



Bridging the Gap with Touch for Health, Energy Kinesiology & Metaphor

By Matthew Thie, M. Ed.

Touch for Health (TFH) 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, Dr. Thie wanted to provide basic tools to his patients that would allow them to focus on caring for themselves to prevent illness and disease and to optimize personal bests and peak performance.

TFH bridges the gap between feeling energetic and well, and feeling “sick enough” to warrant a visit to a health professional. There is a grey area in which we’re not sick, yet we’re not well. Most of us simply seek to ignore minor symptoms, hoping they’ll go away, essentially pretending they don’t exist unless they are obviously debilitating. Even then, the approach is often to simply treat symptoms, rather than addressing the imbalances in our lives that lead to symptoms.

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 dis-comfort, 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 getting rid of disease to achieve some static and standard condition of health.

The empowered, proactive self-responsibility model of TFH also leads to earlier and more frequent use of expert and professional healthcare when it is needed. Thus, rather than compete with existing health professions as was originally feared by some practitioners, adopting the TFH approach actually leads to more appropriate, assertive and appropriate access to healthcare resources. This also reinforces the fact that TFH is also extremely SAFE.

While Contemporary Medical Care has reached the point of being considered the leading cause of death, ahead of all of the diseases it is meant to treat, TFH enhances Wellness and disease prevention and reduces unnecessary medical procedures while also encouraging pro-active recourse to traditional medicine. Adverse reactions to TFH energy balancing are extremely rare and have never been life threatening.

Dr. Thie found that by teaching patients to care for themselves, and pay close attention to the habits and experiences that either inhibit their function, make them feel ill, or enhance their vitality and joy, their attitude towards their doctor changed from wanting the minimum treatment (and cost) that would "get rid" of their symptoms, to an attitude of ongoing investment in feeling well. A trip to the chiropractor, or *energy kinesiologist*, is then about getting the maximum benefit and optimal experience of being alive.

The more Dr. Thie taught people to care for themselves, the more they were able to appreciate the value of his years of experience and his expert skills, so that as they cared for themselves, they were also more interested in getting the expert care. TFH bridges the gap between the lay person's knowledge of their own health issues and needs in life, and the professional's experience and training both in health maintenance and in responding to acute pain, trauma or disease, or coping with and adapting to chronic conditions.

Currently there seems to be an ongoing gap between training in kinesiology for lay people for self-care and the integration of kinesiology into professional health care, or even the practice of kinesiology as a health care profession in its own right.

TFH bridges the gap between lay education and self-responsibility, *energy healthcare* or *energy medicine* (whether practiced informally at home, or by professionals in the holistic Energy Kinesiology model), and use of the energetic model as a complementary or integrated aspect of practice by

physicians who are also working with diagnosed, named diseases and availing themselves of the armamentarium of powerful (and dangerous) drugs and surgery. TFH serves as an initial experience for those who would be healers, to see if they have a gift of healing, and if they enjoy working with people, dealing with their problems, health issues, and their needs, life-goals and dreams.

TFH provides a minimum investment of time, money and energy to explore a method of promoting health, and to decide if the holistic, non-diagnostic, energetic TFH protocol is enough to allow you to help yourself and others fulfill their healing gift, or if you need more expert care or more training. You may want to explore the traditional academic fields of psychology, muscle/body mechanics, anatomy and physiology, acupressure and acupuncture, massage, chiropractic pathology and so on. You may find that TFH gives you an added tool in your existing healthcare practice, or reorients and revolutionizes your entire practice. You also might find that the Wellness model and the development of your subtle sensitivity and intuition does not require academic knowledge- indeed may be inhibited by it. Your experience with the fundamental Energy Kinesiology principles taught in TFH will help you discern which is your path.

The original premise of chiropractic care involves the concept of "vitalism", the idea that health and disease are ultimately a function of the relative balance and flow of our life force- or the inhibition of our life force. In this model, diseases and dysfunctions are not seen as discrete entities to be addressed in isolation, but rather as expressions of imbalance that are

unique to the individual. For this reason, you will hear many chiropractors say, "I don't treat diseases, I treat people."

The disconnect between treatment of disease and caring for people has resulted in a crisis in modern bio-medicine in the United States and many other countries, exacerbated by insurance companies and Health Maintenance Organizations that demand standardized treatment of diagnosed conditions. The holistic, person centered approach of chiropractic and Touch for Health has always been a bridge between treatments that alleviate symptoms and health care that truly reinforces and maintains ongoing health.

This corresponds well with the energetic model of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Acupuncture. TFH provides a bridge to the powerful energy balancing model and techniques developed over thousands of years in the East. TCM involves sophisticated academic and practical skills, as well as culturally bound conceptions and practices. TFH allows us to implement the powerful energy-balancing model of TCM in our own personal and cultural contexts. Use of Muscle Testing for biofeedback allows us to safely access some of the information utilized by the traditional acupuncturist, without the years of specialized training.

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 (the complete physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, energetic

human being) and to facilitate the flow of energy and communication between all of the cells, organs and organ systems, between the conscious mind, the unconscious, our intuition, and our connection to Chi, life energy, and God.

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 separate and independent functions.

When we test muscles to get a sense of the energy flow in the meridians, we are working simultaneously with the gross muscle function and the neurological circuits and general brain function and integration, but we are also accessing the subtle, intuitive sense of energy. When we test the muscle, we are normally working within what is considered the "normal" functional range of physical muscle integrity, or muscle strength. We are not looking for muscles that don't have strength, but rather, looking for muscles which seem to have a relatively inhibited flow of energy.

This tactile, kinesthetic monitoring of muscle flow provides a bridge between concrete physical sensation and intuition and subtle sensitivity to energy states. In many cases it provides people with an initial realization that their intuition is real, and that awareness of subtleties and subtle energies can be significant. The muscle test also allows people who are naturally intuitive, or have special gifts of "seeing" or feeling what is happening with other people's energy, to reinforce what they see, and refine their vision, as well as make their ineffable instincts more concrete and real for those they work with. So TFH allows those

with a special intuitive gift or who have simply not “unlearned” or had their abilities “taught out of them” to have a tool to communicate and show what they see, and to enhance their skills in reading and balancing energy. It also provides a bridge for all of us to begin developing our awareness of our intuition and 6th senses and their positive, effective use.

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, and bridges the gap between muscle/energy work and 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 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 ideas, and our future outlook, and the “gestalt” sensation of experience as it is experienced through the senses and feelings. We know that emotions are actually a fascinating nexus of our awareness of physiological function, our unconscious physical reactions to stimulus (if we consider our automatic survival

responses as the precursors to the millions of subtle feelings we experience as emotions), and our conscious interpretations of our experiences (think of the fact that although many emotions are cross-cultural- happiness, grief, sadness, anger, fear- there are subtle emotions that are only well defined and recognized as a common experience in certain cultures). So being aware of our emotions is actually assessing a highly complex 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 take advantage of the efficiency of simply 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 meaning 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 and Energy Kinesiology is in developing our awareness of the things that

we really want from life, the things that block our energy to accomplish our goals, and in activating and balancing our energies to more joyfully and effectively participate in our lives.

The Five Element Metaphors, the Organ Function metaphors and metaphors derived from the muscle anatomy and functions/test motions or gestures, 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, and 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. The TFH Metaphor Workshop, recently approved by the IKC as an additional course for TFH instructors to teach, expands on the powerful goal-setting and Five Element Metaphor protocols of the standard TFH I-IV training.

Learning to use metaphors effectively involves practice of listening and other communication skills. This may be interpersonal communication, or communication with ourselves, self-awareness. The person seeking help will often have conscious insights related to the metaphors, but also reveal things they might not be aware of through body language, tone of voice, etc. The person acting as helper has an important role in observing responses that the individual may not perceive, may be blind to, or may be in denial about. However, we maintain the self-responsibility model. The helper only offers their observations as possibilities. It is up to the individual to derive his or her meaning. Yet through this assistive, supportive dialogue process, we bridge the gap between what we are consciously aware of and able to cope with or resolve, and things that have us "stuck", overwhelmed or simply unaware. Assisting each other to balance our energy, posture & attitude, we often find relief and improved function, whether subtle or dramatic, bridging the gap between the reality we see, the possibilities we can visualize, and the experiences we can create in our lives

Bridging the Gaps with <i>Touch for Health</i> Kinsiology		
“Doctor”, Therapist/ Authority	Instructor/Coach/Consultant Assistant	Empowered Personal Responsibility
Clinical Illness/ Disease treatment	“not sick” but also “not Well”	Wellness, Optimal Function, Personal Best
Reductionist: Cause & Cure	Survival: Stiff Upper Lip	Holistic: Balance and Enjoy LIFE
Intuition, Energetic Sensitivity	Bio-feedback, Muscle Response	Concrete Physical Experience
Traditional Chinese Medicine	Formula or Medical Acupuncture	Holistic Energy Balancing with Kinesiology
Spinal Adjustment, Massage, PT etc.	Postural Exercise and Strengthening: Yoga, Gymnastics, etc.	Harmony of Purpose, Posture and Attitude
Postural/Body Work	Sensory/Associative aspects	Mental/Emotional Energy work/ Dialogue
Good Energy, Mental Clarity, Comfort, Range, Strength etc.	Feeling No Pain: “I can’t complain”- Pain Pills	Meaning, Vision, Purpose, Fulfillment & Satisfaction in YOUR LIFE
Dangers of Medication, Side- effects, Surgery, etc.	DEMAND for some kind of help for non-pathology	Holistic Preventative, Wellness Enhancing, Balancing
Academic Teaching Institutions	Workshop Training Environment	One-one-One, Independent Study
Long Term, High Cost, Licensure Education	Vocational Training – Modality Certificate/ Business License	Lay Education, Home Care, Volunteer & Missionary
Legislation, Licensure: “Protect the Public”	Piece-meal Regulation, City by City; Grey Areas, “Flying Under Radar”	Freedom of Access to Health Care: “Empower the Public”
Natural “Gift of Healing” & Joy in Health Care Work	Religious Healing Traditions, Vocational/ Para-Professional	Long-term Formal Academic and Clinical Training

To find Touch for Health Practitioner or Instructor near you

contact the TFHK Association: www.tfhka.org

For Information around the world,

contact the International Kinesiology College: www.IKC-info.com

For Touch for Health Education,

courses with Dr. John & Matthew Thie: www.touch4health.com ; 213-482-4480

To order TFH Books, Charts, etc. www.devorss.com

To order the NEW eTouch CD-ROM, Contact: www.etchforhealth.com

Matthew Thie M.Ed, LA, CA, Vice president, Touch for Health Education, Inc. He has taught the TFH Metaphor Workshop to over 500 students, BA, Literature, UC Berkeley, M.Ed. Education, '90 UCLA, TFH Instructor '80, TFH Instructor Trainer '03, worked extensively with his father, TFH founder, John F. Thie, DC., co-authoring articles and books, organizing seminars, teaching TFH I-IV, and speaking at national and international Energy and Kinesiology conferences. Co-authored: TFH Pocketbook with Chinese 5 Element Metaphors with his dad.