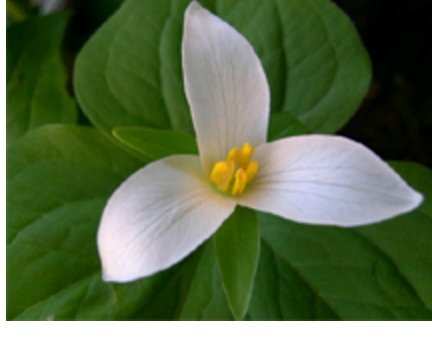


Presencing Issue 53

Palliative Passages Part II



Leaving in Presence: Usually our minds and thoughts distort reality, because our perceptions are conditioned by past memories. When we become aware of our involvement in distorting reality we can take on the responsibility for changing our minds; by anchoring our minds in the present moment... in true always-now reality. I consider this mind changing via anchoring in presence to be an essential factor in accompanying patients with palliative care. Anchoring in presence means that we do not rely on past experiences to provide pathways for our caring. Because of our own familiarity with presence we can share a mutual state of presence with the patient. This sharing allows the patient to enter a realm that is fully operable and attendant to her needs... especially in preparation for leaving the body.

Finding the Door - Two by Two: In these newsletters I have proposed that we train our minds to *now*, by entraining to body senses: We are standing on sure ground and joining the Buddha under the Bodhi tree when we join with the somatosensory system to create a direct link with this moment. And the interesting thing is that this joining can be shared. One way of putting it is that both persons are entering the true realm of creation and love together. In a sense we are inviting ourselves and our clients to tap into eternity together and open ourselves to be informed from this realm. Carl Rogers described a realm that he would enter occasionally with clients in which everything is mutual, everything is unified, and there are no mistakes. I believe this is exactly what happens when we invite our clients into sharing presence with us.

Body instrument: Part of that training is to approach the body as an instrument we are learning. Rumi described the body as an instrument for calculating the astronomy of the spirit: In my wanderings in the somatosensory system, I realize that the body has remarkable features that can take us deeper and deeper into our own being. Starting with feeling our own sentience during meditations we start to interact with different parts of the body system. For instance I discovered that by paying attention to the sensations of tiredness in my body... by bringing myself into presence by using those sensations. Not only did my tiredness disappear, but my mind became sharper and I was able to teach for a whole day with an acuity that was refreshing and full of amazing insights. I use the living fascia films in my classes to show how complex and abstruse those micro-changes are. I'm still awaiting films of the mind's conscious interactions with the fascia... something I know a touch practitioner can actually learn to feel.



Gifted Doorways: Doorways open when we entrain our minds to NOW! Silence, stillness, no-time, no-thought, emptiness: In these newsletters I have described those doorways as "signs of presence." In my experience, when we become aware of these doorways we start to open up to other levels of presencing which I call the "gifts of presence." These gifts are reflections of our state of presence coming from the world around us. I am convinced that these gifts exist in the non-body realms and that that is exactly what persons report who have had near death experiences. So, if we have become used to receiving those gifts while in a conscious state of presencing, then we are fully engaged with our end of life patients, in preparing them to receive those gifts as they advance towards letting go of their bodies.



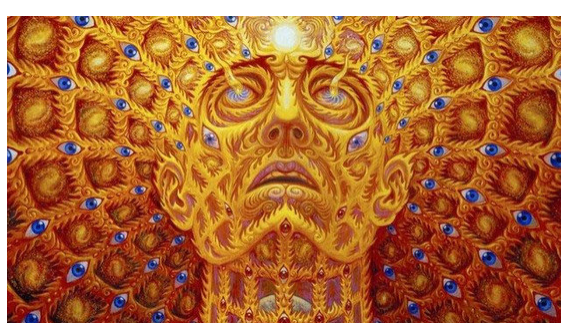
Interactive Zones: There are various sensory effects that produce and accompany now: Example: we ask clients to use their breathing to interact with our hands in different parts of their bodies. As clients consciously direct their inhalation and exhalation, the practitioner can feel the client's breath filling and emptying her hands. Even more... Both client and the practitioner can feel changes happening in their own body parts. The practitioner feels a dramatic sensitivity emerging in her hands as she feels the clients' tissue soften and warm. The client can feel those changes in her body and can feel the shape and tonus of the practitioner's hands even

after they have been removed from her body. The practitioner can feel the left-over sensitivity in her own hands and can observe a reddening and flushing of her hands. This type of interaction can also take place when the client is asked to touch the hands of the practitioner from inside her body. Another interaction can take place when the practitioner uses tactile stimulation, light tapping, to engage the client's awareness within a body part. The client is asked to notice how deeply, she can feel that stimulation in her body.

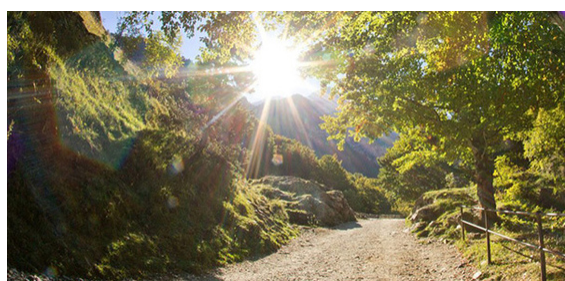
Interior Interactions: Somatosensory system *interoceptors* allow proprioceptive touch, interactive touch, adaptive touch: We have been investigating what happens when a client touches a part of her body from inside. This inner touching we have described as proprioceptive. But proprioception is usually described an awareness of knowing where your body is positioned in space and how much you are able to perform certain movements from that body positioning. Here we are talking about a different kind of inner perception, a feeling and interactive engagement with any body part. The term interoception has been used to describe interior body state or inner feeling awareness. But interoceptors are usually associated with sensations of the gut or abdominal cavity. We are finding that with training a client can not only feel into any part inside the body but can adapt her feeling awareness to interact directly with that body part. She can also use that body part to directly interact with the practitioner's hands. For instance the sacral tuberos ligament can become bone-hard for certain clients. If we gently tap the ligament, so that the client can feel it from inside and ask her to lightly touch the ligament from inside, she can actually soften that ligament by touching it lightly. The practitioner is monitoring the tonus and giving positive feedback to the client. "It is melting like butter."

Inner Connections, Sentience, Being, Soul, Self,

Holy Spirit: When we become present in a resting state we are free to start exploring what shows up when we start to explore the gateways or signs of presence. For instance when we listen into the silence that lies underneath all sound we start to become aware that, our state of rest, creates an opening into mindscapes that go far beyond ordinary thought. We start to notice feelings of merging with the silence; thoughts are emanating from a different source, emerging as words of wisdom, words of inner direction, words of salvation, what some have called the "voice of the silence." We have entered the hush of our inner temple and various ones will show up; hearing their words, smelling their spicy presence, feeling their comforts, joining in light and entering the inner spaces as we pass through each gateless gate. We are being prepared for our own journey as we share these presences with others who are ending this body-centered portion of their own journey.



Sensations are Now: Using the breath to interact directly with different body sensations; is a yoga tradition stemming from Patanjali: Many times we can give the client homework to bring her more and more into a state of presence by teaching her to bring her expanding and contracting in-breath and out-breath into various body parts before going to sleep or upon awakening. This is sometimes referred to as a "body scan." Another way we can approach a similar practice for the client is to have her place her hands on specific body parts and use her breath to fill and empty her own hands... this can be done in places where she is feeling pain. Once she has mastered this technique she can use it any place she can reach with her hands or using her interoception she can direct her breath into places she cannot reach directly with her hands. Another use of the same approach is to coordinate her hand positions and breathing with her chakra centers, particularly with the awareness of working on emotional states. For instance the solar plexus is a center for working on fear, anger, digestive problems, and psychological states like anorexia nervosa. The throat chakra often is closed or inhibited by physical discomfort when a client is fearful about self-expression.



Preparing the Way: Consciously feel into a body part and use your sensory awareness to describe (translate) what you feel into words: This is a very intriguing way of engaging yourself inside with your somatic awareness. Feeling into a bodily symptom, allows us to become much more aware of that body part, and we can start to take the measure of what we are feeling; does it have a shape; does it connect with other body parts; can we describe what we are feeling, is it metaphorical,

physical, non-physical. If there is pain how would we describe the pain; size, shape, intensity, depth, fiery, icy, solid, vapid, metallic, stony, etc.? Once again this is an important practice for practitioners who would thus accompany their clients' verbal descriptions while touching that part of the body. What we will often find that as we mirror back what the client is expressing, and let the client know that we can feel her activity in that part of the body, is that her descriptions of what she is feeling changes in complement with what we are feeling with our hands. This is particularly useful with dying clients who still have the ability to feel inside and verbalize what they are feeling. As this is occurring you will find that she is becoming more peaceful and relaxed.



- Open hands
- Open mind
- Open face
- Open heart
- Open creation

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