

From Point to Field



I remember a question I was asked one day in class by a student. It was to have a great impact on my understanding of the phenomena I had been experiencing in my Shiatsu. The student asked about the Gallbladder meridian and how I used it in my treatments. I remember being a little taken aback. The question was quite direct. It was a how do I use the Gallbladder and not how could the Gallbladder be used when treating. I remember I gave the standard theoretical answer but in the back of my mind the real answer was swirling. It dawned on me that I hadn't worked on the Gallbladder meridian for at least five years, perhaps even longer.

At one point in my meridian work, I had veered away from the meridians origins in the Japanese and Chinese Traditions. The resonance of the meridians that I met in my shiatsu had introduced me to the Energetic Field. In the field the meridians were only about depth of resonance.

In my treatment the meridians were the pathways that led down to the field. At a certain level of Oneness, the meridians merged and became one with the Energetic Field. I gradually realised that I could no longer keep my Shiatsu in the theory box it had arrived in.

Although I had moved away from the traditional homeland view of Zen Shiatsu, I had one solid Zen Shiatsu technique left in my hands. Oneness of touch. In hindsight if it wasn't for the expansiveness of the Oneness I experienced when treating, I would have been able to answer the Gallbladder question more honestly. When working in Oneness there is a time and a place for everything that happens in a Shiatsu session. Nothing that happens when we treat is as random as it may sometimes seem.

Legend

By introducing the two-handed Oneness technique in a Shiatsu setting Masunaga knowingly or not opened the gate to the expansiveness of the Energetic Field. When the Oneness deepens in a session a number of things can happen. It is normal as a session progresses that we sense we have become closer to the receiver. Paradoxically this will only happen when the receiver has moved away from any surface contact with us. The further away a receiver is from what we are doing with our hands the more depth we will sense in our touch.

Energetic Fields of a Shiatsu.

Here is my take on the Energetic Fields and how they can be used in a Shiatsu setting. 1. We all have our own Energy Field. 2. There is a vast Universal Energy Field surrounding us. As part of our natural design we connect with the Universal Field on and off all day long. Our Energetic Field and the Universal Energy Field are naturally in a state of Oneness. We can feel this instantly by relaxing for a second and looking out the window at the sky or walking out the front door. When giving a Shiatsu however, the givers Energetic Field has to have merged with the receivers Energetic Field before the same Oneness with the Universal Field will make its presence felt in a session.

I learnt to use my own body to sense how deeply I could touch a meridian. I had three specific areas on and around my own body where I monitored how a meridian was reacting to my pressure.

The first area was logically my fingers and hands that were pressing on the receivers body. The second area was in my arms and my torso. In this case the Oneness I was experiencing on a meridian was no longer only connecting with my hands, but now I could feel the connection all the way up my arms and into my physical body. The third area where I monitored the depth of a meridian was throughout my entire body and this time the feeling expanded into my outer energy body. The meridian, if listened to properly, could connect with my whole being and I could feel its echo in my outer energy body.

One of the things I could measure by monitoring my own body was a meridians depth of resonance. For example, If I was working on an area of pain, let's say on the lower back or a shoulder problem, I could measure how the meridians in the area of the pain resonated with the field. This gave me valuable information about the meridians in the area of pain. I could check the different quality and depth of the meridians and their relationship with the field through mirroring the meridian resonance in my own Field. I was very careful not to put labels of strong or weak on what I found. I was finished with labelling.

However, I had a rough outline that I could follow. If the meridian resonance remained mostly in my hands then I viewed the meridian as being on an organ energy based level and not yet ready to change. If the meridian resonance travelled up my arms and into my torso, I saw this as the middle phase. Bordering on a change. Here the meridian was echoing in my physical body. I took this as a sign that the meridian was reverberating through my clients physical body. We were standing at the gate to their field but it was still locked. Lastly, when the gate to the field was open, I could feel the meridian echo in my whole being and into my outer energy body. Then I knew that the meridian had become the field.

When the meridians became the field, they lost their theoretically ascribed functions. Now the meridians were energy lines of expansion through the Field. Like land rover tracks that led out into a vast wilderness. I viewed the

meridians as being the tracks that linked the body and the mind and the energy as the glue that held the two close allies together.

Home and Away

I had unconsciously without noticing peeled away the layers of theory from my shiatsu treatments. I had lost my direct treatment focus of the old days. Sure, I am an experienced Shiatsu therapist so I had a fair idea of what was going on with a client. But I used the meridian now to access the field and let the receiver strengthened connection to their field solve the problem.

As I was not following a conscious treatment plan or trying to work out how to treat a problem, I had more time to embrace what I was observing. I would follow a basic set of meridian pathways to get me around the receivers body. I now worked with an open focus monitoring my thoughts and the depth of Oneness with a receiver. I found that intuitively my mind reacted in a form of synchronicity with the flow of the session. My level of thought and my intuitive visions were decided by my depth of contact with the client. In a Shiatsu it takes two to tango, so you never walk alone. As I entered the later part of a session, I found that my intuition wasn't a random voice in the background giving me abstract suggestions but was connected to the journey I was on with my client. Again, there is a time and a place for everything in a treatment. Thoughts and visions are conjured up by the expansion of the Oneness.

When we connect with other people, there are many completely natural systems at work. We are equipped with an intricately designed Energetic Field that we use to tune into other people. So, it is not surprising in a Shiatsu that the same thing happens when we are treating. As the Oneness between therapist and their client deepens a wide array of new contact possibilities comes to the forefront. Energy field awareness in Shiatsu strengthens our interaction with a client and can lead a session out into the expanded surroundings of the treatment room. However, there are a few things that must be in place before the Energetic Field will fully open in a session.

On the other side of the court as a receiver of a Shiatsu we can feel this happening when we have no more contact with our own breathing or of what the giver is doing on the surface of our body. When the field is in place, it's possible for the giver to start to work from their own outer energy body. They can do this by projecting a suggestion of contact. The giver is using the presence of their outer energy body to communicate with another area of the receivers body at the same time as giving a Shiatsu. An example of this is a technique I call Double Directing. Let us say I am working on a meridian on a clients arm. At the same time that I am pressing on their arm, I am projecting my own outer energy body expanding out to another area of the receivers body. Depending on the strength of the Oneness in the session, I could also project my outer energy body to an area in the treatment room. What I am doing here is suggesting movement to the receivers field by creating an altered direction of contact.

At a certain time in a session, it is enough to suggest a movement and it will create a signal strong enough to be picked up by a client. The client is connecting to my work on the meridian on their arm but depending on how open their Field is they will also pick up on the movement my outer energy body is suggesting. My objective here is to expand the space the client has in their field. The more space the more room for change.

I'm able to pick up the answer to my outer projection in the changes I feel on the meridian in their arm. My treatments are about entering and making space in a clients Energy Field and strengthening a clients connection to the Universal Field. Hopefully by doing this I can give a client the space they need to change what needs changing and let go of what's needs released and move on between sessions.

Today in my clinic a Shiatsu treatment has two very different phases. Each phase has its own set of rules. The first phase of a session is usually dominated by the classical view of a Shiatsu treatment based on the organ functions and a defining theory. But at one point the meridians will merge with the Energetic Field. Our GPS will have stopped functioning and we are left intuitively to navigate the field. It fascinates me that Shiatsu has the power to transport a client off-grid. In this phase it is possible to enter together with a client into their inner heart core space.

Legacy

This was Shizuto Masunaga, the founder of Zen Shiatsu's legacy. By creating oneness of touch in a treatment he gave us the keys to the door to the inner chapel. Here it is possible to communicate with a client on a core level. Heart to Heart.

A tricky thing in the more open phase of a session is, that we can follow a client into their Field but once we are there, all our known systems and structures crash. We have entered a multidimensional hall of mirrors. Here there are another set of rules on the mat. We cannot consciously enter or control anything in the multidimension but we can learn to intuitively navigate this expanded phase of a session.

Within and without

Although the client is travelling deep inside at this point, the therapist is doing the exact opposite and has a feeling of expanding outwardly into the treatment room. The giver has merged with the receivers field and can feel with every touch the Universal Fields presence . The Universal Field is open and the area around them in the treatment room is invigorated by the clients internal journey. We are still giving regular shiatsu but now there is a special resonance at hand. The meridians are not containing the energy in the same way they did when we first started to press on them. The meridians have change from Point to Field. Now the meridians relate to the Universal Field that has awakened the multidimensional aspects of the meridians.

I spent years trying to find my way around the illusionary aspects of this part of a session. Probably because there were no answers around to grab and hold on to. The meridian pathways that normally could explain what was happening had change frequency and were referring to the expanse of the Universal Field. The techniques in the multidimension were not able to be defined or used again and again. Like castles made of sand they fall back into the sea eventually. However, I had an animated feeling that

something very important was happening in this phase of a session. So I journeyed deeper to find the source.

These days my shiatsu is about feeling the signs on a meridian that tell me that the gate to the Energetic Field is open. When this happens, I know that the treatment journey will also encompass an element of healing. In this phase I have a soft feeling in my body of being drawn upwards and outwards and at the same time I feel unified with all things. This is a sign that the larger Universal Field is making its presence felt. My own energy field is united in Oneness with the receivers energy field and we float together in harmony in the infiniteness of the Universal Field. We are no longer two separate entities - a giver and a receiver. It feels like we are united together in an expanded space. The only structure I have to help me remain present is the power of my own physical posture. How I hold my connection to the earth and the sky is paramount to how I am able to travel in the field. Technically my Shiatsu is at its minimal. The inner workings of the multidimension are the only cards I have left to put on the table. I am just holding on, following my client deeper into their subconscious inner landscape.

Please keep in touch

When we treat, we must remember we are part of a bigger picture. As therapists, we are not solitary figures fighting out our own treatment battles of success or failure. In every touch we give, we must acknowledge and pay homage to the universal force of life. When we touch another person, we touch ourselves and when we touch ourselves through another person we unite together with the universe.

