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BOOKS

***Kathleen Dowling Singh, PhD. *The Grace in Dying: A Message of Hope, Comfort, and Spiritual Transformation*, San Francisco/New York: HarperCollins Publishers 1998 332 pp \$15.00 28 pp notes and references**

Kathleen Dowling Singh presents excellent descriptions of many healings that are possible in the process of dying. While her transpersonal orientation is apparently inspired by Sufi (mystic Muslim) traditions, her writing is relevant universally. As she notes, "I am an ordinary person working with ordinary people dying ordinary deaths." (p. 3).

Singh specifies that this book is for people who have a space of time towards the end of their life – or are close to someone in this situation – and who can contemplate what lies ahead. It is not for people who are already in the process of transition. At this stage, one's business is simply to get on with what is happening, not to distance oneself from it through analyzing it.

I found Singh's discussion on qualities of the Nearing Death Experience to be helpful handles on aspects of the deathing process. These include the qualities of *relaxation, withdrawal, radiance, interiority, silence, the sacred, transcendence, knowing, intensity, merging, and experienced perfection*.

Taking a more structured perspective, Singh considers stages of releasing of controls over psychophysical functions (Karnofsky scale – Appendix II) and relates them to stages in the process of dying which she finds conceptually helpful, including *chaos, surrender and transcendence*.

Singh's discussion brings an atmosphere of peace, acceptance and healing to what is often in our society a time fraught with anxieties, fears and distress. An example of this attitude is evident in the following observation:

The AIDS community has called its disease 'Accelerated Individual Discovery of Self' and has referred to the pandemic as 'enlightenment at gunpoint.' This phrase applies equally to any one of us who is dying. (p. 15)

I strongly recommend this book to anyone who is involved in the dying process or just interested in understanding it in greater depth, from a healing perspective.

***Louis E. LaGrand, *Messages and Miracles: Extraordinary Experiences of the Bereaved*, St. Paul: Llewellyn Publications 1999. 311 pp \$12.95 6 pp References**

The most frequent sources of evidence for survival of the spirit are the bereavement apparitions reported by at least two out of three people who are close to someone who passed away. Louis Lagrand brings us an excellent collection of these heartwarming stories of after-death communications (ADCs), from people in all walks of life.

LaGrand presents his materials as answers to a long series of logical questions that anyone studying ADCs is likely to ask.

Here are a few informative items, chosen for their uniqueness in my perusal of related literature over many years.

The ancient Christian doctrine of the communion of saints states that the living and the souls of the deceased are connected through all eternity. Some Anglican communities, and all Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communities, believe a spiritual union exists in which intercessory prayer can take place. Thus the living can pray to their deceased loved ones (who are saints if they are in heaven) to intercede to God for them. Some ADCs, therefore, can be assumed to be a form of assistance from the deceased or from their intercessory powers... (p. 105)

What do you mean by direct ADCs and indirect ADCs?

Essentially, these two terms are used to refer to ADCs that either directly or indirectly involve the deceased loved one and the mourner. For example, a direct contact would mean the mourner believes he has heard, seen, smelled, sensed the presence, or been touched by the beloved. The indirect contact includes all other ADCs where the deceased loved one or a Supreme Being is believed to be somehow responsible for the contact.

Direct ADCs: Auditory, Visual, Tactile, Dreams, Intuitive, Olfactory, Out-of-Body

Indirect ADCs: Symbolic, Third-Party; Fourth-Party, Birds and Animals; Olfactory; Dreams

Symbolic ADCs are most frequently referred to as indirect ADCs because they involve objects, natural or manmade. These objects are signs or indicators to the bereaved that the deceased person is somehow connected to or the reason why the symbol presents itself at a specific time and place... (p. 157-158)

LaGrand gives a common example of indirect communication. Dana had a dramatic dream which related to three teenagers who had been in a major auto accident after drinking, fourteen years prior to her dream. She had been in high school with all of the boys.

...Patrick died at the scene, Chris was thrown from the truck... and Willy was burned over 75 percent of his body. He was... admitted to the burn unit for treatment, but died the next day.

Dana reported:

In the fall of 1994, I dreamt I was in a sort of terminal or large entry way. As I look up, walking toward me, is Willy. (Now Willy had not been a close friend of mine in real life.

He was more or less an acquaintance.) Patrick, who had died at the scene of the accident, was really my friend. Anyway, when we make eye contact, Willy comes over and hugs me and says, "You have to do me a favor." I agreed. "Go tell Brian I'm okay. He has to let it go." I agreed. I knew he was talking about a childhood friend of mine.

A few days passed. I told my sister about the dream and she said I should go and tell Brian, whom I hadn't seen in years. Of course, I was hesitant to go, but I stopped down at his house, and luckily he was just coming home from work. We exchanged greetings and small talk and then I told him of my strange dream. His face fell and his eyes filled with tears. He then told me he had been crying at Willy's grave the Sunday before. I was relieved that I told him. (p. 157-158)

Brian had been unable to let go of his grief over the fourteen years since the accident. Dana's indirect message to Brian from Willy, who communicated through her dream, clearly brought relief and comfort to Brian.

LaGrand answers a question about dreams:

How can I decide if any of them are ADC dreams? LeGrand suggests that ADC dreams have the following qualities: They are more clear, vivid and bright than usual dreams. They contain specific messages. They include strong feelings and are comforting.

This is a book that has much to offer for anyone exploring bereavement apparitions – whether as a novice or an educated and experienced student of life, death and survival..

[See extensive list of references on death and bereavement at <http://www.wholistichealingresearch.com/References/death.asp> .

***Anderson, Robert A. *The Scientific Basis for Holistic Medicine, Annotated Abstracts 6th Edition*, East Wenatchee, WA: American Health Press 2004. 639 pp Soft ring binding nhf@msn.com**

This is an outstanding compendium of annotated abstracts from an enormous spectrum of holistic studies.

Anderson's divisions of the articles into categories is as interesting to this reviewer as many of the articles themselves. He cuts the Gordian knot of holistic medicine in ways that differ from the approaches of many other authors, including myself.

Section 1 – Physical
 Section 2 – Mental
 Section 3 – Spiritual/ Social
 Section 4 – Specialized Areas
 Section 5 – Diagnostic and Laboratory Medicine
 Section 6 – Conventional medicine

The comprehensive index cuts through these divisions, allowing the reader to locate items of interest by subjects that may appear in various sections. For instance, in searching for items on healing, in section 3 I found reports on:

Neurology

A woman was in coma with a brain tumor. Her husband still insisted that she have full treatment for her condition, including surgery and chemotherapy. He also spent a lot of time talking to her while she was still in coma, reporting on what he and their children were doing. To everyone's astonishment, she made a complete recovery.

Oncology

A study of the effects of energy healing on in vitro tumor cell proliferation

Psychiatry

Effects of Therapeutic Touch on biochemical mood indicators in women

Miscellaneous

Detection of extraordinary large bio-magnetic field strength from human hand during external Qi emission

SPIRITUAL MEDICINE

BELIEFS, PLACEBOS

AGING, LONGEVITY, MORTALITY

A dip in deaths before ceremonial occasions

DOLOROLOGY

Beecher's classic: The Powerful Placebo

SURGERY

A controlled trial of arthroscopic surgery for osteoarthritis of the knee.

One has to admire Anderson's breadth of vision and dedication in surveying, culling, and succinctly summarizing this enormous spectrum of holistic healing reports.

For any serious student of holistic care, and particularly for researchers, this compendium is highly recommended as an outstanding addition to your library.

***Tim Johnson, *Herbage*, 3rd Edition CD-ROM www.holisticopia.com \$100.**

I prescribe herbs extensively in my practice, so it seemed natural for me to review the reference CD *Herbage*. It looks unassuming enough, one CD with a simple bifold paper inserted into the CD case. Looks can deceive. It contains 28,000 concise (quite brief) monographs about medicinal plants. It also lists historical attributes from around the world. The sheer number of herbs covered is astounding. From Aaron's Beard to Zizotes Milkweed, most of the herbs were exotic or uncommon.

Once you review the brief monograph on the herb, *Herbage* takes you deep into the Internet database using a web-browser to explore the 3 largest ethnobotany databases and 18 leading works on the subject. Needless to say the sheer volume of data looks staggering. Some of my search requests brought up over 8,000 responses.

I found this reference work to be an exceptional tool for research as I worked to prepare articles or presentations. However, I found it to be cumbersome for standard clinical

applications. You do not have a simple overview to fall back on. The Internet resources often give you hundreds of options to review on a topic – very time consuming. Some of the material seemed dated. For example, the monograph on Kava Kava did not mention a warning about liver toxicity – in the news over the last two years. The summation on herbs for anxiety did not list Kava Kava either. On the other hand, a search for herbs for eye ailments netted 275 different herbs.

This work would be useful if someone came upon an exotic herb unlisted in standard references. It would also be helpful to find herbs for a very unusual indication such as: ardor (6 references), aftosa (15 references), aque (41 references) or actinomycosis (just one: *teucrium scorodium*).

If you want a resource to take your reference database on herbs to another level, *Herbage* is for you. This is not for the novice and it is not easy to use for quick clinical reference. In the right hands it can lead you to a wonderful article on the value of *Teucrium Scorodium* to clear heavy metals from silver mines in Ireland. Wow!

It is available from the author's website www.holisticopia.com

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***Jenny Wade, *Transcendent Sex: When Lovemaking Opens the Veil*, New York: Paraview/Pocket/ Simon & Schuster 2004. 322 pp \$14.00 5 pp Refs.**

Jenny Wade interviewed 91 people (identified through personal acquaintance networks) who spontaneously experienced transcendent awarenesses during sexual encounters. They report that these experiences were so profoundly moving that their sexual encounters paled by comparison. In fact, the sexual climax was often experienced as a distraction or even as an annoyance.

A variety of transcendent experiences were identified by her subjects, including transfiguration of the sexual partner, shape shifting, channeling of spirit awarenesses, totally being in the present moment, cosmic awareness, out of body experiences, and past life recall.

Wade writes clearly, providing the background for understanding these transcendent sexual experiences in the context of more commonly reported transcendent experiences. She illustrates each of these types of experience with fascinating quotes from her subjects.

I was taken up beyond my body and the warmth of the sun on my skin and the clear blue sky until I went in that golden sunlight and cerulean blue. Then I shot out beyond it into the vastness of space where all was silence and the blackness lit by stars. Everything there looked clear and beautiful and cold, yet I could feel the life pulsating through it, the fierce fires of the distant suns and burning stars. It was beauty and it was love and there I was in the middle of this universe stretching forever. I wanted to stay there always.

Rachel (p.111)

The only criticism I can muster about this book is a minor unclarity about whether these transcendent experiences as sexual encounters are ever shared by both partners. On page 141 Wade clarifies that past life awarenesses are the only transcendent experiences that couples regularly share.

While transcendent sex as a Tantric meditative practice has been well known and extensively described, Wade clearly expands the boundaries of these experiences in this groundbreaking book.

***Sukie Miller with Suzanne Lipsett. *After Death: How People Around the World Map the Journey After Life*, New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster 1998. 235 pp \$12.00 16 pp. References**

Sukie Miller has produced an excellent survey of beliefs and experiences relating to the afterlife. She distills from this collection four stages in the process of transitioning to spirit life. These stages go well beyond the merging with the Being of Light that is well known from the Near Death Experience.

Stage I is a Bardo state of waiting, as one adjusts to the transition from physical to spirit existence. Stage II is one of judgment and life review, an immersion in the deeper truth of the meanings of one's total life experiences. Stage III is a less homogeneous collection of beliefs and reports (Miller does not distinguish between the two in this discussion), that may include heavenly realms, encounters with angels, and varieties of other visions. Stage IV is the return to physical existence, in another incarnation.

Far beyond the contributions of this book in cosmologies are the richly detailed anecdotes of Miller's explorations and work with people who have had glimpses into the infinite in the last stages of their lives. She also shares the stories of others who, like her, work in these areas between life in the flesh and life in spirit worlds. Here are a few of these stories.

When my colleague Edmundo Barbosa is not accompanying me on interviewing expeditions around the world, he is practicing psychotherapy in his specialty: helping groups and individuals cope with terminal diseases. In his work, he has a special relationship with the truth. He seeks it, attempting to liberate his patients with its healing power.

"I tell stories—stories of other people, stories from literature, stories and koans and small examples from the world's- religious and spiritual traditions. Something of the Tibetans. Something of the Cree Indians. Something of my neighbor down the street or-a client I knew ten years ago, what he feared and what happened to him. These might seem like false constructions, nothing to do with truth. But the story goes into the mind,- and the person goes home and thinks of-it over the week, passes the story on maybe to a wife or a husband or a child. And very often the story itself breaks through the resistance to an acceptance of death.

"For the stories-aren't false constructions: They are carriers of the truth. Telling them is a way to slip the truth inside the brain, when they can—not always, but can—work against the denial of truth and suddenly bring down the walls.

“What I have seen is this: Accepting the truth that you are dying enables you to achieve a state I heard described in Nigeria by this deeply evocative phrase: ‘This man is ripe to die.’ Ripe-to die. To-me, this phrase contains a sense of natural progression, and in the progression of nature is basic truth.

“Let me put it this -way. Think of a tree, a living system. A fruit on that tree is part of the system, and when the fruit is ripe- it’s at its fullest—flavor, taste; nutritional value: it is ripe to feed. And therefore it is ready to leave the system of the living tree to serve -the life around it. In my practice, a client who is ripe to die no longer resists but accepts the truth of his or her dying. Inevitably, then, that person takes practical action to ‘feed’ living loved ones with the fruits of his or her life—writes the will, pays the taxes, ties up the business, works out problems in the family. But more than that are the benefits to the dying person of stepping fully into the truth:

“Strife ends when truth prevails; one need no longer struggle. To resist truth is pain; to accept it is to enter seamlessly into reality. Many people suppress the knowledge of impending death out of fear of dying in the here-and now and fear of harsh judgment and punishment after death. But with truth comes the knowledge that the pain is in the resistance, not in the truth. And along with the struggle, fear can disappear as well.

“The second benefit is riskier to explain, for there is as far as I know no scientific confirmation of it. But my long experience with the dying has convinced me that denial increases the agony of death and, conversely, acceptance—readiness, or ripeness, and embracing truth—brings ease.

“One boy in a cancer group gave his voice to the significance of this possibility. ‘When I came here,’ he told us in the group, ‘my greatest fear was how I would actually die. Everything I had ever heard told me that there was great pain and suffering connected with dying of disease. I was terribly afraid of pain, but I was equally worried about my family seeing me in agony. And what I’m finding here, as people in this group die week by week, is that — well, one week we are here and the next week we’re gone. So death can come much sunpler, much easier than I thought. And to me that changes everything, and I am not afraid.’ “ (p. 105-106)

[Roger] Woolger tells this story of one of his subjects.

Winifred was a middle-aged woman who bad had chronic sinusitis since her early life During [a past-lives workshop] she relived the lonely death on a battlefield during World War 1 of a young man who had grown up in London as an orphan. The young man had made friends for the first time in the trenches during the campaign When he suddenly found himself choking on mustard gas, in the middle of a surprise attack, he realized momentarily, as he lay dying, how much he was about to lose in terms of his newly found friendships. But the gas blocked any possibility to weep and grieve. When Winifred relived this experience, she was able to realize how much grief the young man had never expressed and was at last able to let it go. Almost miraculously, her sinuses unblocked. And when she came back to a later session in the workshop, she reported that she had woken up that particular morning for the first time in over twenty years able to breath through her sinuses. (p. 154)

This book is highly recommended to anyone working in end of life midwifery.

***Connie Grauds. *Jungle Medicine*, San Rafael, CA: Center for Spirited Medicine 2004. 206 pp \$14.95 10 pp refs**

Connie Grauds is an unusual person. She has apprenticed herself to a Peruvian shaman, Don Antonio and learned shamanic herbal treatments – in addition to being a conventionally trained western pharmacist.

Grauds points out that herbal remedies contribute significantly to our western pharmacopoeia.

120 clinically useful prescription drugs worldwide are derived from plants, around 39% of which are used in the U.S. And 47 of these 120 drugs are derived from plants native to the tropical rainforests. (p. 17).

Grauds describes one of the remedies that Don Antonio uses.

"*Sangre de grado... Dragon's blood...*" Don Antonio wiped some of the red sap from the tree and rubbed it vigorously on the back of his hand till it formed a white paste. He told us that he used *sangre de grado* orally to treat diarrhea, and topically to heal wounds, that it both stops bleeding and disinfects the wound. "It's the rainforest's mercurochrome," said Charles, adding that scientific research on *sangre de grado* had shown it to be effective in treating a variety of ailments. The proanthocyanidins extracted from this sap are currently being used in wound-healing, anti-viral and anti-inflammatory medications, and to treat Herpes simplex and infections diarrhea. Various other applications are also being tested. Another case of modern science validating traditional indigenous plant medicines. (p. 48).

While Grauds spontaneously developed strong intuitive awarenesses of plants prior to studying with Don Antonio, she had no idea what to make of these. It was only as she observed her teacher communicating with the plants in order to identify which of them would be appropriate for treating various problems that she came to understand her gift.

Even more important, she came to understand the spiritual component of healing that markedly augments the effects of herbal remedies. Don Antonio explained,

You wanted to learn about the garden and my healing work, didn't you? Then you must experience the Earth and its plants with your heart, not just with your mind. That's the difference in our medicines. My medicine has magic in it, yours does not. Spirit does the healing, not science. Science is good, it is knowledge. But spirit has the real power. (p. 99).

Asked whether he was interested in learning western medicine, Don Antonio replied,

I am not interested in learning your medicine. I don't need any machines in order to make a direct diagnosis. I can see into my patients with my own eyes. And my medicine is medicine from nature and spirit, which heals not only their bodies but their hearts and souls, too. I'm sorry but I'm not interested, because *your medicine does not have any magic in it*. (p. 94).

When Grauds developed a pustular infection in her toe, she resisted using the antibiotics she had brought with her and invited Don Antonio to treat her. She reports on his successful treatment,

What most struck me about the treatments was the unquantifiable ingredient in don Antonio's ministrations, the care and attention he showed to me, his patient. I'd never felt this level of sensitivity and intimate concern in a Western medical setting, not even in the throes of my bout with cancer. I saw how this level of compassionate attention implied in the medical term "attending physician" was a largely unfulfilled promise in the West. (p. 105).

Seeking to understand the shaman's ways, Grauds asked,

"Don Antonio, how do you know if a physical problem needs a spiritual healing? ...And does the spirit that heals come from you, the plants, or somewhere else?" "It's all the same," he answered softly. "In the end it cannot be explained." (p. 110).

Don Antonio is a strict teacher, demanding firm commitments from anyone who would be his apprentice.

"If you do not follow the required disciplinas there will be painful spiritual consequences. I must tell you this for your own good." [...] "Many ask to apprentice with me, but no one yet has become a shaman. Years of apprenticeship alone do not make a shaman. Most fail because they do not obey the rules and live the disciplinas. Weak commitment does not survive the testing." Then he added in his best mentoring voice, "The deeper the commitment, the stronger the medicine." (p. 119).

As she advanced in her knowledge of plant lore and treatments, she learned to work with the remedies more deeply.

One of the shaman's ways of healing is through song, which can markedly enhance the action of the remedies.

You might say the concept of magical healing songs is as far from a pill in a bottle as Jesus Christ is from Isaac Newton. Both have their place, neither one necessarily cancels out the other, and the two together are better than either alone. In my case, the scientist who formerly dispensed pills in a bottle, became a singer dispensing spirit in a song. Becoming an open channel for spirit had made me, for the first time, an inspired pharmacist!" (p. 161).

This is a delightful, insightful, healing book, warmly recommended to anyone interested in shamanism and particularly in shamanic herbal remedies.

Lee Carrol and Jan Tober. *The Indigo Children: The New Kids Have Arrived*, Carlsbad, CA: Hay House 1999 248 pp \$13.95 10 pp References No index

Lee Carol and Jan Tober bring us a collection of writings from a spectrum of counselors, intuitives and others who have worked with children who represent a new wave in the collective consciousness that is being birthed in these challenging times.

These children are described by parents and caregivers around the world. They typically present with these traits (p. 1-2):

1. Feeling and behaving like royalty;
2. Feeling they deserve to be here;
3. Strong feelings of self-worth;
4. Discomfort with authority expressed without explanations;
5. Refusing to do such things as standing in line;
6. Feeling frustrated with ritual behaviors that do not invite creativity;
7. Seeing patterns quickly and generating creative suggestions for changing the ways things are done;
8. Strongly preferring to associate with others who are similar and withdraw when they are not in stimulating company;
9. Not responding to discipline through inducing guilt; and
10. Being very forward in letting people know what they want and need.

These children have a sense of knowing who they are and what they want, and they have little hesitation in doing whatever they feel they need to do to get what they want. They are open to negotiating, but expect to be treated as equals with adults.

There are four types:

1. Humanists – who are very active (often hyperactive) and social. They are attracted to the social sciences and services, and appear likely to move into positions of leadership.
2. Conceptualists – who favor projects over people and are fiercely independent, but need firm limits nevertheless.
3. Artists – who are highly gifted, but tend to shift quickly from one medium of expression and from one activity to another.
4. Interdimensionalists – who are omnivorous in their interests and seem to know everything (or want to think they do)

If adults (parents or teachers) tell them what to do and not to do, they are inviting struggles and battles. However, if you ask the indigo child how s/he would solve a challenging problem or situation, they are often very creative in suggesting solutions – and will then abide by the agreements that adults make with them to enable them to pursue their choices. In school there commonly are conflicts with teachers over authority and expectations, but these can be

resolved when teachers discuss their expectations and invite the children to state theirs, and then seek ways to satisfy both sides.

Many of these children are perceived to be hyperactive, distractible and oppositional. They may easily be labeled as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or Oppositional Defiant Disorder, each of which commonly is treated with medications.

This book presents a variety of reports from a group of open-minded, thoughtful and creative caregivers. It is highly recommended for anyone working with problem children – your own or those you teach or counsel.

Jan Yordy, *Indigo Child: The Next Step in Human Evolution* (videotape) 2003 \$35 Cdn + shipping www.energyconnectiontherapies.com

This is a very helpful video, presenting clips of interviews with indigo children of all ages and their parents. It brings to life what the above book describes. Warmly recommended.

Doreen Virtue, PhD. *The Crystal Children: A Guide to the Newest Generation of Psychic and Sensitive Children*, Carlsbad, CA: Hay House 2003. 4 x 6 inch format 168 pp \$7.00

Crystal children are described as the next stage of advancement over Indigo Children. They have been appearing over the last ten years, evidently coming as facilitators for dealing with major global changes that seem eminent.

Doreen Virtue Describes these enlightened beings as being highly telepathic and highly empathetic, able to communicate without spoken words from the moment they are born – and sometimes even when they are in-utero. Many do not start to speak till they are three years-old, finding no reason to do so. They are able to make their needs and intents clear telepathically. When they start speaking, it may be in complete sentences.

While they are enormously engaging and appealing, they know what they want and firmly insist on pursuing it. They read people well and therefore find it easier to achieve their goals.

They are enormously loving, and people sense that their presence is healing – even in infancy.

This little book may alert you to children who can be good teachers, as well as to the shifts in planetary consciousness that is stirring.

David Feinstein, PhD. *Energy Psychology Interactive: Rapid Interventions for Lasting Change*, Ashland, OR: Innersource 2004. 297 pp 2 pp Links 4 pp Resources

David Feinstein, PhD. *Energy Psychology Interactive: Self-Help Guide*, Ashland, OR: Innersource 2004. 82 pp \$22

David Feinstein, PhD. *Energy Psychology Interactive CD-ROM: A Training Program for Professionals*, Ashland, OR: Innersource 2004. \$42 (Discounts with combined purchases)

This 40-hour course combines a computer-based CD, a Companion Book, and a Client Workbook into a powerful approach for learning how to use the methods of energy psychology and how to introduce these methods into your practice. The CD is all-encompassing. You will find the answer to any question you may have on the subject as well as everything that you would ever want or need to know about Energy Psychology. The companion book is the best of its type that I've yet seen and the client self-help guide is one of the most comprehensive and well organized booklets on the subject that has ever been written. This trio are a fantastic resource and training tool for both newcomers to the field of energy psychology and for experienced practitioners of these methods.

A Prototype of this amazing Program was the Winner of the Outstanding Contribution Award for 2002 from ACEP (The Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology)

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John H. Diepold, Jr., Victoria Britt and Sheila S. Bender, *Evolving Thought Field Therapy: The Clinician's Handbook of Diagnoses, Treatment, and Theory*, NY/ London: W. W. Norton 2004 381 pp 6 pp References \$35.00 ISBN 0-393-70405-x

The authors have worked together for many years, developing several systems of treatment for a broad spectrum of psychological and physical problems.

Thought Field Therapy (TFT) was developed by Roger Callahan in the 1970's. This involves touching or tapping on prescribed series (algorithms) of acupuncture points that are specific for particular problems.

Prior to starting a series of these interventions, a person assesses her level of distress on a scale of "0" (not at all) to "10" (the worst I could feel at this moment as I focus on this issue). While tapping, a person will focus mentally on an affirmation. For a fear of heights, this could be: "Even though I'm afraid of heights, I love and accept myself, wholly and completely." After a few minutes of tapping, she will again check her level of distress. Often, the intensity will have distinctly decreased to some degree. This process is repeated until the distress level is zero.

In a brief period, many people can eliminate their symptoms and transform their lives. Being trained in psychology, medicine, psychiatry and research, I was highly sceptical when I first

heard of this (and related) forms of therapy. I expected that if symptoms were rapidly eliminated, people would have them recur or would develop other symptoms – in the service of unconscious conflicts and needs. Having been an observer and active participant in these Meridian Based Therapies (MBTs) for five years, my opinions have drastically changed. I have seen hundreds of people cured of problems – major and minor – with relatively brief interventions.

Diepold, Britt and Bender bring us an excellent summary of their variation on this system of treatment, which they call Evolving Thought Field Therapy (EvTFT). They summarize succinctly the history of TFT and explain the ways in which they have taken this further. Diepold, in particular, has pioneered new approaches that involve breathing to augment the therapeutic effects of treatment. In addition, muscle testing derived from Kinesiology is used to identify issues and attitudes that may impede or facilitate therapy.

This book will be of interest to anyone who wants to understand the burgeoning field of MBTs. Innovations in MBTs that may be generalizable to other forms of psychotherapy include:

- Reversals – Bioenergetic patterns that can be identified through particular manouvers, indicating that a person is unlikely to respond to treatment. These reversals can be normalized so that treatment can then proceed. Awareness of these subtle-energy impediments to treatment may contribute to enhanced effects of any therapy.
- Elators – Positive feelings that contribute to negative outcomes, such as the cravings that people habitually satisfy – to their detriment. These can be treated rapidly and effectively with EvTFT (and other MBTs).
- Partializing problems – Identifying and treating what appears to be the key log in the logjam that prevents a person from resolving a problem; then addressing whatever other logs appear to be similar keys, eliminating each in turn. Systematically focusing on these issues and eliminating their hold on a person can markedly facilitate the therapy.
- Using Kinesiology - Identifying which acupressure points are appropriate to address particular problems. This could be used to identify any forms of therapy that might be appropriate in a given situation.

The most serious weakness of MBTs lies in the paucity of formal research to validate its efficacy. There has been only one controlled study by Roger Wells, in Australia, showing that EFT produced significant reductions in phobias to small animals (Wells et al 2003).

Countering this criticism is the personal research that anyone can do to validate that MBTs are effective in addressing physical and emotional distress. While TFT and EvTFT require tapping on various series of acupressure points that are specifically prescribed for problems, and in EvTFT following the explorations through Kinesiology to identify which are the correct points, there are other systems that provide generic points to tap on for any problems.

A system that I developed, WHEE (Wholistic Hybrid of EMDR and EFT), is a much simpler approach that anyone can use to check whether MBTs are effective (Benor). Other than this brief article, however, there is nothing written to expand on how WHEE can be helpful.

Gary Craig developed Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). An enormous series of problems successfully treated with EFT are described on his website (www.emofree.com).

This book is a helpful contribution to the field. It is clearly written and well organized, with illustrations to identify acupuncture points and muscle testing methods, ample case examples to clarify numerous problems appropriate for this rapidly effective therapy, an excellent index, and ample references for further perusal.

Benor, Daniel J. Self-healing: Brief psychotherapy with WHEE, a hybrid of meridian based therapies and EMDR, other approaches, 2000:

<http://www.wholistichealingresearch.com/Articles/Selfheal.htm>.

Wells, S., Polglase, K., Andrews, H., Carrington, P., & Baker, A.H. (2003). Evaluation of a Meridian-Based Intervention, Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), for Reducing Specific Phobias of Small Animals. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 59 (9). 943-966

For children of all ages.



Dana Lyons, Illustrated by David Danioth, *The Tree*, Bellevue, WA: Illumination Arts 2002 \$16.95

A parable of an 800 year-old tree, sparingly but pointedly told in words, and richly illustrated. The tree, which has witnessed much over its long lifetime, is threatened by bulldozers. Its story and rescue advocate for ecological activism.

Suitable, as the publisher suggests, for ages 4-adult.