

Tracking Energy or Fluid Phenomena in SE Sessions

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In the integration and organization phases of an SE session, fluid body or energy phenomena tend to emerge of their own accord in the awareness of the client and/or therapist. Educating clients about the importance of tracking and supporting such phenomena can make the healing that takes place in SE sessions much deeper. It is not important to provide clients with an explanation for these phenomena. It is sufficient to normalize them as signs of deep healing states, and offer language to identify and support them as they emerge in one's process.

Fluid or energy phenomena arise in different forms and have different qualities. There is no assumption here that the following listing of such phenomena is exhaustive by any means. The attempt is to identify a few phenomena, and develop a language for identifying and supporting them in one's process, since these phenomena appear to occur with most frequency across individuals. The sensations of the qualities of water and air, and of the interactions of these qualities of water and air with the physical body, appear to be the most common and most useful phenomena to track. It might feel like water throughout the body or in specific places in the body, filling up, expanding, soaking, penetrating, moistening, dissolving, swishing around, swirling, wavy, undulating and even spiraling. Or it might feel like air expanding, deflating, stretching, lightening, becoming buoyant, penetrating, dissipating, filling up, filling out, and even spiraling. These phenomena might be accompanied by back to

front, side to side, and circular movements of the physical body, especially around the spine. The movements can be experienced as spirals, downward as well as upward, encompassing the inside as well as the outside of the body at the same time.

In some instances, such phenomena can bring about system-wide holistic shifts that are described in the cranial literature as transmutations, as opposed to transformations. They are capable of shifting long-held patterns in the body for good, and can be experienced by clients as well as therapists as miraculous. A long held pattern of tendency towards constriction in the lungs under stress, for example, might simply disappear after an experience of the lungs filling up with what feels like air, and growing like a cauliflower from the inside out in slow motion. Images are helpful in these situations as an economical means to capture, track, and support complex and at times system-wide phenomena of an extraordinary nature, but care should be taken to ensure that the client is not completely lost in the image in a dissociated way apart from awareness of sensations of the interactions between the physical body and the fluid or energy body mending it.

The extent to which a client's awareness needs to be distributed between the physical body and the fluid body is an empirical issue in any given session. In general, some guidelines have been found to be useful. As a general rule, being aware of as much of the body as possible, whether it is the physical or fluid body, is always helpful, even though at times focusing attention in a particular area is therapeutically necessary. One common mistake that can abort the process is

the focusing of awareness on the discomfort that is caused in the physical body by stretching by the work of the fluid body on it. In those instances, it is helpful for the therapist and/or client to pay more attention to the fluid or energy body that is stretching the physical body, and the pleasure or other qualities of it, than on the discomfort of the physical body that is being stretched or repatterned. One might have to move back and forth between the two, so that the physical body with its discomfort does not slip away out of awareness into a habitual dysfunctional pattern or symptom. And if the physical body appears to become seriously symptomatic in the process, then it might be necessary to step down all the way to the level of the physical body, and engage it a cycle or two of SE or some other somatic process of working it through, so that it no longer presents such resistance to the movement of the fluid or energy body within it. The fluid body or energy body itself might be at times too fast or chaotic and it might then be necessary to set the intent to slow it down, as in SE sessions when the physical body processes are too fast, as is common in traumatic experience.

Therapists of a Jungian persuasion might prefer to cite the fluid or energy body phenomena as evidence of archetypal forces, those who work with energy as evidence of energy bodies, and those who work with spiritual and religious systems as evidence of the movement of the subtle body, soul, or even God within. Many Indian tsunami survivors started to describe these phenomena as God moving within them again when they noticed them during the integration and organization phases of the SE process. Scientists who study energy medicine, with energy defined strictly as properties of the physical body, might cite these

phenomena as evidence of such energies emanating from the therapist or the client in states of deep healing, which can bring about further rapid local as well as system-wide healing, though this might be incomprehensible from the conventional medical paradigm. The scientifically measurable emergence of more coherent electromagnetic waves from the heart, and their rapid communication and regulation of the whole body, including the brain, has been cited as evidence for such processes in deep healing states. Again, it is important not to get lost in the theory of what these phenomena might be, but to stress the importance of tracking them for deep healing as they emerge during the integration and organization stages of the SE process.

Movement of the physical body can accompany such phenomena and be therapeutic, but care should be taken to ensure that movements do not dissipate the energy that is working on the physical body from the inside out. Such movements at times appear to be defensive in some clients because they cannot tolerate the minimum discomfort caused in the physical body by the fluid or energy body as it attempts to heal it. A certain level of intensity or pressure that is created by the energy appears to be necessary for healing, and movement can at times dissipate it instead of helping. On the other hand, at times spontaneous movement is just an integral part of the energy body healing the physical body. If there is doubt, it is helpful to slow the movement down to help the client track whether the rate of movement or the movement itself is helpful or in the way of healing.

Especially during the integration, organization, and stabilization phases of the SE session, stillness is a necessary ingredient. States of system-wide stillness induced by the fluid body can be profound, and are necessary for deep healing. Since they border on altered or non-ordinary states of consciousness, most clients as well as therapists unfamiliar with such subjective phenomena avoid them consciously or unconsciously, as they have no reference or frames of meaning for such states in their training or life. In BDSCT, it is recognized that these states of stillness are dynamic, and there can be much integration and organization going on at the same time in what appears to be a place where nothing is at all is happening, like a placid lake on a day with no wind and no current. Educating clients as to the importance of tracking and staying with these quiet states for deep healing, with or without helpful images, is extremely important in the use of fluid or energy body phenomena for healing in SE sessions. These states are also seen as natural places where the system pauses to gather deep resources from within for the next cycle of trauma healing.