

## Emotional Integration

### Healing the Inner Child

by Paula Oleska

Emotional Integration is a process of learning how to make friends with emotions and restore them to their proper place in our experience. This process recognizes the validity of all emotions, seeing them as a very primal language, and it gives them space to evolve and transform by allowing them a direct expression through sound and movement. Encouraging this direct expression in the balancing process can reduce the number of corrections needed and can also allow those corrections used to reach deeper levels of personality. The results tend to be more permanent and the transformation more profound.

#### Emotions as a language

Emotions can be viewed as a language of the body. A baby communicates with the world through movement, touch and emotional expression. Fear, anger, frustration, joy or sadness all communicate how well the baby's physical and emotional needs are being met. From that point of view, therefore, there are no "negative" emotions--only a more or less intense expression of satisfaction or need.

Just as the development of the cortex complements, but does not supersede, the function of the limbic brain, similarly the development of verbal expression does not supersede the baby's "emotional language". Each of us still has that baby within. That is the Inner Child.

The Inner Child needs healing because the baby's needs were rarely met completely and his/her emotional expression was disapproved of. Thus, very early on, we learned to view the language of emotions as something inferior that needed to at least be controlled if not entirely eliminated. Consequently, as adults we do not consider it appropriate to cry when we hurt, to shout when we are angry, or to jump for joy when we are happy. We have many judgements like "control yourself," "grin and bear it," "don't cry out loud, just keep it inside," (why do you think that song was so popular?) "get

rid of your negativity", etc. We are also ready to pass these judgements on to our children to complete the vicious cycle. And yet without reaching and accepting those deep levels of our feeling and movement expressed by the inner child our vitality is undermined.

#### Touch for Health and emotions

When we look at the 5-Element chart we can understand that emotions are an emanation of our life force flowing through all our vital organs, and not just some abstraction that happens arbitrarily and can be changed at will. We cannot live our lives without experiencing fear and anger any more than we can live without our kidneys and our livers. The key is balance--dealing with meridians, we know that either a deficiency or excess is detrimental. The same goes for emotions as expressed through meridians. For example, how would you like to go for a dangerous mountain climb with someone who never feels fear?

The truth is we cannot avoid feeling these feelings, but we avoid expressing them. Each emotion has a specific physiological response that happens instantly, and we can either let it flow or block it. Blocking has to be accompanied by a stiffening and numbing of a corresponding area of the body which little by little leads to limiting our ability to move freely and to experience aliveness.

Touch for Health is in a unique position to enhance emotional healing because of its inherent understanding of the meridian flow. If we look again at the 5-Element chart, we will see that, if the energy is allowed to flow freely, we will always end up feeling joy and compassion. This has been confirmed in all the classes where I taught the 5-Element emotional balance. Having gone through tears, groaning and shouting, all participants usually end up giggling. They also report that this is a real high point of the class. The road for experiencing more of joy and love in our lives is not through "getting rid of negativity", but through enhancing the emotional

flow of each element. How do we do that? By allowing each emotion its full expression in a non judgmental, safe environment.

There is now a sizable body of neurological research supporting the thesis that emotional expression is necessary for physical healing. Touch for Health has recognized the importance of emotions in balancing for several years now, especially thanks to the work of Gordon Stokes and Bruce Dewe. Including direct emotional expression in our process will put TFH in the forefront of the healing field and produce even more profound integrative changes for our students and clients. The model I suggest is as follows:

1. **Balance for 5E Emotions.** Check the statement "I accept and express all of my emotions." Repeat with each emotion and its related sound.

Sit in Cook's posture and for each of the emotions. Recall an unfinished situation from the past that called for more expression. Allow that expression now. When complete, move on to the next element until you have gone through the whole cycle, following either the KO or the SHEN flow. It is interesting to start and end with joy. Observe your experience of joy at the end of the cycle. It may be very different from the first one. Sometimes it is also useful to repeat the process while holding the ESR points.

When you feel complete, check all the statements again.

2. **Include direct emotional expression in your balances.** It can reduce the number of corrections and help you or your client discover more insights about the situation. Identify the need underneath the emotion. Balance for the fulfillment of the need.

**Example 1.** "Mary" comes in for a balance and is very upset over a fight with her boyfriend. As she expresses her feelings by crying and shouting at him (he is not present), she gets in touch with a specific incident from her childhood where an underlying emotional pattern was created.

She identifies the feeling: "I am not important. My needs don't matter." When she feels ready, we balance for a picture of her life where her needs matter and she feels important/considered. This often translates into specific changes in relationships, family and workplace. Since "Mary" went through a lot of changes during her release, the corrections are very simple.

**Example 2.** "Jack" is in a process of balancing for his goal. Through age regression we are directed to age 12, and he gets in touch with an unresolved conflict with a particularly abusive teacher. As he relives the situation and acts out all the emotions he could not express as a child, his posture changes. He also gets additional "aha's" into how this has affected his life. When he feels complete, we can finish the balance quickly and easily.

Additional benefit from and including this process in the balance is the student's deeper sense of self-acceptance and his/her increased ability to take care of his or herself better. Says Louise, a student of mine who has followed this process for over a year, "Who I am is less scary and more clear. When emotions come up I know what they are ... I know exactly what to do. It is very comforting. I can take care of myself better. I'm not confused about myself any more.

Sometimes emotional expression may also help ground the balancing in the body better. A man who works with me from time to time has experienced many balances with different systems over several years. He has had profound experiences, and yet there was something missing. He complained that he never felt "a real physical difference." In one of our sessions he got in touch with a very frightening childhood experience. When I encouraged him to feel the fear, there first was a fear of feeling the fear (and other emotions as well), in the form of judgments like "I'll be overwhelmed," "I'll lose my mind," "I'll die." etc. We balanced for being able to feel the fear and survive -- it did not take long. Then he was able to feel it -- he screamed for about 10 minutes -- and when he was done, he said, "Wow! I feel a real physical difference!"

### **To Summarize**

The Inner Child within each of us is the key to our vitality, spontaneity and creativity. The Child speaks primarily the language of feelings and is now seriously repressed, as a result of severe past disapproval. Giving the Child an opportunity to express in a safe and accepting environment allows the "negative" emotions to transform, ultimately increasing the joy, love and self-acceptance in our lives. Including the Inner Child and his/her expression in a balancing process will save practitioner's time and effort while giving the student a more profound and more grounded experience as well as more autonomy.

### **For the practitioner**

If you are one of the people who would like to include emotional release in your work, you will need to start with yourself. You will also need to continue to work this way. Learning how to handle the intensity of your own emotions will prepare you to handle it with others and will also give them your unconscious permission to open up the way with you. (See the following paper, *Why/How TFH Works*.) This process is very rewarding, though not easy. But if you start, you will quickly see the benefits both to yourself and to your students.