

The Third Pillar of Integrative Health - Regeneration

By Li-Chuan Chen, Ph.D.

All ancient cultures have possessed distinctive concepts of health and healing. Indeed, most of us get sick occasionally and we all gradually degenerate—hence the universal need for medicine. Medicine is so fundamental and central to human existence that it is almost as old as human history. In fact, the very word health is derived from the same ancient language root as whole, wholesome, hallowed, and holy. Health makes us feel whole, while sickness makes us feel not-quite-together.

Why are there illnesses? Without modern scientific explanations, the ancients of many cultures believed illnesses were punishments from the divine. They sought to explain the cause and effect of illness the best they could—by accusing the invisible forces, gods and demons. So wedded was health and illness to spirituality that the first health professionals were doctor-priests. In fact, shamans were and still are the typical doctor-priests in many healing traditions. They are able to cast out from the sick the demons or bad curses. Although we now have more rational explanations of illness, such as the germ theory or the terrain theory, nevertheless, we have gained little ground in healing the sick. More people are dying of chronic degenerative diseases than ever. In this article we are going to explore the idea of radical healing and regeneration.

Previously I discussed the many dietary and nutritional treatments available to nourish and free ourselves from sickness. The many proponents of dietary therapies try to outshine one another by making bold claims. However, upon deeper inspection, these treatments are not as liberating as we first thought. Replacing synthetic drugs with nutritional supplements and herbs may avert unwanted side effects, to a large extent, but many patients still hold on to the idea of popping pills for their health. While contemplating those issues, I stumbled upon the idea of chewing with gratitude and found it to be the most liberating and complete dietary and nutritional therapy of all. Thus, proper chewing became the first pillar of integrative health. There is no separation of body, mind and spirit in its practice.

As for detoxification, the second pillar of integrative health, I found this practice to be very prevalent in ancient healing traditions and modern complementary and alternative medicine. I asked the same fundamental question as before: what are the most liberating therapies and accompanying attitudes for detoxification? I found that the use of fasting and sweating, which simulate the natural detoxification processes of appetite loss and fever, to be the most powerful. The accompanying attitude for detoxification is the willingness to let go of the binding and biting wounds that plague us. Often, the woundology (identification with the wound) or the pain body, in Eckhart Tolle's words, become the reality and identity of a sick person, thus locking them into their problems. In addition, I emphasized the integration of meditation or prayer to deepen the effect of

detoxification. Again, there is no separation of body, mind and spirit in the practice of detoxification that I advocate.

This leads us to the third pillar, regeneration. What is the defining issue in regeneration? For our purposes, regeneration encompasses the issues of health recovery, wound healing, rejuvenation and longevity. But it also includes, radical healing, sometimes referred to as spontaneous remission. Many healing modalities and disease protocols that we have discussed, such as those for macular degeneration and TMJ problems, focus on the diagnosis of and treatment for various diseases. In addition, we have reported on amazing products, such as Silverlon, a silver-coated nylon dressing for wound healing, which has even stimulated digit regeneration in children. We have also introduced yoga, meditation, Qigong and other forms of relaxation and rejuvenation techniques. Rejuvenation, a form of regeneration, boosts our energy and removes stress. We will continue to report on and introduce other modalities beneficial for rejuvenation and stress reduction. However, spontaneous remission, the extreme of regeneration, is our focus here. I have previously provided some insights and examples in my three-part article, *Toward A Unifying Theory of Cancer*. Here, I further explore the connection between miraculous healing, regeneration and spiritual transformation. Let us look into two inspiring stories.

The Healing Power within

Recently, I learned about a remarkable individual, originally from Holland, named Jack Schwarz. Jack was mentioned by Dr. Larry Lytle, D.D.S., Ph.D. in his lecture on Low Intensity Level Laser Therapy at Capital University of Integrative Medicine. Dr. Lytle believes that energetic frequencies are the underpinning of Jack's amazing healing power. Dr. Lytle was inspired to invent laser equipment to harness those healing frequencies. Fascinated by Jack's story, I called his widow, Lois, at the Aletheia Institute, to learn more about him.

Aletheia means "truth" in Greek. Plato used this word extensively in his writings. In Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, aletheia means truth and logos, discourse; and Alethiology, the science or doctrine of truth, the branch of logic that deals with truth. According to the writing in the Aletheia Institutexs website, "it has been suggested that the word, aletheia, originated from three other words: a = non, lethe = from the river Lethe or the river of death, and eia = from the word experience. Together they mean a non-death-experience or immortality."

At age seven Jack Schwarz discovered that he could feel illness with his hands and could see the energy field of people. At age nine Jack realized that he had healing power. Whenever he was around his mother, who was sick from TB, his hands would go directly to her sore spots and she would feel better. At age 14 he was able to do hypnosis after watching others perform it. At about the same time he found that he could stop bleeding from a needle wound. WWII broke out when

he was 17 and Jack joined the Dutch underground. In 1943 he was captured and tortured in prison by the Nazis. One time he was tortured until he fell unconscious. He had visions of Christ and His disciples. When he woke up he said: "I love you" to the Nazi officer who had tortured him. At that instant, his wounds started to heal one after another. His miraculous healing gained respect from the prisoner guards, who returned him to his cell. Ever since then, Jack has harbored no trace of hatred. Jack later escaped and again went into the underground movement. Toward the end of WWII he got caught and was jailed in East Berlin. He used hard bread to carve an escape tunnel. He finally was rescued by the British troops and ended up serving in the British army for several years. In 1957 he came to the U.S. and in 1958 started Aletheia. He died on November 26, 2000. During his time in the U.S., he was tested by medical doctors and scientists for his incredible ability to control his physical and psycho-neural capacities. He demonstrated his ability to stick a needle through his arm and feel no pain. Eventually, he developed some methods (Autogenics) and equipment to help people enter relaxation states. The simplest method he taught for relaxation is to breathe in deeply for eight counts, hold the breath for another eight counts, breathe out for another eight counts and stop breathing for four counts. This helps the person to enter the alpha brain wave state, which promotes relaxation and rejuvenation.

The following is a story about another remarkable man from Korea, Dr. Seung Heun Lee. He is the creator and grand master of Dahn Hak (a type of Ki (chi) practice, and Brain Respiration. He first experienced Ki (life force) when he was five years old. One day, his mother woke up in panic because she had forgotten that her mother-in-law's birthday was that day. She needed meat for the special occasion and there was none in the house. The butcher's house was over five miles away through rough, mountainous terrain and knee-deep snow. Out of compassion for his mother's plight, the child, Seung Heun Lee volunteered to go. Dr. Lee's mother, in her panicked state, actually gave him permission to go.

The danger of this trip was such that with one misstep, he would not have been found until spring. To say the least it was not a pleasant stroll but out of concern for his mother, Dr. Lee forgot his fear. As he realized years later, his unselfish love triggered a profound experience Ki. He walked along the path with fresh and fluffy knee-high snow without leaving any foot-prints. He felt incredible warmth all around him as if wrapped in a warm blanket. He reached the butcher's home, got the needed meat, and raced home. As he was walking toward home he went into a trance-like state and found himself looking down at himself skipping along in the snow. He realized his vision went well beyond the confines of normal human perceptions. Dr. Lee's mother greeted him with delight and shock. She was happy that he got the meat, but she was shocked that he made the trip in less than half the time usually required for an adult. In his own words, Master Lee was "in touch with his True Self."

The second time Master Lee had a Ki experience was in his mid-twenties when he accidentally read a sentence in a book. It said, "If you achieve enlightenment through positive energy and deed, you will be invincible." As soon as he read it, a jolt of electricity ran through his body. Again, a blanket of warmth surrounded him. At that time Master Lee was a third degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and ran a martial arts school. Still, he had never felt this kind of Ki before. The he increased his Ki training until he was able to master the movement of Ki and had obtained some psychic abilities.

He could perform such feats as communing with spirits, curing incurable diseases, helping paralyzed people walk, and calming mentally unstable people. However, no matter how high his level of energy control became, he realized the limits of such feats of energy and psychic ability. He considered them to be devoid of spiritual meaning. He embarked on a search for spirituality on a remote mountain.

He went without water, food or sleep for 21 days and reached the utmost limits of physical and mental strength. He had a piecing and pounding headache and was at his wits end. In his own words, "it was at this moment that the cosmos opened up inside of me and swept me into her arms with a loud resounding moment of enlightenment, a deafening crash that seemed to transport me to another world."

After his spiritual awakening, Master Lee went on to systematically devise the Dahn Hak technique. It consists of simple but effective exercises, such as stretching, calisthenics, breathing techniques, and meditation to reintegrate the physical, mental and spiritual health of the practitioners. But Dahn Hak is more than just physical exercises; it aims at the spiritual enlightenment of the individual as well as the whole human race. For Master Lee, there is no separation of individual selves from general humanity; they are the two sides of the same coin.

Dr. Lee had another important episode of spiritual awakening on the hundredth day of his Ki training. The first hundred days is crucial for laying the foundation in Ki training. Master Lee did not want to give up his practice on a severely cold day. His body shook with the cold and his breathing became haggard. He tried to wait out the cold, but his body went numb instead. His breath became more difficult and he was losing consciousness. He thought he was going to freeze to death right on the spot. He then completely gave up every attachment he ever had in life and trusted God to do what He saw fit. It was at this exact moment that the Dahn Jon point in his lower belly came to life and started spewing out furious heat, melting all the snow around him. From this experience, he realized that we need divine help and this help can only come from complete belief and trust. He also realized that his mastery of Ki flow and his psychic abilities were not the ultimate answers to Life, but were rather cheap thrills. Interestingly, after years of performing superhuman feats before others, Dr. Lee and Jack Schwarz stopped those practices. They realized that there is something much more important than

showmanship. They started teaching people how to empower themselves to unleash their human potential.

These two stories clearly show that we can experience miraculous healing whenever we choose to enter the state of complete loving kindness and total faith in the Divine. There are more stories like this which serve as spiritual nourishment for our souls. Inspiration is a powerful tool to awaken our untapped potential. The only difference between these two healers and us is we have yet to become unconditionally loving.

In short, it is not possible to talk about radical healing or spontaneous remission without talking about spiritual transformation. Let us start with the question of our meaning and purpose of life.

Man's Search for Meaning and Purpose in Life

Often we lose ourselves in the various stages of life, such as finding a job, getting married, rearing children or moving to a new location. If everything goes according to our "plan," we might still end up wondering what is missing in our lives. Prosperity is often not sufficient to satiate that fundamental need and hunger of us. If everything goes wrong, we turn to God and ask "why me?" The emptiness in our lives often pushes us towards some sort of addiction. A person who feels poor and lacking in wealth will grasp every penny. A person who when young was deprived of attention or love may act out in ways to draw attention, love or approval from any source that is willing to give it. If the acquisition of wealth or the seeking of love, approval and attention from others is not the meaning and purpose of life, then what is the true meaning and purpose of life?

Viktor Frankl, the author of *Man's Searching for Meaning*, observed the responses of concentration camp prisoners living under the most horrific circumstances during WW II. He found that many prisoners chose to suppress their true emotions and act aggressively to ensure their own survival. However, he found a few who walked around to comfort others and gave away tiny pieces of the little bread they had. These few people at some level decided to remain themselves mentally and spiritually. They retained their human dignity even in extremely harsh conditions. This shows that although everything is taken away from humans, the last human freedom, to actively choose one's attitude in any given condition, still remains. Therefore, according to Viktor Frankl, the true meaning and purpose of life is to be our real SELF.

For those of you who are acutely or chronically ill, you may choose to fulfill your true SELF along the line of Viktor Frankl's thinking. This true SELF is the same as the expression of the higher self, whether it is called Buddha nature or Christ consciousness. The minute you cease to perceive your suffering as suffering, your sickness stops exerting its grip on you. This often releases a burst of

energy, which causes a spiritual transformation and physical healing as well. Healing and spiritual transformation are intricately linked.

The Scientific Basis of Spiritual Transformation

For the last few hundred years, rationalism and science have failed to fulfill the human need for spiritual existence in the fullest sense. There is a resurgent seeking of religion and spirituality, even in the bedrock of rationalism—academic institutes. When the Metanexus Institute of Science and Religion, located in Philadelphia, solicited research proposals for studying spiritual transformation, 500 applications from 21 countries poured in, much to the surprise of the officials. Their spiritual transformation program will examine the biological, social, psychological and cultural factors that underlie the transformation of individuals and groups.

Based on our current knowledge, the experience of spiritual transformation often results from stress and anguish or rigorous religious practice. But sometimes it happens spontaneously. In plain language, spiritual transformation can come from any way of life. Dr. James Wellman, assistant professor of Western religious traditions at the University of Washington, said, “Traditionally, transformation happens because of suffering, love and beauty.” Scientific investigation of this subject is often traced to the seminal publication by William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). He looked at what happened to people because of their beliefs. Prior to that, scholars studied God, not the believers. Another more recent book, *The Transformed Self: The Psychology of Religious Conversion* (1989), by Chana Ullman shows that the major issues motivating transformation were emotional, involving problematic family relationships, unhappy childhoods and a history of troubled personal relationships. A 1994 study found that 52 subjects reported an increase in their sense of meaning, a decrease in their sense of something missing (a void) in life, and increased happiness, satisfaction and a closeness to God when they underwent spiritual transformation.

Dr. Persinger, a professor of neuroscience at Laurentia University in Ontario, observes that people who experienced God and conversion processes have health improvements. He thinks that if we can understand what generates this experience, we may be able to understand how to cure ourselves. To that end, he conducted studies using a so-called God machine to electromagnetically stimulate subjects to experience God.

To understand more about spiritual transformation, many scientists are looking into the brain. The new generation of neurotheologists have found that we may be hard wired to God. Recent research by Andrew Newberg and Nina Azari shows that certain sections of the brain are activated during religious activity such as prayer and meditation. These sections are involved in rationality, reason

and high-order thinking. Other researchers have a different interpretation; they view religious activity as being in the domain of the emotion.

Besides the brain, the heart is emerging as another important neural center based on the finding that many previously unknown nerves were found to be located in the heart. In esoteric teachings, the heart is actually the house of the spirit. I have written in depth about this subject in the first issue of IH&H in an article called *Breath of Life and A Heart of Gold*. Perhaps, spiritual transformation is the cause or the result of changes in neuronal firing in the brain and/or the heart.

Practical Tools for Attaining an Altered State of Consciousness

Many researchers have noted the healing power of suggestion when observing shamans living in the jungles of South America. They found that elaborate rituals, healing herbs, and a trance-like altered state of consciousness are central to shamanic healing. In fact, an altered state of consciousness can be induced by hallucinatory drugs, dance, drumming, chanting, singing, breath work, meditation and prayer. Other phenomena, such as near-death and out-of-body experiences, can also induce altered states of consciousness. Therefore, I believe that spiritual transformation, leading to a more heightened or enlightened state of mind, can occur via one of many routes.

The diverse research attempting to locate the brain areas that are involved in prayer, meditation or the feeling of God or bliss, may yield conflicting results. However, another way of looking at the involvement of the brain in various states of consciousness is through brain wave analysis. In my opinion, this is a more “holistic” approach. Through her brain wave analysis of thousands of cases, Anna Wise concludes in her book, *Awakening The Mind*, that an awakened mind (in an altered state of consciousness or in a state of transformation) exhibits a combination of different brain waves.

There are four brain waves: alpha, beta, theta and delta. The brain wave pattern reflects your state of consciousness at any given time. Alpha is our relaxed, detached awareness. It is also our daydreaming mode. Beta signifies a waking state, reflecting our thought process or thinking mind. Theta represents the sub-consciousness mind, the dream state and the REM (rapid eye movement) stage of sleep. Theta also provides the experience of deep meditation and is associated with the profound feeling of bliss. Delta is the unconscious mind. It gives us deep restorative rest and underlies our intuition, empathy and instinctual action. It also offers a sense of inner knowing, a deep level of psychic awareness.

Anna Wise found that the brain-wave pattern found in people who have an awakened mind and have mastered life, exhibits a combination of all four brain

waves in the right relationships and proportions. That is to say, they have access to all functions of the brain simultaneously.

Anna Wise went on to develop a step-by-step process to teach people how to reach different states of consciousness and ultimately the state of mastery. She sees meditation as a state of consciousness, not just a technique. This is best reflected in Swami Prakashanand's answer to the question, "How many times a day do you meditate?" He said, "Once a day for 24 hours."

Another way of altering one's state of consciousness is through the use of a biofeedback device. A biofeedback program shows you your heart rate variability. When you are stressed, the variability of the heart rate, as reflected in a wave form, decreases. The stress reduction methods used by Anna Wise and the biofeedback program are the same; they teach people how to reach a peaceful and loving state of consciousness. Other biofeedback methods include Jack Schwarz's Autogenic, auto-regulation process.

What do a Catholic priest chanting the Mass, a gospel choir singing the praise of the lord, a Zen Buddhist deep in meditation, an Islamic believer called to prayer, and a shaman entering a state of trance have in common? They all reach a special level of consciousness that aids in healing. There are many tools for reaching an altered state. What is more important is finding a way to remain in that enlightened state of consciousness over time.

What are the attributes inherent in mastery? Anna Wise defines mastery as "being in the state you want to be in, when you want to be there, knowing what to do with that state, and being able to accomplish it." According to her research, the seven attributes of mastery are: compassion, detachment, non-judgment, clarity, equanimity, service and love.

Living the Way of Awakening

How can we remain in an altered state of consciousness? As Swami Prakashanand articulated, be in a meditative state all the time. This simply means that we have to live the way of awakening.

I believe that by daily practice of prayer, meditation or any means of spiritual transformation, we increase the likelihood of attaining a more fully awakened mind. In the last two issues of IH&H, I have introduced ways to combine spiritual practice with the practical routine of daily life, such as when chewing during a meal, and when cleansing our bodies during detoxification, such as in a sauna.

Most people fail to awaken their mind because they are fixated in certain behavioral patterns. If an adult behaves violently when an object is taken out of their hand, you wonder whether he or she was repeatedly traumatized by the loss of a milk bottle or a toy in early childhood. The cellular memory of a trauma,

which remains hidden below the surface of the conscious mind, becomes a part of the belief system. Any subsequent action that causes the person to lose a possession, even if it is just a piece of paper, releases a cascade of reactions and erratic behaviors. From this perspective, post traumatic stress syndrome, schizophrenia, manic depression, and multiple personality disorders can be seen as being the result of repeated traumas. Of course, the autonomic nervous system is involved in these cases.

The process of daily meditative practice is another kind of “conditioning,” but it is the opposite of the negative conditioning from repeated stresses or traumas. We lose our authentic selves from repeated traumas. In order to cope, we “adapt” to them by forming new behaviors or emotional responses. However, we can choose to let go of those defensive mechanisms and allow our true selves to emerge. In fact, it has been noticed by scientists that there is a loving voice that may come through in people who are diagnosed with multiple personality disorders. This personality appears to be very loving and compassionate, full of wisdom and gentleness. Could this be the authentic SELF? I believe so.

Spiritual practice or meditation can heal “sick” bodies as well as negative behavior patterns. Meditation and other forms of spiritual practice have been used in prisons for rehabilitation behind bars. If we see these inmates as “lost” souls, it would be interesting to see whether spiritual practice can help transform them. The current penal system often does little to reform their souls, let alone their lives. However, Buddhist Vipassana practice (meaning to see things as they really are), has been introduced to prisoners in a few facilities. A preliminary study shows that 45% of the participants of the intensive 10-day course have not re-offended. And Rabbi Martin Seigal helps those who are in need find their true self with his Seven Principles from the Kabbalah. Other studies also substantiate spirituality’s positive effects on inmates.

Ancient Technology for Regeneration

Previously, we have introduced Kaya Regeneration Therapy, a powerful longevity technique from southern India. Warm herbal ingredients are applied to the skin by means of pouches. Endorphins, induced by Kaya Regeneration therapy, promote a sense of well-being and many other positive effects. Endorphins have great normalizing effects on the chronically stressed autonomic nervous system. It has been hypothesized that Kaya Regeneration Therapy activates the innate healing or repairing mechanisms in the body to reverse the aging process. In this issue I would like to introduce another even more powerful and profound technology for spiritual transformation and longevity. It is called Kaya Kalpa.

Basically, Kaya Kalpa is meditation in a dark room for an extended period of time with minimal food intake. The complete darkness is the most important component of this program.

In various cultures, dark rooms appear in the form of underground tunnels, pyramids, catacombs, and caves. They were used for the pursuit of enlightenment. Complete darkness profoundly changes the sensory perception of the body and mind. In effect, we are deprived of all sensory references. Darkness shuts down the major cortical centers in the brain and enhances the extrasensory perception. Darkness also activates the higher brain centers, such as the pineal gland, the hypothalamus, and the pituitary gland. Participants in dark room meditation report experiencing lucid dreaming and heightened consciousness

Heightened consciousness during dark room meditation can be correlated with the production of certain psychedelic chemicals in the brain. Between day one and three, melatonin production is increased. This hormone, which quiets the body and mind, is a self-healing molecule. Its production is disrupted by light. Patients with melatonin deficiency have difficulty in healing. Between days three and five, pinoline production is increased. This molecule affects the neurotransmission that regulates the emergence of vision and dream states. By day six and on, the brain synthesizes the “spirit molecules”: 5-methoxy-dimethyltryptamine (50meO-DMT) and dimethyltryptamine (DMT). These molecules facilitate the transcendental experiences of universal love and compassion.

According to Rick Strassman, M.D., author of *DMT: The Spirit Molecule*, xDMT exists in all of our bodies and occurs throughout the plant and animal kingdoms. It is a part of the normal makeup of humans and other mammals; marine animals; grasses and peas; toads and frogs; mushrooms and molds; and barks, flowers, and roots. The machinery for DMT production is highly active in the mystical gland, the pineal. In addition, the DMT-forming enzyme is also present in high concentrations in the lungs! Perhaps, this is why deep breathing may lead to a blissful feeling (please see the Holotropic Breathwork article in Issue I).

From his psychedelic research, Dr. Strassman hypothesizes that DMT is perhaps involved in the soul's movement in and out of the body, the processes of birth and death, the highest states of meditation and sexual transcendence, near-death experience, and mystical experiences. However, injection of DMT did not consistently produce the desirable spiritual feelings. Perhaps, only natural, internally induced DMT production is capable of provoking feelings of transcendence

Conclusion

The ultimate goal of the Trinity of Integrative Health is to free us from sickness, help us all achieve wellness and attain a higher level of consciousness. This level of higher consciousness gives us more than just democratic freedom; it gives us the ultimate freedom—liberty. Democracy ideally provides for a free and open

society, but it is often undermined by special interests. Special interests are not grounded in the principle of unconditional love and thus can never be free from conflict. On the individual level, if the special interest of the ego cannot be deferred, the authentic self cannot be unmasked. Let us bury our selfish egos in the ash and allow spiritual self-regeneration, just like the phoenix, rise from the ash to live again. Some interpret the fabulous bird as a symbol, which we all keep within ourselves, enabling us to live out every moment to the fullest and embrace each and every partial death and change. In alchemy, the phoenix corresponds to the color red, to the regeneration of universal life and to the successful completion of processes.

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