

4. HOW TO BECOME HEALTH SELF-SUFFICIENT USING "ENERGY MEDICINE"

For many people, being "health self-sufficient" means nothing more than knowing to take two aspirin to relieve an ache or pain. A more health-conscious person might add a daily vitamin pill or even a series of taxing calisthenics to his/her personal health care program. After that, it's up to God, luck, or the doctor to keep one well, right?

But wouldn't it be wonderful to have nearly full control of your own health? To be able to "erase" your own pain and suffering in seconds ... to maintain a high level of wellness throughout your entire life ... to remain healthy and pain-free for little or no cost, year after year -- without doctors, drugs or surgery?

Not only is this possible, but people have been doing it for centuries ... using a process called "energy medicine." This is an ancient system of healing and health maintenance which is still widely practiced in many rural parts of the Orient, where doctors are few and poverty is widespread.

Energy medicine is a program based on the belief that there is a vital force that circulates throughout the body and causes physical life. The Chinese call this energy ch'i (pronounced "chee" or "jee"). When ch'i is flowing smoothly throughout the system, we are in good health. But when ch'i moves either too quickly or too slowly, we manifest symptoms and suffering. And when ch'i stops flowing completely, the spirit departs and we are no longer alive (at least in the physical sense).

Energy medicine -- whether it is practiced in China, India or elsewhere in the East -- believes that, while there may be many symptoms, there is only one disease: an imbalanced flow of energy. And restoring health -- at least in concept -- is equally straightforward: stimulate energy to flow more normally; then symptoms and suffering will "reverse" (heal) themselves and health will be restored.

Energy medicine uses low- and no-cost physical and non-physical therapies -- many of them easily self-applied. In an earlier article I described G-Jo, one of the easiest and most effective of these physical energy medicine "self-health" techniques (see FATE, April? 1984). G-Jo is a kind of acupuncture without needles ... that is acupressure. But there are literally hundreds of self-health methods based on energy medicine. And most of them take only a few minutes to master. After that, it is simply a matter of remembering to apply these techniques as often as is necessary (namely, as soon as suffering manifests itself or returns).

Many of these physical methods involve the use of touch, as with G-Jo. The body has a least twelve, known acupuncture systems within it. Each of these is a complete, self-contained healing system which may be used in many ways, either alone or in conjunction with other methods, to stimulate healing and prevent suffering.

Two of the most accessible of these systems are located in either hand and foot. Today, a growing number of people interested in good health know about reflexology -- a method of therapeutically massaging the hands or feet. Reflexology is both easy and effective to use ... even for beginners. Here, tender spots or "reflexes" are deeply massaged several times a day until the tenderness fades at these points. The belief is that each reflex or acupressure point in the hand or foot is connected by energy channels to another bodily part or internal organ. Tenderness at the underlying reflex indicates distress in that related bodily part. But regular massage of the most sensitive reflexes will usually stimulate self-healing within the distressed target organ or bodily site.

In fact, each acupuncture system -- be it located in the hands, feet, nose, ears or elsewhere -- gives these same signals (tenderness when a "good" therapeutic point is pressed) and promotes the same kind of healing response when properly stimulated. The Chinese have known about this healing response for millennia. Such practices were the subject of the world's first medical book (or perhaps first of any books), The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine, the famed Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wen, or often called Nei Ching. This book, believed to have been written some five thousand years ago, is still the basis for all Chinese-style acupuncture as well as many other energy medicine techniques.

While energy medicine may seem too simplistic to be possible, the results of these techniques are often astonishing in their speed and effectiveness. For example, I have taught G-Jo to millions of people (via more than 850 radio and television broadcasts I have done since 1977). There, listeners usually phone in who are suffering from various aches or ailments and would like relief. On the air, I describe how to find -- and "trigger" (deeply massage) -- the appropriate G-Jo acupressure point that my experience tells should bring immediate relief.

The callers -- most of whom have never even heard of G-Jo acupressure before -- follow along, pressing and massaging according to these instructions. In nearly every case, they do bring themselves profound, immediate relief from their symptoms. Understandably, many callers are dumb-founded ... especially the skeptics who had phoned in with a "show me" attitude. The comments and subsequent letters I receive from these shows usually reflect that astonishment: how could something so simple and effective could remain "unknown" for so long? Yet such techniques were well known to even primitive tribes in many parts of the earth. And today, in more than two thirds of the world, energy medicine still plays an important role in the health care of the rural, the poor or the disenfranchised.

An even more effective, if slightly more complicated technique, is called "auricular therapy." Essentially, this is the stimulation of one or several of the more than 250 therapy points located in the ear. As with other forms of touch therapy, all that is needed to utilize this healing system is: a knowledge of which point in the ear controls which bodily area; and an appropriate tool by which to stimulate the tiny therapy point.

Nearly any "tool" will do, as long as it is somewhat pointed and easy to manipulate. I like using a toothpick whose sharp point has been clipped off with a nail clipper; but a wooden matchstick or even a twig will do just as well.

Then, as soon as a symptom or discomfort manifests itself, the appropriate ear therapy point is located by gently pressing in the general area (see chart) until a profound -- somewhat painful -- feeling announces the right point is being pressed. Finally, the tool is gently pressed and jiggled upon the point for a few moments (which causes a very painful or numbing sensation to radiate, generally, throughout the side of the face and neck). Indeed, it will not be possible to trigger the point for more than several seconds due to the intense discomfort that should be occurring.

But in nearly every case, in my experience, relief of the target pain or other discomfort is virtually instantaneous! And this is just one of many types of energy medicine which uses touch to stimulate relief and self-healing. Furthermore, the use of touch is only one of many types of self-applied energy medicine ... and often not the best of them!

Perhaps even more profound (although more subtle) in their overall effects are its mental techniques. Included in this umbrella category would be such methods as prayer, "spiritual healing," laying-on-of-hands, meditation, and what would generally be called hypnosis, as well

as the process many people know of as visualization.

In all, there are at least four broad, general categories that comprise the philosophy and practice of energy medicine: physical energy-balancing methods (such as acupuncture, auricular therapy, etc.); mental therapies (like meditation and visualization); movement and exercise (typically non-strenuous and easy enough for people of all ages to perform -- see below); and the use of medicinal foods and herbs. And each of these categories must be incorporated into his "healthstyle" for one to become totally health self-sufficient.

It is the latter category -- using food and other edibles as medicine -- which is perhaps the most important (and least understood) element of energy medicine. To an energy doctor, every substance which goes in the mouth (or, for that matter, in the nose or any other orifice) affects the state of internal energy and is thus a medicine. Some food-medicines are good and some are bad, depending if they move energy toward (good) -- or away from (bad) -- its ideal rate of flow.

"Extreme" foods -- such as slaughtered products, salt, sugar, alcohol, tobacco or harsh drugs -- are said to cause energy to move away from its ideal flow, forcing it to flow either much too quickly (like sugar, alcohol or tobacco) or too slowly (such as salt, meat or other slaughtered foods) throughout the system. These, then, are "bad medicines" and should be avoided whenever possible.

What is a good energy medicine diet? While one's geographical location, state of health and time of year are important variables, to most energy doctors a vegetarian -- or near-vegetarian -- diet is essential. The bulk of the diet should be based on grains (in temperate or tropical climates, this usually means rice) with fresh vegetables, legumes and fruits acting as complements to provide the necessary balancing effect on one's energy. Grains, then (especially rice), are the most nearly perfect food for human beings.

For those whose religions do not prevent it, the occasional use of meat, poultry or seafood may be considered, but more as supplements rather than as the bulk of the meal, itself. However, too much meat (or, for that matter, too much of any substance) causes one to move away from internal balance and harmony and is thus responsible for symptoms, disease and suffering.

To the energy doctor, the mouth is the prime cause of disease and suffering for most people. This is because we take food-medicine at least several times a day, every day of our lives. Hence, good health is not possible to maintain or restore without the right diet. Later, if necessary, various herbs or other natural medicines may be added to "fine tune" one's energy flow; but the diet must first be essentially compatible with the human energy system. (For a more complete discussion of using food as medicine, see this author's *Dynamic Nutrition! The Acugenics Way of Eating for Pleasure and Health.*)

There are many differences between energy medicine and the typical practice of most Western doctors, called "allopathic medicine." Western physicians, for example, are taught that most illnesses are caused by germs or viruses, whereas energy doctors see these microscopic creatures as natural responses to disturbed internal energy.

To the energy doctor, disease (really dis-ease) and suffering are primarily caused by abuse. While it is true that one's heredity (karma) has a certain influence on his health, there are a number of abuses -- most of them self-inflicted -- which are, by far, the more important cause of suffering. (And of these, of course, the greatest is abuse by the mouth, or wrong eating. Other abuses include physical injury, weather extremes, emotional excesses, too much or otherwise "imbalanced" sexual activity, etc.)

Thus, one of the key tenets of energy healing is: to stop the suffering, stop the abuse. Compare this to most Western (allopathic) doctors who seek to heal the patient in spite of his or her self-imposed abuses. The energy doctor would merely scratch his head in amazement or throw up his hands in frustration at the patient who would continue such abusive practices, once they were revealed to actually be abusive. Even more incomprehensible to the energy doctor would be the willingness of his allopathic counterpart to continue treating a patient who repeatedly injures him- or herself with known abuses. (Centuries ago, Chinese doctors were paid only if the patient stayed well!)

Even more illustrative of these differences is the rank of social prestige between allopathic and energy doctors. In the West, surgeons command the highest respect (and incomes), whereas those who use mostly non-intrusive means -- usually psychiatrists -- are at the bottom of the scale in both income and social respect, when one thinks of doctors.

The most highly regarded energy doctor, however, is the teacher-philosopher who treats his patient using only with non-intrusive methods. Surgeons (along with veterinarians) rank at the low end of the respect scale, barely nosing out acupuncturists.

Inherent in this reasoning is the observation that it is the body -- and only the body -- which heals itself. The best physician gently (yet profoundly) stimulates the process; the surgeon or acupuncturist intrudes in the process.

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With this brief introduction to energy medicine, how can you apply some of its more simple practices to maintain your own health and relieve your own suffering? It is remarkably easy ... regardless of your age or level of education. Children, old or infirm people and those with virtually no education have used -- and continue to use -- energy "balancing" techniques with excellent results.

While there are many easy and effective methods that you can learn and apply, The G-Jo Institute (a non-profit educational group organized to share basic self-health energy medicine techniques) has developed a short program that works well and is easy to learn.

First and foremost is to have a method for relieving your own suffering. Here, G-Jo acupressure -- that simplified form of acupuncture without needles -- is ideal. G-Jo is easily learned, takes only moments to self-apply and, most important, G-Jo brings immediate relief from most kinds of suffering.

Equally important is to eat right. For us, that means following a lacto-vegetarian diet (that is, a grain-based diet supplemented by the occasional use of milk, rennetless cheese, yogurt, and such) or a vegan (dairy-less) diet, if an allergy to milk products exists. Whenever possible, fresh -- not frozen or other out-of-season -- local vegetables and fruits should be used to complement the meal.

Even more important is what we recommend not putting in the mouth: cigarettes ... "recreational" drugs and even medications (whenever they can be avoided) ... slaughtered foods ... sugar or honey (instead, use a bit of maple syrup or fruit juice concentrate) ... excess alcohol ... and any substance which causes allergic reactions (either obvious or "hidden").

To supplement this program we add a series of "effortless" exercises that take less than twenty minutes to perform, and are best done at least five days a week. First, start by taking long, deep breaths, keeping the tip of the tongue rolled back into the roof of the mouth (this helps

"balance" the heart). Breathe "to" and "from" the lower abdomen (known as the hara or tan t'ien in the Orient), whenever possible (see the excellent article about Chi Gung, FATE, Nov., 1984). A good time to do this is while driving or when doing any kind of quiet work. It should be repeated whenever you think of it, until deep, tongue-curved breathing actually becomes a regular habit; but at the very least, this breathing method should be repeated 10-20 times a day.

Our "exercise" routine begins by briskly shaking the hands as loosely as possible until a tingling, glowing sensation occurs in them and begins radiating up the forearms. This may take from thirty seconds to one minute to happen. What this does is to help restore energy balance within the so-called "micro-acupuncture" system of the hands -- the same system used in hand reflexology. Its effects gradually flow outward to the rest of the body.

Then, while standing, swing the arms loosely forward to about shoulder height -- palms facing forwards or upwards -- then back as far as they will comfortably go. Repeat these arm swings fifty or seventy-five times, until you feel a sense of "heaviness" (increased blood flow), warmth or vitality throughout the arms, shoulders and neck area. This exercise takes only two or three minutes to perform. The Chinese say that this technique helps prevent cancer, stroke and other serious disorders by stimulating the endocrine and lymph system.

Then do gentle, full-swing twists. Here, stand with your feet at shoulder width and swing the arms loosely as far around as centrifugal force will naturally take them, first to the right, then to the left (the hands should loosely slap the opposite shoulder or even the upper back area, if you are doing this correctly). Let the head and neck -- as well as the rest of the spine -- follow around from the momentum of your swinging arms. Important: do not stop this swing abruptly -- instead, let it gradually "wind down" on its own! This technique helps restore or maintain the health of the acupuncture system found along the spine, as well as that of the spinal column, itself, both of which are crucial to overall well-being. You may even feel "snaps" and "pops" in joints from the ankles to the shoulders, as well as within the vertebrae of the spinal column, as self-realignment occurs.

Step five is stretching. Begin by standing in a "tee" position with the feet nearly together. With arms outstretched sideways, and palms facing upwards, slowly rotate the hands around and backwards in a full circle, until the palms are again facing as far upwards as possible, but "in reverse." Here -- and for the rest of the routine described below -- it is crucial that you stretch very slowly. This is important for several reasons: first, it makes the stretch more effective; but it also helps to prevent any accidental injury that might occur from stretching too far.

Then bring the hands together in front, palm-to-palm, at about waist level (arms still straight out, not bent) and press them together as you move the outstretched arms now upward, over the head, arching the back as far as possible. At the same time, let your head hang back as far as comfortable, and -- with the head still back -- jut the lower jaw forward as far as possible. This stimulates the thyroid (and thus the rest of the endocrine system) and helps keep the neck and face in good shape.

Then reverse the process and, slowly, allow yourself to hang forward with the hands reaching toward the toes as far as is comfortably possible. If you can touch the floor with either your fingertips or your palms, fine -- but if not, don't worry. It makes no difference how far you stretch downwards, only that you feel the effects of that stretch. Repeat these stretches several times, until you feel a sense of invigoration in the legs and back.

Then click your teeth together lightly but rapidly and, at the same time, tap all over the scalp and forehead briskly with fingertips (or rap with your knuckles, if you have long

fingernails, as if knocking gently on a door). This stimulates various acupuncture systems of the head, face and mouth (each tooth is considered to be "connected" to a specific internal organ or gland). Do this until you again feel a tingling, glowing sensation -- maybe thirty to sixty times. In all, this takes just a few seconds to perform.

Now focus on the lower abdomen -- the key to wellness, according to many energy doctors. It is said that when the lower abdomen is supple and healthy, fitness and good health must follow. But when the lower abdomen, or hara, becomes flaccid and weak, suffering cannot be far behind. I personally do a rather strenuous type of sit-up to keep my belly toned: with fingers locked behind my neck I raise my crossed legs and at the same time, attempt to touch my nose to my knees. I do this as slowly as possible until discomfort occurs -- for me, usually less than ten times.

But such exertions are unnecessary (I do them only as a personal challenge), and are not well suited for older or out-of-shape individuals. The maximum energy (vs. muscular) benefits occur as soon as you feel the results of the effort -- namely, a bit of discomfort. Many of the same benefits may be achieved by doing either a more gentle sit-up, an even gentler "sit-back" or even the so called stomach lift, combined with the "p-c clench."

The stomach lift is done either standing or lying down: simply pull the lower abdomen in -- and up -- as far as possible, imagining trying to pull the navel up and back to touch the area just below the shoulder blades at the spine.

At the same time, clench the "p-c" (pubococcygeal) muscle -- the muscle located in the perineum, between the sex organs and rectum, which clamps the sphincter muscles of both these orifices in retention -- as tightly as possible. Hold this muscle clench for as long as you hold the stomach lift (usually a few seconds is enough ... in fact, that may be all you can hold this position). Gradually increase the length of time you hold this powerful pose. The results of this technique, alone, are: vastly improved tone of the lower abdomen; improved sex drive; increased energy; and a glowing sense of vitality that lasts for up to several hours. In my own practices, I frequently do those same techniques during other parts of the day when I want a quick energy boost or feel the need to "un-stress" myself.

Depending on your desire and physical condition, other stretches -- called asanas, taught by any hatha yoga teacher -- may also be added. In most communities, Liliias Folan (or another TV yoga teacher) is on public television during some part of the day, and this is an excellent time to do your energy balancing routine. Possibly you can video-record the broadcast if it is shown at an inconvenient time.

You should also include several easy eye balancing techniques. One is to simply roll the eyes in wide circles both clockwise and counterclockwise, several times in each direction). These, too, should be done on a daily basis.

Finally, deeply and briskly pinch the tips and sides of each finger and toe (near the nail) with deep pressure. Each finger- and toe-tip is said to be connected to a key inner organ or gland; and pinching the tips of these appendages helps to restore balance and harmony within.

In all, this program should take under twenty minutes a day to do but the results should be remarkable. First benefits -- a feeling of more energy and vitality, especially -- will be felt within several days, but it will take at least several months of daily repetition to realize much of the true worth of this simple program. Remember: this is a lifelong program so it is important not to be rigid or over-taxing in a first burst of enthusiasm (or too discouraged if you forget for a few days in a row -- just pick up where you stopped). It's not so much a matter of what you do, but

that you do something ... even just take a short, daily stroll. There is very little cumulative benefit after a certain point from any exercise program, so frequent "doses" are needed.

To keep my own program fun and diversified, I also add other simple methods whenever they "feel right." Yanking gently on the ears (to stimulate the ear acupuncture system) ... briskly massaging the nose (which also contains an acupuncture system) ... brushing my back and legs with a hairbrush ... there are literally hundreds of such self-health techniques, most of which take only moments to do, but which are powerfully effective when used regularly incorporated into your personal health care program.

The primary goal of energy-balancing methods is to improve energy flow and flexibility (rather than to only build muscular strength). Flexibility and suppleness (as exhibited by a well-conditioned yogi) are thought to be the peak expressions of wellness.

In fact, harsh physical exercise is not encouraged by energy doctors. Instead, they see running and such as a natural response to an abusive lifestyle. Most benefits -- and none of the risks -- from harsh exercise may be obtained by a simple change in diet plus the techniques described above.

Let's quickly review the steps for becoming health self-sufficient:

- eliminate suffering as soon as you notice it (with G-Jo, auricular therapy, etc.)...
- stop abusing yourself as much as possible (no smoking or drugs reduce stress, etc.)...
- move to a lacto-vegetarian or vegan diet as quickly as possible...
- incorporate a regular, daily program of "energy balancing" exercises into your healthstyle.

Of course, doctors can play an important part of your health care program -- say, to set a broken bone. But following the above steps will all but eliminate the need for outside medical help except in extreme situations, just as it has for countless other people for many centuries.