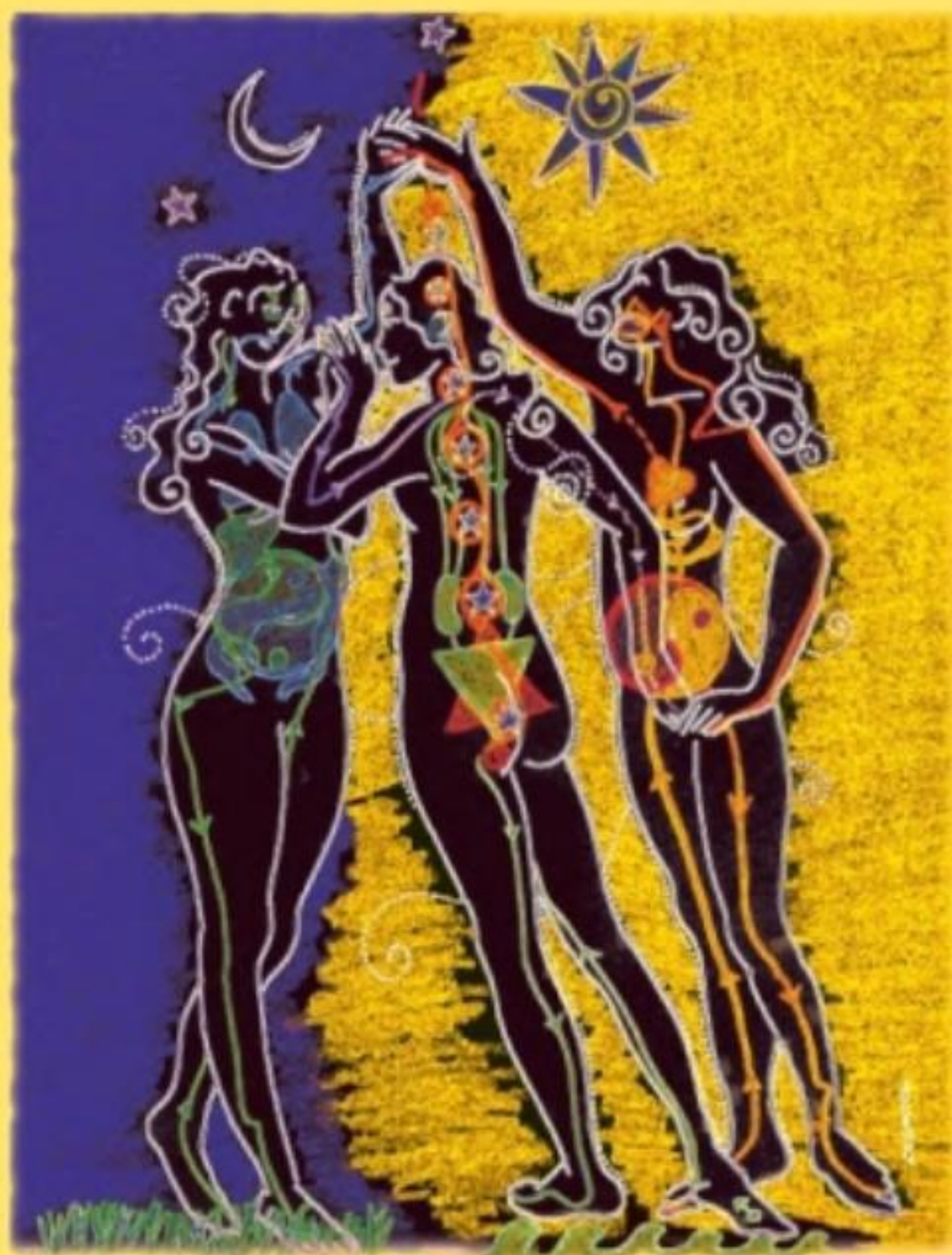


Five Elements Six Conditions

A Taoist Approach to Emotional Healing,
Psychology, and Internal Alchemy



Gilles Marin

Author of Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang

Five Elements, Six Conditions

A Taoist Approach to Emotional
Healing, Psychology, and
Internal Alchemy

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Chi Nei Tsang Institute
Berkeley, California

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Preface

This book is for anyone interested in understanding the work of healing at the physical as well as the mental, emotional, and spiritual levels. To understand healing at these multiple levels, we need to use a mental process that allows us to have a global appreciation of these different levels of existence. This is why I find it necessary to use the Eastern concept of the Taoist Law of the Five Elemental Forces of Nature.

To be complete, any healing method needs to embody a holistic perspective on health and existence. And to be accepted by the general public, it also has to make sense. In addition, I believe that human consciousness has reached a level that requires clarity rather than mysticism. We no longer live in a time when it was enough for us to just “believe,” to have blind faith in our doctors and other health care providers, or our religious leaders, for that matter. I chose the Taoist approach because of its comprehensive cosmology, scientific soundness, and use of the Law of Five Elemental Forces of Nature (also called the Law of the Five Elements or Law of Five Phases)—and because it has a universal grasp of life. Its origins are deeply rooted in Taoist esoteric monastic practices and traditional wisdom, and it has survived the test of time. Today, despite the global pervasiveness of conventional allopathic medicine, it is the most popular traditional medical method used among Asian populations. In the West it has become a way of thinking that reconciles the most current scientific perspectives with both ancient and traditional philosophy and cosmology. Taoism’s description of the world integrates completely with the most up-to-date theories in modern physics. Taoist cosmology, with its system of polarity (Yin and Yang), its Five Elemental Forces, and its sixty-four binary representations (I’Ching), is still, to this day, the most accurate and dynamic representation of existence. It has been used by scientists all over the world to help them progress in their methods of research, and many have written books about modern discoveries proving the truth of Taoist wisdom.¹

This book is based on more than twenty years of clinical practice and personal experience in a Taoist method of healing called Chi Nei Tsang, along with the exploration of a very wide spectrum of healing techniques as a client and practitioner of massage therapy. It is also the fruit of a regular practice of martial arts such as Aikido and T'ai-Chi-Chuan, different forms of Chi-Kung (*qigong*), and various Taoist meditations since my first involvement with Aikido, bio-energy, and massage therapy in the mid-seventies when I was still a teenager. I owe my understanding of the working of the Taoist system of the Five Elemental Forces of Nature primarily to two great Taoist teachers, Dr. Stephen T. Chang and Master Mantak Chia. Dr. Chang taught me the principles of classical Traditional Chinese Medicine, acupuncture, internal exercises (Chi-Kung), classical Chinese herbology, the I'Ching, Feng-Shui, and Taoist philosophy. Master Chia has been my mentor in esoteric Taoist meditations and Chi-Kung practices since my mid-twenties.

It is important to understand that the teachings in this book are not based on particular dogma. They have all been passed down from my mentors, based on practical experience, and have been personally updated from daily learning and personal discovery. This is what I believe to be "true" Taoism, the progressive rediscovery of the right way (Tao) to do things as new events and updated information unfold into history. This tradition has been honored for millennia and passed down directly from masters to students. In China, it gave birth to acupuncture, the use of powerful traditional herbal combinations, and different schools of internal energy exercises and martial arts called Kung-Fu (mastery of a skill), Chi-Kung or Nei-Kung (mastery of Chi and internal processes), and T'ai-Chi-Chuan. It is also at the origin of traditional Chinese sacred architecture and geomancy called Feng-Shui, and of Chi Nei Tsang, the art of internal healing through applied Chi-Kung.

When I began studying Traditional Chinese Medicine, I was both startled and confused by the discrepancies and the many different systems conceived by different doctors, true erudites and authorities in their fields, who seemed at times to contradict one another. Only a long practice of meditation and Chi-Kung revealed the answer to me:

No one is wrong, and everyone is right (from his own perspective). This doesn't mean, however, that everyone's way of doing things will work for me, or for anyone else for that matter. Especially with regard to health, there is only one reality about the truth: Everything is relative. The truth changes according to where we stand. Like every doctor in that tradition, I had to study, investigate, and make sense of all these theories for myself before I could expect results in my own private practice. Therefore, the information contained in this book is not to be taken as dogma. Rather, it is meant to perpetuate a tradition of the search for truth and meaning from a personal and authentic perspective dear to all Taoist scholars and practitioners for millennia. It is designed to teach "how to learn" rather than "what to remember." So don't believe anything written in this book until it makes sense to you in a way that's practical and useful, until you have accepted its truth as your own.

To this effect, after each "lecture," in each chapter, there are specific exercises designed to help you understand and integrate the principles outlined in this book at a more physical level. This is the way I teach at the Chi Nei Tsang Institute and at other centers where these classes are offered. I will not teach any healing techniques without teaching the principles that allowed their discovery. These principles are found in each exercise, meditation, and visualization in this book. These exercises and meditations are drawn from esoteric classical formulas that took several generations to refine and clarify, and have been updated to adapt to the needs of our times. The exercises and meditations follow a progression of difficulty that needs to be respected in order to achieve better results. As with the practices contained in my first book, *Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang*, I recommend that you play with them. Don't be too rigid; go for what feels right for you. Every morning choose "something" that feels right, and make it a daily routine to do twenty minutes of this "something" every day. Build your own practice even if you don't have the opportunity to live near a Chi Nei Tsang center where you can join a study group. You don't need to work too hard; all you need is to be steady and regular. Remember that it takes effort to be fully human. Without this kind of discipline, we will not evolve to our full human potential.

Meditation usually takes a lot of training and dedication, with directed guidance. However, meditations and Chi-Kung are not meant to make you do anything unnatural. Every single practice involves nothing more than to be aware of something that is already happening naturally. You need to enhance your awareness to be able to control these natural processes of life a little better, instead of being completely controlled by them. The practices described in this book are adapted to bring even absolute beginners to great insights. For adepts of advanced forms of meditation, you will also find that, in applying these principles, your regular routines will be greatly enhanced. These meditations and exercises are extremely powerful. When practiced regularly from the heart, they will bring you to the highest levels of spiritual practice and add clarity, wisdom, and guidance to your daily life. Many monks and nuns have devoted their lifetimes in monasteries to learning only bits and pieces of these practices, in anonymous seclusion. Please practice with diligence and high spirit out of respect and gratitude for their memories.

Note that in this book I choose to use formal English rather than the commonly adopted Romanized writing of Chinese ideographs (*Chi* and *Chi-Kung*, rather than *qi* and *qigong*). Concept names are capitalized (Chi, Chakra, Liver, Spleen-Pancreas) and shouldn't be mistaken for their English homonyms: for example, Liver means "the energetic system of the Yin Wood function" and is not only the anatomical organ liver, even though the Liver encompasses certain functions of the liver.

When reading this book, you might feel that I am negating both conventional medicine and psychotherapy. Actually, some of my best friends are medical doctors and psychotherapists, and I am very thankful for their knowledge and advice. As I have already stated in *Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang*, there is a need for the whole spectrum of healing in the health care community. We actually need more science, not less! Medical and scientific research over the past ten to twenty years has been responsible for many important discoveries. It is the synthesizing work of healing that has been mostly misunderstood and underdeveloped because of its tendency to shroud itself under a thick layer of mysticism. This book is an attempt to lift this mystical shroud, and to make healing more commonly understood, and less

disregarded, by the scientific community and the general public, so that healing can be used to make science, in general, and medicine, in particular, more efficient and more human.

Gilles Marin
Whispering Pines, California,
December 2001

There is no intelligence required for healing. To heal, we don't need to be intelligent, we don't need to be good, and we don't need to deserve it. Healing is pure grace. To heal, we do need honesty. We need to be true to ourselves. We need to be able to admit that we have feelings we wish we didn't have. We need to own these feelings so we can outgrow them, and so we can mature as human beings.

G. M.

PART ★ I

Healing and the Universal Laws of Nature

CHAPTER ★ 1

Introduction to the Concepts of Healing, Taoism, and Chi Nei Tsang

Five Realizations About Emotional Healing

During my practice of massage therapy and Chi Nei Tsang, my clients regularly tell me how their treatments allow them to make major breakthroughs in their emotional life, and how their physical health improvement brings corresponding mental and emotional transformations. Some of them are amazed at how much their behavior and personality change during the brief period of time that they have experienced Chi Nei Tsang, compared to the length of treatment typically required with psychotherapy.

From a personal point of view, my studies of psychology and my own extended experience with psychotherapy as a client, at best, never really afforded me more than a certain degree of mental satisfaction and awareness about things that need to change, but no satisfying method to effect those changes. Actually, very little deep personal transformation spontaneously emerged from these studies and consultations. No matter how much I understood why I felt a certain way, I would still feel the same or even worse. All this led me to believe that something fundamental was missing from the current psychological approach. Instead of helping us to discover why we feel a certain way and how we become fixated on this, a well-understood healing process should bring us to a place where we can say that we used to feel that way, but that we no longer do.

Considering the poor understanding of the concept of healing and holism in our Western society, the current practices of psychotherapy and psychiatry have very little choice but to be medically oriented and

aimed at problem solving. Instead, they should provide the means and support required for healthy growth, constant life enhancement, and spiritual self-guidance—the necessities for outgrowing the inevitable mental crises and emotional distress of modern life, and the frightening mental symptoms that often accompany such crises and stress. This has led me to five essential realizations about emotional healing:

- First, in healing, *we cannot separate the mind from the body*. Each symptom, mental or physical, has a meaning. This meaning reflects the way we generally feel and is always emotionally charged. Different symptoms usually keep repeating the same meaning, so multiple symptoms in us are *always* emotionally related.
- Second, unlike thoughts, *emotions are not rational*. Therefore, they cannot be solved. Besides, we don't choose our feelings; we get them. We don't solve emotional charges; we outgrow them. To outgrow them requires digesting them. We literally grow out of our emotions—we take what we need from them and eliminate what we don't need. Taking what we need makes us stronger, more sensitive, and allows us to expand our awareness further, to feel more and emotionally digest more, to grow even more emotionally mature, and thus more emotionally perceptive.
- Third, *emotions are carried in our bodies as energetic charges that need to be processed physically*. They manifest in significant locations in bodily structures such as joints and muscle groups, to be expressed by bodily attitudes. These energetic charges require digestion and their level of processing can be traced throughout the length of our digestive system.
- Fourth, *the healing process can take place only when there is a chance to recover and awareness is present*. The key to the healing process is awareness, which is always proportional to power and maturity. We possess a failsafe that prevents us from feeling too much when we don't have a sufficient support system, or sufficient maturity or power. This is our protective denial system, our “guardian.” It is usually easier to endure pain at the strictly physical level than at the mental-emotional level. Therefore, the evolution of symptomatic responses starts

with physical distress, and when a mental connection is made, and the pain is felt at the emotional level, then the physical pain disappears.

- Fifth, *spirit rules healing*. Spirit means guidance and being connected with our reason for being alive. Getting in touch with our life purpose and its enjoyment allows us to adjust our lifestyle, and accept and adapt to necessary changes.

Differentiating Thoughts from Emotions

The primary focus of this book is on emotional healing. To really understand healing means to understand that there is no difference whatsoever between physical, mental, and emotional healing. Emotions are a part of us that we are not accustomed to understanding. In our culture, it is not common practice to sit down and contemplate the world of feelings in a group setting. Even though many of us do this individually as a matter of habit, it is not something that our culture favors outside of a professional setting such as in psychotherapy, or in art and entertainment, which even then have a tendency to be artificial and heavily tainted with a profit-making or propagandist agenda.

Emotions must first be differentiated from thoughts. Thoughts are rational. Thinking uses logic, and belongs to time and space with a linear structure of past, present, and future. Thinking is for problem solving. Thoughts are the product of the frontal lobe of our cerebral cortex—the most advanced part of our nervous system, the most advanced feature in primates, and the latest upgrade in the evolutionary chain. It is so advanced that it doesn't really work at full capacity yet. Scientific research has demonstrated that even the most educated, cultured, literate, well-traveled, and sophisticated among us are using no more than 10 to 15 percent of full capacity, and with constant effort at that. If we relate our humanity to our capacity to use our thinking process, our rationality, and clarity of mind, it means that it takes great effort to be fully human. Being fully human doesn't come naturally to us yet, and it requires a lot of work and cultivation. Even if we understand this principle of mental evolution, new ideas traditionally and systematically get rejected: the time of Galileo and the Inquisition occurred less than 300 years ago, and yet various forms of inquisition

still exist today in many so-called intellectual circles. This means that new, unfamiliar ideas, no matter how accurate they are, will feel wrong to most of us.

As for emotions, we have such a difficult time with them that I believe we are still in the dark. Before modern times, emotional research and introspection had always been the domain of the occult, or the spiritual, of the monastic practices and of hermits. Only recently, during the past eighty years of Western civilization, have we attempted to explore a contested scientific approach to human behavior and the reasons for such through the study of psychology. Emotions are non-rational. They are not to be confused with thoughts. They are pure abstraction, and therefore, richer, more complete, and more exacting than thoughts. They come from various parts of our nervous system that work at 100 percent of their capacity at all times. Our emotions are also strongly supported by our endocrine system, which governs our nervous system through hormones such as serotonin, insulin, and adrenaline. Emotions are therefore longer lasting, much faster, and more powerful than thoughts. Unlike our thoughts, we don't choose our emotions; we get them. They don't belong to time or space, to past or future; they only belong to the present, the here and now.

But what are emotions, really? We know that they manifest somatically, and that their manifestation spreads through the whole self. Emotions are felt, so they are also often called feelings. Emotions are truly responsible for behavior. We don't act according to the way we think; we act according to the way we feel. It doesn't matter if we know what is better for us. If we don't ultimately feel like doing something, we won't. Most of the time, our way of thinking is quite powerless when confronted with contradictory feelings. This reflects the biggest crisis of our time: being unable to do what our best knowledge advises us to do. Its influence is far-reaching at all levels of life from communication to relationship, from sports to show business, from education to engineering, and from politics and social studies to law and justice. "What feels right," with all the abstract and irrational content of what "what feels right" means, will always ultimately rule over reason.

We feel with our entire being—body, as well as mind and spirit. When we feel happy, we don't only feel it in our mind and our nervous system. Our face is happy, our heart is happy, our skin, stomach, and even our

hair manifest that happiness. When we are sad, our whole body is sad. Feelings carry through our whole body and manifest through what are called *emotional charges*, pockets of energy containing information—what we call *Chi* in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Emotions are carried through our nervous system and our endocrine system. In biology, the endocrine system has a prevalent function of intercellular communication throughout the body, and there are indeed many correlations between what we know of the endocrine system, and the *Chakras*, or energetic-informational centers of the body from Eastern traditions.

Unlike the thoughts, emotions don't care about solutions or comprehension. Understanding them doesn't change them. We can't change feelings the way we do thoughts by "knowing better." The only thing we can do to change our emotions is to outgrow them. This is literal: Emotionally growing means growing physically by digesting these emotions, taking what we need from them, and eliminating what we don't.

Emotions Are the Food of Our Soul

My studies in healing and my practice of Taoist meditation have led me to believe that emotions are the food of our soul. When we talk about "growing" as a person, I understand it literally. We feed every day on different kinds of emotions, and we literally digest them. This makes us grow. Emotional maturity thus means having digested a sufficiently wide spectrum of basic human feelings to allow us to function independent of any form of parental protection, authority figure, or external guidance.

Every day we absorb a certain quantity of emotions in the form of energetic charges created by our body's reactions to feelings. Some of these charges are easy to digest, some harder to digest, and some are quite indigestible. We call these latter type toxic or negative emotions. Where do these charges go when not digested? To exactly the same place that any toxic food would go in our body, to various places of storage: the liver, body fat, the lymphatic system, and any tissue and location that has meaning for that particular charge. Every part of the body has a function, which has a corresponding meaning for the emotional self that is going to hold and hide the charge there.

How can we hide anything inside our own body? We do it all the time, and very easily. All it takes for us not to know anything about ourselves is to make sure communication doesn't reach specific places. Actually, the body can't really forget anything. Unlike the nervous system, which has to constantly select from all the information needed at one time to fit it on the small screen of our awareness, every single cell in our body contains all of the information from all of evolution since the day of creation. So our body doesn't really forget anything; rather, it chooses not to remember something in particular.

We are born to enjoy life. Unfortunately, life is not always enjoyable. To protect us from the horror of emotional distress, our bodies are equipped with a very sophisticated protection system. This denial system protects us from permanently feeling bad from the emotions we don't have the capacity to address due to lack of maturity or knowledge, or a weakness in our support system. This *denial system*, the "guardian," is in charge of hiding the emotions until we are able to meet the conditions that will allow us to digest them and grow from them. Since we are born to enjoy life, every single part of our body is entitled to participate in this enjoyment. When we hide an emotional charge somewhere in our body, this place doesn't feel bad because it has become numb. But, by the same token, it can't feel good either. The role of our guardian is also to let us know when we finally meet the requirements to be able to face our emotions. Once we are mature enough, stable enough, strong enough, and have a sufficient support system, the guardian lets us know this through a symptom. A symptom is then an attempt from our deeper inner self to let us know that it is time to change, time to grow, time to heal.

The main vehicles for communication in the body are the nervous and endocrine systems, while the principal modes of communication are contact and movement. The nerves have to make contact in order to carry information because they have to carry the impulse, the energy that carries information. Unlike electricity that runs through inanimate matter, the energy running through a live body, Chi, follows different rules: It needs movement to carry on. The mode of movement through our body is our breath. It is our breath that pumps oxygen in our chest and it is the cellular breath that makes sure that the product of breath, the spark of life, is evenly distributed to every tissue and cell in our

bodies. It is well recognized in Traditional Chinese Medicine that our breath carries our Chi, that spark of life that carries the energy and the information of life at all levels in our body and allows us to feel inner movement.

Our breath is the inner bridge that connects all levels of awareness within us. Not to feel a certain place in our body requires not breathing there. We stop breathing there so we stop feeling it. It numbs, and becomes able to hold any amount of tension without our feeling it. This is the reason we can go through our whole life with unnoticed muscular contractions in our shoulders, for example, or in our neck or our back that we would not be able to tolerate if we were actually made to feel them. When we are made aware of such contractions through exercise, yoga, or a massage therapy session, it usually comes out either as a pain, or as what we call a “healing crisis” when it expresses itself as a symptom. It takes a tremendous amount of effort for us to keep our body out of alignment. If we choose to do it so systematically, we must have good reason. It is easier to endure pain at the physical level than to experience it at the emotional level!

Hidden emotional charges explain the reasons we have a hard time recovering after a minor accident. Strictly physical problems go away quickly. If they don't, it is because there are hidden charges creating a physical, energetic, and informational blockage that prevents us from recovering. Osteoporosis is a good example of chronically hidden emotional charges. Working with osteoporosis clients, one learns that not all the bones in their body are affected the same way. Some bones are not affected at all, and the bones that are affected are not necessarily the ones that succumb to weakness due to non-use. This is because the site of most weakness in the bones always relates to places of chronic contractions, of which the client is unaware or where the client is unable to relax (typically, jaws, different parts of the spine, hips, shoulders, or neck). The muscles in constant contraction leach more calcium from the local bones, and prevent these bones from regenerating at the normal rate. When an osteoporosis client releases the charge from that location and allows the muscles there to relax and be healthy, the bones in that particular location improve dramatically.² Of course, hormones also play a major role there. They have to in order to support the strategy of the emotional body in hiding chronic patterns of tension (see Chapter 5).

We carry some of these emotional charges for years, even for generations when they are passed down through patterns of habit. In *Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang* (hereinafter referred to simply as *Healing from Within*), we explored the digestive aspects of these emotional charges. In this book, we explore the conditions by which such digestion is possible, how the different stages of that digestion are expressed, and how we can actually map out the manifestation of these different emotional charges throughout our entire body. Once we understand how our body deals with this, then we practice the Fusion of the Five Elemental Forces meditation (see Chapter 7). This meditation uses a formula that has been practiced and refined for hundreds of years in the spiritual disciplines of the East to help our entire mind, not only our thinking mind, to process and grow from the experience of emotional digestion. This formula is based on working with the Five Elemental Forces of Nature to find harmony within and outside us in this ever-expanding universe.

What Is Healing?

First, we must define “healing.” The conventional medical approach is to cure symptoms and conditions that cause suffering through the use of synthesized drugs, surgery, and, more recently, genetic engineering. The basic philosophy behind this approach is the assumption that nature is not to be trusted—that nature has problems that need to be solved through human intervention.

The holistic approach, on the other hand, assumes that since we are the product of millions of years of evolution, and since we are still in the gene pool, we are pretty much perfect, at least to the degree of perfection possible in a universe in constant evolution. Perfection, as a matter of fact, is not an attribute of nature; therefore, it is not a human attribute either. What is natural and human is to be able to improve all the time. It is to progress constantly, following the need to adapt to the ever-changing, ever-evolving world. Something perfect cannot be ameliorated any further. Perfection is not an attribute of this universe; it is an attribute of what rules the universe. If we experience diseases and conditions, it is either as an attempt to adapt or because we lack the information that would either protect us from or prevent these health

problems. Symptoms are usually messages from within, asking for help and demanding evolution. Most of our pains come from healthy reactions to unhealthy situations in our bodies in which we often find ourselves involved.

The principle of health—what is healthy—draws a very fine line between too much and not enough. Health is not about balance since life is about motion and movement. Complete balance describes a static world not even found in death. To live well, we need a constant state of imbalance that moves us in the direction of the progression, evolution, and expansion of the universe to maintain harmony within it. Too little would require the constant effort of having to catch up with the pace of life, while too much would bring us ahead of our time with the catastrophic results of non-adaptation and rejection. Indeed, humanity, throughout all civilizations, has always experienced this full spectrum.

Healing is also about fulfilling our life purpose. It involves being in harmony with the evolution of our time. Our life purpose is about fulfilling our individual role as a member of existence. We come into life inheriting a universe that is complete. This heritage is biological, historical, geographical, cultural, ethnic, and ecological, and it encompasses the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the self. Many of us get sick from “not being on the right track.” We find ourselves in life situations that are foreign to our nature or unfair to our spirit, and we find our bodies and souls rebelling against this. Most of the time, our conscious mind is oblivious to the situation, and, only after enduring systemic symptoms, are we given the chance to make the necessary changes to go through our healing process.

The Healing Process

The healing process is the physical and/or mental manifestation of the internal conflict between the part of us that wants to evolve and grow, and the part of us that is afraid of going through the pains of change and growth. Change is the hardest thing to go through in life and requires the transition time of the healing process, which often necessitates the intervention of symptoms, accidents, or life crises to bring awareness of the need for change.

The healing process is, thus, the often-uncomfortable transition time between that place of familiarity we all come from, and that new better place, which is still not familiar enough to be comfortable. This is why the healing process is often called a healing crisis. Healing is always a step forward in evolution. There is no healing without change. Once we are healed, there is no turning back and no suffering through the same symptoms again. The healing process does not need to be painful, but will always contain a large amount of confusion where the old patterns, the old frame of reference, the old self, need to be discarded. For this reason, specific conditions have to be met in order for healing to take place (see Chapter 8).

Emotional Release: The First Law of Thermodynamics Applied to Psychotherapy

While traveling through Polynesia and Hawaii searching for peace and quiet to work on my books and guided meditations, I learned a lot by being in contact with native Polynesians and by observing the reactions of Westerners to the natives' way of life. Hygiene is a big issue on the islands. Dwellings are traditionally spotless and elevated from the ground, and shoes are kept outdoors. But what horrifies the non-locals is the amount of trash left on beaches where the local people live. Natives have been using these beaches for thousands of years, living, eating, fishing, surfing, sleeping, and enjoying life there. Everything they use—plant leaves to wrap and cook their food, coconut shells, bones, sea shells, and leftovers from cooking—is organic, biodegradable, and part of the eternal recycling aspect of nature and their island. Such detritus wouldn't remain on the beach any longer than the next tide, and, in any case, no longer than a night or two before starting to decompose. By the end of the week, everything would return to the continuing decomposition-recomposition cycle of life and death. To the indigenous mind, there is no such thing as dumping, especially on a small island. In fact, the very idea of trash and dumping is considered extremely disrespectful. Everything has its place and order. The locals often say jokingly when people don't tidy up, "Please clean up after yourself, your mother doesn't work here!"—meaning that whatever you dump, someone else has to pick up.

Indigenous habits didn't change readily with the advent of plastic, canning, and packaging. The natives have no concept of something that is so durable and dirty that you have to "make it disappear by hiding it," even in the face of the tropical sun and the mighty Pacific Ocean. Does anything like this really exist? What is this Western concept of dumping, anyway? Does anything we dump ever disappear? Well, nothing disappears. This is the law of thermodynamics in modern physics where only two things exist, energy and information: "Nothing is created, nothing disappears; energy is either transmitted or transformed." We are so used to "disposing" of garbage that we have a tendency to think that when we take the garbage "out" at night, and it is "gone" in the morning, it is just another commodity of the civilized world such as starting a car, using a computer, and buying groceries at the store. We don't need to know how these machines operate, and how they are built, or who grows the vegetables, and how they got to the store. Likewise, we don't need to worry about dumping. "It is taken care of ..."—or is it?

From the psychological perspective, there is no real dumping either, in the true sense of the word. There is no such thing as a final emotional release. When we release emotionally, an energetic charge is moving, changing place, perhaps changing shape, but it is *not* disappearing. It is moving, it is transforming. It is a process. When we become aware of an emotional charge and feel it stirring, it doesn't mean that it has been taken care of even if we cry, jump, scream, or go into convulsion and spasm. Such actions are mere reactions to an unpleasant situation. They don't mean, in any way, that the work of healing is complete.

Again, whatever we dump has to be picked up by someone else, and, at the emotional level, we all dump and pick up and dump some more. Emotional charges are dumped and picked up and dumped again and again until they find a place of transformation, until they get recycled and put to use again. In the meantime, dumped emotional charges haunt the places where they were released and affect us like a parasite wavelength affects reception in a radio or a cordless telephone. This is what we feel when we walk into a place where there has been a heated argument, or a psychotherapy treatment room after a session. This is the "charged atmosphere" in a courtroom or a stadium. Since emotional charges also get released in people, this has a big impact on the

quality of relationship we have with others. This is why it is important to do Chi-Kung and meditation to change the energy of the environment into a more positive and more loving atmosphere.

Real emotional processing is an emotional transformation that changes the negative aspects of the charge into positive ones. This happens with a shift in the whole person, not only at the emotional level, but also at the physical, mental, and spiritual levels. There is no such thing as changing only here and there. The body is very consistent: If one part of us changes, not only the whole body, but our whole personality has to shift and adapt to that change. It is not a part of our body, or our mind, or a part of our emotional makeup changing. It is we in that part of our body, we in that part of our mind, we in that part of our emotional self who change. In short, our whole being changes.

When such a change occurs, it is by using the same biological matter, the same energy that has been there all along. Only now it has been recycled and digested, and it has transformed and evolved. This recycling aspect of emotional energy is a very important one. Chi is like water. When water circulates, oxygen enters the water and kills bacteria. When water stagnates, bacteria proliferate, and the water becomes poisonous. Like water, when Chi circulates, it is healthy. When it slows down and stops, it becomes toxic. We should never store Chi for very long. When we “store” Chi during certain Chi-Kung exercises, it is only for a short time, the same way we store air in a bagpipe to play it, or water in a tank for constant use in a house. The air and water stored there are never the same because they keep circulating.

Our work as practitioners is not only to merely dislodge the emotional charge, but it is also to make sure that the energy contained there is going to move and change. There is no point in moving dirt from under one carpet to under another one. But neither can we “dump” that dirt, even to put it under a cosmic size carpet! That dirt has to be put back to use. Life has to be put back into it, then it has to be put in a place where it can be enjoyed. This is what happens during healing: The energy spent to hold a pathology in place turns into the healing surge that melts tumors and reverses diseases, and the negative emotional pattern turns into a positive one. No energy is lost, no energy is gained. This is the law of physics, the law of nature.

Extraordinary Chi

In *Healing from Within*, we explored the concept of Chi as energy pregnant with information, and the inseparability of energy from the information that it holds. Chi feeds the various functions in the body; it thus takes on the qualities of these functions. When the Chi goes through our Heart and endocrine system (Heart Controller) in our blood, it becomes Fire Chi; when going through the Kidneys and our genes, it becomes Water Chi; in our Spleen-Pancreas, digestive system, and muscles, it is Earth Chi; in our Liver and nervous system, it becomes Wood Chi; and in our Lungs and skin, it is Metal Chi. The energy and information that constitute our Chi is subject to improvement through learning and self-cultivation. When applied to a skill, it is called Kung-Fu, and when applied to health, Chi-Kung.

In this book, we are emphasizing the most classical aspect of Chi brought about by its very etymology. The classical Chinese character for Chi is composed of two ideographs: the first on the top, formally written in four strokes, represents a flow meaning “air,” “vapor,” or “breath,” which we translate as flow of breath (see Figure 1),³ and the second ideograph, on the bottom, formally written in six strokes, representing the notion of “rice,” as well as “essence.” The rice ideograph symbolizes the presence of the life force, the energy contained in every grain of rice. It is the spark of life. Together these two ideographs represent the flow of the life force, the energy and the information that brings life. Chi is therefore not neutral. Chi is the energy carrying the deliberate intent to promote life and existence. It is a power that comes with an intention. It is the breath of creation. For this reason, Chi is often translated as “the breath of God.” It is then understandable why the essentially atheist Chinese Communist ideology chose to “simplify” the character Chi by removing the “spark of life contained in a single grain of rice” ideograph, keeping only the “flow of breath” ideograph, thereby eliminating any spiritual connection with the concept of Chi and translating it as the neutral concept of energy or breath. (See Figure 1 for ideographs of classical Chi.⁴)

A large, bold calligraphic character for 'Classical Chi' (氣). It features a top radical of three horizontal strokes, a middle radical of a rice grain (米), and a right-side radical of a vertical stroke with a curved tail.

Classical Chi
The breath of life

A calligraphic character for 'The spark of life within a grain of rice' (米). It is a stylized version of the rice grain radical (米), consisting of a central vertical stroke with four horizontal strokes branching out from it.

The spark of life within a grain of rice

A calligraphic character for 'The flow of breath' (气). It features a top radical of three horizontal strokes, a middle radical of a horizontal stroke, and a right-side radical of a vertical stroke with a curved tail.

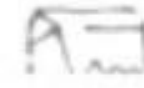
The flow of breath
Chi in modern Chinese

Figure 1.
Ideographs of
classical Chi

Four ways to write Chi (Ki) by Master Kazuaki Tanahashi



Formal in ten strokes



Cursive in four strokes



Two strokes



A magnificent Chi executed in one stroke

Figure 2.
Four ways to write Chi

In medicine, Chi is used to establish the changes that bring healing. When used in martial arts to kill or in situations where life is no longer tolerable, Chi ultimately effects the changes that renew existence. The quality of the Chi establishes the power delivered by the level of consciousness: If the energy is corrupted or somewhat deficient, it results in a negative charge, as disease or suffering. If the energy is healthy and abundant, it promotes good health and happiness, and the development of human consciousness. Power and consciousness come with responsibilities, which are ultimately aimed at protecting and promoting quality of life and health.

Because of its extensive use of Chi (Ki in Japanese), the martial art Aikido is so powerful that, to this day, it can't be safely used in competition. It has been called the ultimate martial art, the last of a long lineage of Budo, the Japanese martial tradition. Morihei Ueshiba (1883–1969), the founder of Aikido, was probably the last of the Japanese “invincible warriors.”⁵ However, like legendary warriors Myamoto Musashi, author of *The Book of Five Rings*, and, before him, General Sun Tzu, author of *The Art of War*, Ueshiba spent his life promoting peace and nonviolence. Furthermore, Ueshiba was the first to introduce the concept of “protecting the enemy,” the ultimate art of diplomacy, the art of the peace warrior. By protecting the enemy, we outgrow our bestiality and protect our humanity. There are then no losers, only winners. Aikido—Ai for “togetherness,” Ki (Chi) for “life force,” and Do (Tao) for “the way”—translates as “the way of harmony.” Martial art, at this level of consciousness, then becomes the art of winning rather than the art of fighting, with the connotation of winning over, not defeating, the “enemy.”

Why a Taoist Approach?

There are three main reasons, as outlined below.

First, we need a *methodology for treatments*.

We need a clear methodology, a good system to help support clients in the midst of their processes. Healing generally happens in several waves. There is the immediate wave that comes out of the treatment, and there are also the long-term, long-range waves that lie beneath the surface, which can take several days, weeks, months, or longer to find

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