

## Options for Using Metaphors with Touch for Health Muscle/Energy Balancing

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**Abstract:** From finding an emotion related to a goal to balancing energy by making expressive sounds or combining ESR (Emotional Stress Release) with color visualization, the standard TFH protocol provide us with a variety of options for accessing the powerful symbols of the Chinese 5 Element Metaphors. Adding the Metaphors of Organ Function & Muscle Action, we have 111 distinct images that can be dynamically incorporated into our balancing sessions.

**Touch for Health** combines the Ancient Chinese **Perception of Life Energy** (the basis of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine) with **Western Kinesiology** (Bio-Feedback through Muscle-Monitoring) and Western Touch Reflexes (Neuro-lymphatic, Neuro-vascular, Spinal Reflexes, etc.). The integration of a **Creative Dialogue Process** (using Positive Goal Setting & Consideration of the Symbolic Metaphors of the Chinese Five Elements & 14 primary Meridians, as well as thinking metaphorically about muscle function and action) allows for a holistic clearing and balancing of **physical/structural, subtle energetic, mental/emotional & sensory/associative aspects of health and wellness.**

In TFH we use muscle tests to get a sense of the energy flow in the meridians. We develop goals, assess the flow of energy, use various reflexes to balance energy and then reassess how we feel. Our purpose is to increase awareness of all of the aspects of our whole Soul and to facilitate the flow of energy, communication and balance between all of the cells, organs and organ systems, between the conscious mind, the unconscious, our intuition, and our connection to Chi, life energy, or God.

Touch for Health is a system that *anyone* can learn to use to facilitate the harmony of the whole person. It was first developed by Dr. John F. Thie, a chiropractor in Pasadena,

California. Dr. Thie found that there were simple, safe, effective techniques that his patients could easily learn to use for themselves and with their family and friends, to *bridge the gap between professional health care and home health maintenance.* In keeping with the wellness/prevention model of chiropractic care, TFH bridges the gap between feeling energetic and well, and feeling "sick enough" to warrant a visit to a health professional. TFH allows us to INCREASE our awareness of minor symptoms, and to balance our energy to prevent minor issues from becoming clinical diseases. At the same time, we not only enhance our fine tuning in relation to discomfort, dis-ease, or dysfunction, but we constantly **reframe our focus on the positive experience** that we want to be living, so that health care becomes an ongoing dynamic process of adapting and enhancing our wellness in the context of our life experience and goals rather than "curing" or getting rid of named diseases to achieve some static and standard condition of health.

When we do a holistic TFH energy balancing, we are ultimately trying to re-integrate and harmonize the multiple aspects of our experience of life that tend to be thought of as separate and independent functions. When we test muscles to get a sense of the energy flow in the meridians, we are working with the gross muscle function, neurological circuits,

general brain function, and more importantly, we are also accessing the *subtle, intuitive sense of energy*. The tactile, kinesthetic monitoring of muscle function/energy flow provides a connection between concrete physical sensation and intuition/subtle sensitivity to energy states.

Since Dr. Thie retired from his chiropractic practice, and has enjoyed more free time to speak about the benefits of TFH, he has emphasized a *dialogue process* which grounds the body/energy work in a wellness oriented approach, integrating muscle/energy work with the mind -- the conscious mental processes, attitudes and beliefs that each of us experience. This dialogue process involves a narrative exploration of issues, symptoms and positive goals, and more recently a discussion of the Chinese 5 element metaphors to access the sensory/associative aspects of life experience through the 5 senses, emotions, seasons, climates, etc.. including his own adaptation of the concepts of cognitive development and belief systems- *the Faith metaphors*.

By integrating both narrative and sensory/associative aspects in the dialogue process, we bridge the gap between the abstract, language-based perception of our memories, our current perceptions, and our future outlook, and the "ghestalt" sensation of experience as it is experienced through the senses. We know that emotions are actually a fascinating nexus of our awareness of physiological function, our unconscious physical reactions to stimulus (considering our automatic survival responses as the precursors to the millions of subtle feelings we experience as emotions), and our conscious interpretations of our experiences. So being aware of our emotions is actually assessing a highly complex neurological/energetic construct.

Narrative is necessarily abbreviated to fit the limited "space" available in the abstracted "meanings" of words. By also accessing the "whole picture" of our experience (including visual images, physical/emotional sensations, sounds, smells, and even taste) we fill in the gaps between our words. We can either follow-through on this connection by putting our senses and emotions into words, or

simply take advantage of the efficiency of just being aware of and feeling all of these aspects as we balance the energy.

Our premise is that a sufficient flow of information/energy will result in an emotional, physical, mental and spiritual equilibrium that will allow us to feel whole, to do the things that are most important to us, and to *find greater meaning and joy in life*. Creative use of metaphors can enhance our assessment of our own wellness in the context of our life, help balance our energies towards our goals and help us discover new passions and purposes that are right for us. Awareness is the key aspect of the process. We may feel a lot better physically, mentally and emotionally after a balancing, but the true power of TFH is in developing our awareness of the things that we really want from life and the things that block our energy to accomplish our goals.

**The Five Element Metaphors, the Organ Function metaphors and metaphors derived from the test motions/muscle functions** offer a rich resource for exploring the meanings of our experiences, our feelings, our imbalances and our goals. Using the metaphors helps us to verbalize or at least think about the many possible aspects of our goals and the related imbalances. When we think about a metaphor related to an imbalance indicated by a muscle test, we often have that "Aha!" moment of insight. This may be a highly transcendent, sudden, miraculous moment of enlightenment, like those attained in prayer or meditation, or it may also be a step-by-step process of development through small, everyday insights as we deal with our problems, our life's work, and seek our Telos, the purpose in life we were born to fulfill.

The mental exercise of contemplating the metaphor increases parallel processing in diverse areas of the brain and the whole Soul, bringing more of our innate resources to bear in balancing our energies for our unique purposes. Just thinking or talking about the metaphor often balances the energy in all of the meridians as indicated by muscle testing. But thinking about the metaphors also provides all kinds of insights and new perspectives for our life experience.

### **What is a Metaphor?**

When we use the word "metaphor", we use it in its broadest sense. We suggest symbolic pictures or actions, figurative or literal similarities, parallels, Corollaries etc. We are looking for any imagery that vividly illustrates or represents some significant aspect of your life. This is largely a creative/associative activity. It may help give you specific conscious insight into your personal life issues, or it may simply help to "get the juices flowing" in your mind so that more of your whole system is activated and balanced.

The word Metaphor is composed of two parts, Meta, meaning higher, larger or changed, and phor, meaning to carry or to bear. So metaphor literally denotes a word that carries another meaning- perhaps a larger context, or a higher purpose, or else a different meaning than is denoted by the literal meaning of the word, a changed meaning, or a transformed meaning. At the most basic level, all words are metaphors, symbols (created with sound, text, pictograms, etc.) which represent something else. So, when we are working with metaphors at the most profound level, we are working with all of the functions of Language. We are tapping into the human meaning-making apparatus, accessing the power of Sensory Images, Ideas, and Stories. Sensory images are not just visual, but made up of all of the elements of perception and experience, the 5 senses, impressions, emotions, intuitions, associations, reactions, symptoms. The vast majority of the raw information that we are exposed to is stored in the form of sensory images or sense-memory. Ideas involve some abstract meaning-making related to our sensory experiences. The realm of ideas encompasses our thoughts, notions, fancies, suppositions, conceptions, opinions, views, sentiments, beliefs, intentions, aims, objectives, goals, aspirations and dreams. We use metaphor to relate our sense-memory, ideas and meaning to new experiences and concepts. We can use a word to signify or denote a specific or particular thing or idea. This is the use of the symbol or metaphor to show equivalencies, parallels, likenesses. In literary terminology the metaphor is a comparison such as, "love is a flame", and the simile is a comparison such as, "love is like a

flame". With this subtle turn of the phrase we move from one to one correspondence to mere similarity, analogy, or connotation. The connotation of words involves varied shades of meaning in context. Connotation is the meaning of the words found between the lines -- insinuations, innuendoes, hints, clues, suggestions, inklings, suspicions, intuitions -- as well as outside the text -- our personal or cultural associations, reflections, assumptions, or prejudices. Sometimes we must interpret whole idiomatic phrases as a single figure of speech. It's not always enough to know the literal meanings of words. We must also know where we are and who we are speaking with. Sometimes if we pause to deconstruct the assigned meanings of words, phrases or ideas, we can gain surprising insights or find the release of humor in the absurdity of it. When we take the literal to be symbolic, or consider the symbolic literally, we are often freed of our habitual thought patterns, attitudes and postures, allowing for new ideas, new meanings, new potential for delight and joy. Sometimes the words we choose are understated, or embellished, overstated, exaggerated, or hyperbolic. We might engage in imitation, mimicry, mockery, parody or caricature, all of which can be very productive both in terms of making meaning more vivid, and gauging the actual significance of an idea or an event. Sometimes we need to express our exaggerated fears, dislikes or discomfort before we can appreciate either their effects on our life or our potential to release or resolve them. Similarly, when we tell our personal Stories, we may initially tend to recite a rote narrative memory, a report of the (official) facts. But as soon as we begin to flavor our personal tales with the nuances of Metaphor- vivid, symbolically descriptive language- we can appreciate the greater meaning of our experiences. A simple anecdote from our experience may parallel the universal human experience, and serve as a fable, parable or allegory for others to learn from. As we spin the yarn of our history, we may weave in the legends of our families, or the myths and traditions of our cultures. When we can see our story as symbolic, we can explore any number of meanings, formulas, examples, methods, plots and schemes as possibly significant for us.

## **OPTIONS FOR USING METAPHORS**

- **Goal Setting:** *Develop and check IM* with an emblematic phrase, formulated as true in the present time, which represents the transformation of negatives- symptoms, pains, lack- and the perception and realization of positives-- achievements, feelings, experiences.
- **Finding an Emotion** related to goal (check IM for Element, Aspects of Emotion, Orientation of Emotion, e.g. self, others, circumstances, things)
- **Emotional Stress Release** (*Thinking symbolically* about 5 senses, etc. related to stress/issue)
- **Color Balance** (check IM for Element, Aspects of related Emotion, clear with ESR)
- **Sound Balance** (check 14 Meridians and assess key Element, MAKE RELATED SOUND)
- **Food Testing/Food Balancing** (think about, see, hold, chew, smell, taste & *check IM*, consider possible symbolism of food as well as literal potential sensitivity)
- General Metaphor Balance "*As-You-go*" (based on each given muscle/Meridian/Element)
- General Metaphor Balance with **24 hours Element Assessment** (based on key muscle/ meridian/ Element)

## **METHODS OF FINDING/ DERIVING/ DEVELOPING METAPHORS**

- Noticing- Free association and symbolic thinking
- Checking an IM while thinking, saying, visualizing, feeling, hearing, tasting, etc.
- For a given inhibited muscle, contemplating related muscle/meridian/element
- Checking 14 Meridians and contemplating metaphors of **Key Muscle/Element**

## **CLEARING/BALANCING MODALITIES USED WITH METAPHORS IN TFH**

- Noticing, Awareness, (color)Visualization, Checking IM
- ESR
- Verbalization, Dialogue, Vocalization/ Listening, Tasting/Eating
- Touch Reflexes (SR, NL, NV, Meridians, O/I, AHP)

## **CATEGORIES OF METAPHORS:**

### **MUSCLE METAPHORS**

- Functional Metaphors: mechanical/physiological function seen as symbol
- Action/Association Metaphors: symbolic interpretation of action/range/gesture, personal memory device or association with muscle action.

### **MERIDIAN (ORGAN) FUNCTION METAPHORS**

- Symbolic potential of traditional Chinese meridian names,
- Western Idiomatic or Physiological associations with related Organs/Systems

### **FIVE ELEMENTS METAPHORS**

- The 5 Senses (including Touch/Fortification Metaphors as symbolic of literal aspects of goals/symptoms)
- Symbolism of the 5 Elements, Seasons, and the environment, nature
- Seasons, Life Cycles/Personal Power,
- Cognitive phases/Belief Systems

### **A PROTOCOL FOR FIX-AS-YOU-GO BALANCING**

#### *Using Metaphors as a Primary Intervention*

1. **Establish a goal** that you feel enthusiastic about and you believe is possible.
2. Do any pretests that you normally do, (**Optional: Find related emotion** )
3. **Check and correct the Central and Governing meridians**, using the usual reflexes (i.e. Spinal Reflex if bilateral

weakness is found, then NL, NV, Meridians, etc., or use circuit location if you prefer)

**AND---** as you use the touch reflex, refer to the metaphors for the Central and Governing meridians

*Example, Central:* "What subtle, small thing do you need to let go of?"

*Example, Governing:* "What burden do you need to release?"

4. Check and correct the rest of the meridians using the following guidelines for using metaphors

4a. Before using any touch reflexes, **offer the word or concept** of each metaphor and see what idea or meaning it suggests to the person being balanced in the context of his or her life/goals.

4b. **Present the metaphors as only possibly meaningful.** Clarify your own understanding of the traditional meaning of the metaphor, or of your interpretation in this context only to get ideas flowing.

4c. It may be fruitful to talk over all of the metaphors if it feels appropriate for both people, but it isn't necessary to talk about all of them. **Sometimes just one metaphor "rings the bell".**

4d. **Recheck the muscle** to confirm that it is now strong. If the muscle has remained inhibited, see if **contemplating the other metaphors** rings a bell for the person. Finally if you've exhausted the metaphors and the muscle is still weak, **continue with the touch reflexes.**

5. Repeat for each of the 14 meridians until no further imbalances are indicated by muscle tests.

6. Reassess your goal and how you are feeling, noting whether any of the metaphors will be valuable for you to hold in mind to enhance your ongoing awareness, dynamism, and balance.

## **A PROTOCOL FOR ASSESSMENT BALANCING**

### *Using Metaphors as a Primary Intervention*

1. Establish a goal that you feel enthusiastic about and you believe is possible.

2. Do any pretests that you normally do. (Optionally, find the related emotion)

3. Check and correct the Central and Governing meridians, using the usual reflexes

4. Check the rest of the indicators for the remaining meridians, recording results on the 5 element diagram, or the Midday Midnite/24Hour "Wheel". (4b. Use the Alarm Points to establish over-energy pattern.)

5. Assess the best place to begin balancing according to the 5-Element or 24 Hour cycles.

6. Once you've chosen the appropriate meridian to start with, refer to the metaphors associated with muscle/meridian/element, **following these guidelines:**

6a. Offer the word or Concept and see what idea or meaning it suggests to the individual

6b. Present the metaphors as only possibly meaningful. Traditional meaning doesn't dictate meaning.

6c. Sometimes just one metaphor "rings the bell", sometimes read several or all of the questions.

6d. Recheck the muscle. If inhibited, contemplate other metaphors; continue with the touch reflexes.

7. After correction, recheck all (under-energy) muscles to confirm that they are now facilitated. Correct any which may have remained inhibited, **repeating steps 6a-6d.**

(7a. Recheck alarm points- Use AHP for sedation of any over-energy which may have remained.)

8. Reassess your goal and how you are feeling, noting whether any of the metaphors will be valuable for you to hold in mind to enhance your ongoing awareness, dynamism, and balance.