNE center including dowsing with a pendulum, hand scanning, muscle testing (kinesiology) and thermography.

I have seen spin patterns that include: clockwise, counter-clockwise, diagonal, horizontal, vertical and cloverleaf. Each pattern has a characteristic interpretation in mind-body medicine. For example, a clockwise, even spin usually indicates good health, with the size of the spin revealing the energy level of that center. A horizontal, back-and-forth movement usually suggests the person has partially or completely closed off the life force in that center, due to some form of trauma or denial of an aspect of self.

Once the practitioner has understood and memorized the consciousness and glandular associations of each center, observing the spin patterns provides valuable insights into the underlying cause of pain and disease. With a bit of intuitive synthesis, a whole story emerges that may help make sense of the varied complaints of the patient.

The Basics of PNE Therapy

PNE therapy consists of the application of color light, sometimes with simultaneous microcurrent and/or healing sound, to help open and balance one or more PNE centers. Appropriate colors can be selected through the same methods used to evaluate the centers - dowsing, muscle testing, pulse response (VAS), and others. After applying energy to the centers, they are re-tested to see what degree of change in the spin has happened (if any). Patients must sit up or lay in sideline position so that the practitioners can treat the front and back of the PNE center simultaneously. The use of simultaneous spoken healing statements, such as affirmations, positive intentions or healing dialogue, greatly enhances the treatment's effectiveness.

PNE therapy works very harmoniously with acupuncture, chiropractic and other energetic medicines, utilizing needle or non-needle microcurrent approaches. Each PNE center is associated with a group of acupuncture points, some on the trunk of the body and some distal.

My experience is that when a distorted spin of a PNE center dramatically improves (goes back to clockwise and steady) after therapy, the client almost always reports a sense of increased well-being, pain reduction or other symptomatic improvement. Sometimes emotional releases will happen as part of the process. I have witnessed patients with non-responsive organic illnesses have significant reduction in symptoms as a result of PNE-balancing therapy.

PNE therapy is supportive for treatment of chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, hormonal imbalances, overweight, chronic pain, cancer, depression, mental illnesses and many forms of chronic, hard-to-diagnose disease conditions. Concomitant use of psychotropic medications or chemotherapy may reduce effectiveness, although this is not necessarily the case.

Emotional Transformation Therapy (ETT)

The mind-body connection is a two-way street. We see positive changes in patients' emotions, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, beliefs and other psychological factors when color acupuncture or auriculotherapy successfully alleviates pain or other health conditions. Successful direct treatment of depression, anxiety, anger, PTSD and biopsychosocial factors, which often serve to exacerbate or maintain chronic pain and other health conditions, usually results in alleviation of symptom expression.

Some of the most successful psychological interventions, in fact, now utilize brief stimulation of acupressure points ("energy psychology"). A revolutionary technique which utilizes energy in the form of light and color, called ETT, has shown profound and long-lasting resolution of psychological cases, including trauma, sometimes in brief treatments. When such resolution occurs, chronic medical conditions often dramatically improve and sometimes permanently resolve. These observed benefits have included such diverse conditions as chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, chronic gastro-intestinal problems, ADHD, obesity, post-concussive cognitive deficits, eye and ear problems, and multiple forms of chronic pain.

ETT utilizes the energy of light and color within a complex and comprehensive treatment system to directly impact the balancing of energy systems within the brain, and thereby the body.³ Imbalances of these energy systems can be discerned diagnostically within specific wavelength levels of color through analysis of distortion of perception of those colors. Histories of attachment disorder, trauma, neglect, conflict, reinforced negative self-concept, illness and injury can all cause disruptions or blockages of the natural flow of energy through neuronal pathways in the brain just as they can cause blockages in the natural flow of energy within the meridian system. Negative neuronal patterns affecting both psyche and soma can become habituated and entrenched.

The extensive research of Steven Vasquez, PhD, originator of ETT, has revealed the tendency of specific psychological/emotional issues and somatic conditions to fall within certain wavelengths of energy or colors. Much in the same way that Paul Nogier's seminal work dramatically expanded and changed the ancient tradition of Chinese auriculotherapy with modern technology and science, Dr. Vasquez's work goes far beyond our understanding of the ancient chakra system.

Neurons are most dense and closest to the surface in the eyes. The optic nerve transduces external energy in the form of light and color immediately to different areas of the brain, activating neuronal patterns and responses. Vision is our strongest sense. We have almost immediate responses to visual stimuli through memory centers, emotional centers and neurotransmitter activation, endocrine centers, cognitive-appraisal centers and somatic regulation centers in the brain. ETT utilizes a complex intervention system which allows us to narrow the field of stimulation in appropriate wave bands and activate only part of the optic nerve at a time with specifically selected colors. This activates different specific neuronal patterns, both positive and negative. Positive neuronal patterns can be used to neutralize chronic and entrenched negative neuronal patterns (e.g., memory or behavior). The treatments also create "entrainment" of brainwave states (delta, theta, alpha, beta and gamma) through a strobe (flashing) of color light into the eyes. Unconscious traumatic material may be accessed in delta and theta patterns within specific wave bands of colors.

As previously stated, positive holistic changes in both psyche and soma occur with successful ETT treatment, and it is not unusual for somatic issues such as chronic pain to dramatically benefit, and sometimes resolve, from treatment focused purely on psychological factors. At the same time, ETT offers direct analgesia techniques which have proven efficacious.

Two Case Studies

Case #1: Ms. A entered treatment with medical diagnoses of bilateral tendonitis, epicondylitis and TMJ. History revealed childhood sexual abuse within an alcoholic and dysfunctional family of origin. This patient had been in one form of psychotherapy or another for almost 40 years and had counted 30 mental health professionals. Ms. A entered treatment with plentiful and deep insight into both her psychological issues and her pain, but this insight had not altered her suffering in either realm. She escaped her pain by burying herself in her work as "a way of numbing and escaping emotions I couldn't deal with." With ETT directed at attachment issues, emotional processing and post-traumatic experiences, nightmares and flashbacks (entrenched neuronal patterns) associated with trauma were reprocessed and integrated, somatic and psychic healing occurred, and as is often the case, a new spiritual awakening was initiated. Ms. A stated:

"The very first thing that happened starting light work was that my mood stabilized. ... Immediately, I felt emotionally and spiritually lighter, clearer, free to experience things with more breadth and depth. Color replaced darkness, *stuckness*, emotional paralysis and numbness. Overall this was a metaphysical experience. Healing took place in many spheres on many levels ... nothing short of a miraculous physiological transformation. My TMJ pain resolved. I grew $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch at age 47. My pain disappeared."

Case #2: Mr. B, 69, entered treatment with medical diagnoses of severe cervical stenosis, post-surgical fusion (C 3-4) and myofascial pain syndrome in the neck and shoulders. He also came from a dysfunctional and abusive family of origin. He had suffered chronic cervical pain for almost 50 years, with onset during college. He had also been an active alcoholic until age 44. In Mr. B's case, he largely defined himself in terms of his pain. Pain governed his activity, moods and relationships. Therefore, treatment commenced with direct analgesic work utilizing ETT. Consistent with the ETT somatic paradigm, work with blue-green (cyan) and blue colors of light proved beneficial for pain relief in the neck and shoulders. Patterns of eye movement, depth focus and positioning in these wave bands reduced pain consistently by 50 percent to 100 percent.

Duration of analgesic effect was good but didn't overlap with weekly treatments. Mr. B, therefore, was taught to reproduce the analgesic effect with visual color exercises at home, and continued to be successful bringing pain levels into the 0-2 range. The important attitudinal shift to empowerment over his pain through home analgesic techniques helped him improve his perspectives on more global issues. Once pain was under control, he was able to face underlying psychological issues, which the focus on pain throughout his life had served to obfuscate. Like Ms. A, he is now enjoying emotional, relational identity and spiritual growth never before realized.

Psyche and soma both benefit from major innovations like ETT and color acupuncture, because they are inextricably intertwined. The modern use of light and color in treatment offers a new frontier. Conjoint efforts in our divergent disciplines through further exploration and integrating of treatments might very well allow us to make progress with some of our patients who have historically been most difficult to successfully treat.

Notes

1. For details on *mu-shu* technique, see [my article](#) in the *Acupuncture Today* archives.
2. For more information on this combination therapy, see [my article](#) in the *Acupuncture Today* archives.
3. There is good evidence that holographic connections exist between the chakras, body zones and sections of the brain.

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