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The Evolution of a Healer: What's a respectable physicist doing in the touchy-feely world of healers?

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Abstract

The writer traces his life path from farm boy and beekeeper to teaching physics at university, to the practice of naturopathy and biological energy work.

Key words: healer, Emotional Freedom Techniques, EFT, Naturopathy, pain, grief

In the beginning

I was not always a healer. I grew up a freckle-faced redhead on our small family farm on the Minnesota prairie. With three sisters helping around the house, I was freed to work with my father, a farmer by necessity but a beekeeper by passion. Until high school graduation, I was with him constantly, driving tractor, pulling weeds, baling hay and working with the bees. I learned to fix broken parts with simple tools, keep the tractor headed down the corn rows, and oversee the care and feeding of our several hundred beehives.

Farming was boring but bees were fascinating. I remember the day when a swarm issued from an over-populous hive and landed on a nearby branch, only to return a few minutes later when the bees discovered that the queen was not with them, her wings clipped to prevent exactly that sort of scurrilous activity. Wow!

Judging from the stories of those whom I'd guide later in life, my upbringing was uneventful. My older sister Jackie once described our family as "poor without knowing we were poor," since the neighbors were in much the same economic situation. Our farm home had "running water" (the well was a short run away), "central heat" (a coal stove in the living room), "library" (farm magazines and an encyclopedia), and "social media" (a telephone on a six-party line).

My father had a steady job, and my mother was a stay-at-home where she fed three girls and a growing boy and helped with farm and beekeeping work in her spare time. Dad kept a case of Hauenstein in the basement for neighbors who dropped by when the weather was hot. The family went to church somewhat regularly, the women folk more often. Our farm was one of the few in Shetek township to have lights, perhaps because my father needed the electricity for the honey business, as beeswax was judged critical to the war effort. We used horses when I was very young, and a Farmall tractor with iron wheels tilled the fields after the war. A hundred farming acres, big

home garden and honey sales kept us in food and clothing and helped all of us graduate from college.

There wasn't much hugging. We were of German stock. There were numerous amateur musicians among our neighbors: the Rupps played trombone, piano and saxophone; I played clarinet; Dad blew cornet; and Fritz Wohlschlager, a German bachelor farmer, entertained with banjo, accordion, harmonica and drums. We entertained at our monthly Farm Bureau gatherings, our local center for social media.

My first year of formal education began in 1946. Half a mile away, our one-room schoolhouse had a coal stove, outdoor restrooms and natural solar lighting from the south-facing windows. The school had not quite the same glamour as growing up in a log cabin but it was fun for us kids. A neighbor picked us up in the morning and we walked back at night. Childhood friend David and I were the two first-graders in the eight-grade school. There was teasing but no bullies, learning seemed cooperative, and when you got to eighth grade you had heard the lessons seven times. Neighbors took turns bringing hot lunches to augment the meager contents of the black dinner pails we carried. We went to "town school" in 1947 because no one could be found who would cope with the load of being custodian, fire tender, coach and teacher for eight grades.

The world beckons

My sister Jackie taught me to read, and I devoured the family encyclopedia (my early sex education) and such other tomes as I borrowed from the Tracy library. One day, I was paging through an issue of *Popular Mechanics* when I spotted an ad: BUILD DISTANCE-GETTING, BATTERY-LESS CRYSTAL RADIO! PLANS 25 CENTS, ALLEN, ST. LOUIS MO. My own radio! I saved up two bits and sent for this magical device. A week later came an envelope of instructions plus a little lead encased mineral, my "crystal." There was somewhat more to it: I also needed headphones, some fine wire to make a "coil", and a hundred feet of sturdy copper wire for an antenna. Dad helped me string the antenna from the chimney to a telephone pole we'd sunk in the ground, and we connected a feeder into my little corner of the living room. I fiddled with it for a few evenings and suddenly I heard a station! Like an episode of the Waltons, the family gathered around the kid who had just discovered a new world!

My father sensed that this could be the kernel to lead me out of the poverty agriculture of his existence, and a few weeks later he introduced me to 'Laverne,' the local undertaker. Laverne was also the local amateur radio guy. I had long wondered why the mortuary had the antennas atop its roof, concluding that it must be for communicating with the dead. Laverne patiently took me under his wing and began to teach me the finer points of being a ham radio operator. Dad bought an oscillator for me and sister Joyce to practice Morse Code, and at 13 I obtained my first license.

Amateur radio, music and a cute dark-haired farm girl occupied most of my spare time till high school graduation. I then had to think about more education, and with guidance of University of Minnesota alumni friends of our family, I chose that institution. The music retreated into the background. I was not certain I could earn a living as a musician, but science was fun and I liked the idea of teaching.

Beyond high school

I enrolled in the Institute of Technology at the University of Minnesota, with a preference for electrical engineering, until I found that engineers sat at drafting boards. I wanted none of that and transferred to physics in my sophomore year. Despite its reputation as one of the more difficult of the hard sciences, physics and I became good friends. My ability to visualize physical concepts together with

proficiency in mathematics served me well. I graduated near the top of my class and enrolled in graduate school. This farm kid's new obsession was to be addressed as Dr. Reinert!

I received my PhD in the summer of 1969 and in the fall I accepted an assistant professor position at Southwest Minnesota State College in the little town of Marshall, a few miles from my birthplace. I had received an offer of a post-grad position from Johns Hopkins, but Maryland was too far from home for me and I was burned out by space physics, the area of my dissertation. Besides, I told myself, if I were to continue in the family business of beekeeping, which I'd maintained throughout my years of education, I needed to stay in southwest Minnesota, where the beekeeping was good. Teaching physics gave me summers to work the bees and a warm office for the winter months of the frigid north country.

The young professor learns

It seemed to work as planned. I lectured in the tough-minded way I had been taught by my professors, guided a senior biology major in a bee disease project, filed a few patents, served on a citizen-based, environmental board sponsored by the State of Minnesota, did some innovative work with wind and solar energy, and generally kept myself busy. Until... I began to notice that I was wearing down, developing nervous tics, and that my students were not happy with the strict regimen of my classes.

A student came into my office one Monday and said, "Dr. Reinert, you should look at this article..." It was from a Northwest Airlines travel magazine, describing a NEW way of teaching. The methodology involved play, music, games and even deep relaxation. Developed by a Bulgarian psychiatrist, Dr. Georgi Lozanov, this 'superlearning' method claimed to speed up the learning process twofold or more by engaging the deeper learning resources of the students and the teacher. I was intrigued and a week later I was on a flight to Silver Springs, MD to take my first workshop. I suppose that I was a natural candidate, for I had a love of music, practiced meditation, and, as a physicist, I loved the notion of 'play' as it related to learning about how the world worked.

I returned two days later, gathered what comfortable chairs I could find around the campus, borrowed a record player and a few classical records from the SMSU library, and off we went. Despite my inexperience in the ways of superlearning, it must have seemed a pleasant change from the stern lectures of yore, and the students thrived. I loved it too, and my nervous tics melted away in the exuberance of teaching as I felt I was meant to do it.

That was the beginning of fifteen fun years of teaching the jjoy of physics. As I taught and wrote short stories and songs about physics, my intuition about how to do it also developed. Dr. Lozanov had predicted that beyond learning faster and deeper, the students would likely become healthier since their stress levels would decrease. Student attendance supported that idea. Students rarely missed the class, even though they were packed wall to wall, with many sprawled on the carpet. I also noticed that students seemed more willing to confide in me about their personal issues with relationships as well as health problems. I continued to teach the physics classes in this right-brained way until my 28th year at the University, when I was offered a year's salary in return for taking early retirement. I was ready to explore a new profession.

Remarkable experiences

One fall Friday, a former student phoned me at the office. 'Jeannie' was blind from diabetic neuropathy. She had passed my physics course a few years earlier and had a problem. "Dr. Reinert, can you help me? I'm losing my kidney function..." That hit my heart. Was there anything that I could

do to aid her? I spent some time teaching her what little I knew about health. I don't know that I helped her very much but the experience opened my eyes to the possibility of morphing into a 'healer.'

In 1998, I had another epiphany. My daughter and I had decided to attend a short course at the St. Paul campus of the University. The topic was queen bee breeding. (I was still a commercial beekeeper.) Parasites were raising havoc with bee colonies, and thinking I would be in the game for a while yet, it seemed the thing to do. The research professor teaching the class was an acquaintance of mine who had frequently updated us at our Minnesota beekeepers meetings. This morning, however, her address was not to be. "I'm really sorry to have to tell you this, but I feel VERY ill this morning. I cannot teach today. My assistant will take the class today and perhaps I will feel better tomorrow. 'Dr. Mary' then left the auditorium.

The class was to begin soon, and since I had not yet paid my tuition I walked down the hall to the registration office. As it happened, I walked by Mary's office. I glanced through her open doorway, and there she was, slumped in her chair. With raw courage in hand but not knowing what I was supposed to do, I gently knocked. When she glanced up, I said, "Mary, I'd like to try to help you..."

What happened next seemed an altered state experience. I stood behind Mary's chair and placed my hands on either side of her head, gently touching the skin. I held them there in a prayerful attitude for perhaps three minutes and then felt led to remove them. Mary turned to me in surprise, "That was wonderful! What did you do?" I mumbled a lame something in response and left to complete my registration. When I returned to the auditorium five minutes later, Mary was in front of the blackboard, rattling off information as though nothing untoward had happened. I do not recall what I learned about queen breeding in that three day class but I shall remember the healing experience forever!

Learning from healers

I was impressed that I'd had a hand in Mary's recovery. Could a farm kid/beekeeper/physicist actually help folks to feel better? Encouraged, I decided to take a workshop in subtle energy healing taught by Polish healer Mietek Wirkus and his wife Margaret. I flew to Colorado Springs and entered the classroom the next morning to find a room full of women! And not just any women, but professional, healthcare type women: nurses, social workers and PAs, and here I was, a guy, who didn't even know where his liver was!

I made it through the two-day class, overwhelmed by what I did not know. Virtually none of the material was familiar. Neither Newton's laws nor James Clerk Maxwell's equations nor the behavior of honeybees were part of the curriculum. I felt as lost as a left-handed physicist in a maze of right-handed turns, and the material was as vague to me as my first introduction to quantum mechanics. Even more disconcerting, while others reported various sensations in their hands as they were learning to activate their healing gifts, I couldn't be certain that I was feeling anything. My sole comfort was the chance remark of a more experienced classmate who assured me that, "If you think you might be feeling these energies, then you probably are!"

I flew home to my home in rural Minnesota to lick my wounds, but decided to give it one more go. Mietek was teaching another workshop in southern Minnesota just a month later. Owatonna was a short drive from home, so I registered again. This time the experience was better. Again, the room was full of women with professional healthcare experience, but things began to click and before the end of the workshop I was invited by Margaret Wirkus to attend their advanced class in Bethesda, MD where they had their main office.

Bethesda was better yet. By workshop's end, I realized that not only could I feel the subtle energies of which Mietek spoke, I could even see the little blue 'flames' - emanations coming off the tips of my fingers when I was highly energized.

Now the question was, could I find clients in my home territory of corn, soybeans and of conservative Minnesotans who expressed considerable trust in the Mayo Clinic but not so much in an Albert Schweitzer wannabe? The clients I found were mainly older ladies who seemed to take pity on me, and who gave me lunch and a five-dollar-bill for my efforts. My fledgling efforts to heal their sore elbows, knees and other joints seemed to be effective. They seemed well satisfied. Was there more I could do to test these new found skills?

Trying it out

Earlier, I'd chanced to develop a friendship with 'Tom,' a middle-aged South Dakota rancher. Tom and I had come to know one another when my wife, my crew and I were managing bees in Haakon County, 80 miles west of Pierre, South Dakota, in 1996. He was curious about what beekeepers did, so we talked. Tom sat inside his old blue pickup, the windows rolled tight up, and I was in my spaceman-like beekeeper's outfit, standing with one foot on the running board, the other in the grass of the cow pasture where we had the bees.

Tom had a rollover accident in that blue pickup a few months after our chat and now was in a motorized wheelchair with no feeling below nipple level. I thought that we might be able to energetically repair the damage to his spinal cord and so get him up and walking again, if not riding his horse.

I called Tom one day and suggested that although we were separated by 300 miles of prairie, it might be interesting to see if we could effect some change in his physiology through distance energy work. I explained that while distance healing was yet poorly understood, perhaps it could work like prayer for a loved one, when family are miles distant from the hospital room. Most everyone accepted that that kind of distance interaction worked.

Tom thought about it for a day or two, and then agreed to try. We arranged that I would call him at the appointed time to see that all was in readiness. He was to relax in his motor chair as best he could and close his eyes for the duration. I would disconnect the phone, turn on my special music (Mietek had suggested that his students use flutist Richard Warner's "Spirit Wind"), imagine Tom in front of me, adopt the same intentionality and perform the same kinds of physical movements that I would use were he physically present. I would finish with a balancing of the chakras (energy centers along the midline of the body) and a prayer for my work to have the highest benefit for him. I would then redial Tom, and allow the phone to ring just once as a signal that my work was done. Tom would communicate his feedback by email or phone call with any indications that something had happened on his end of this spiritual/psychic connection.

Some interesting things happened. Here's a verbatim response from Tom after our first experiment:

The date is 12/30/99. My concept of what transpired between Chuck and myself.

The first noticeable sign was a tingling in my right calf then up to my thigh (I don't have feeling below my nipples) in order I can't remember. My left leg had the same sensation twice. My groin felt a strong sensation two times. If it would of been a little stronger it would have been uncomfortable. This morning prior to Chuck's work, my shoulders and neck ached. After the treatment they seem to be relaxed.

Conclusion: I seem to feel some of what you're sending my way (from 300 miles away). It's wild. Gotta go, excuse my grammar. Tom

In the next email, Tom refers to an experiment we did, where I attempted to charge his drinking water with special healing qualities, again from 300 miles distance.

6/14/00 Hello Chuck, Went pretty well here, seems like you can charge parts of my body with or without my assistance during our sessions- kinda cool. The water definitely tastes different after whatever you have done. The sensations started at my toes going up to my waist. It was intense, then my groin had the same feelings only at different times. (I) noticed when feelings were intense in left leg. My right forefinger jumped once (cool). It helps when I breathe in deeply - makes sensations much more intense.

A few things particularly impressed me as the healer: One was that Tom had physical sensations in the lower part of his body, below nipple level, in a region where he had said he had no feeling due to the spinal cord damage. The second was that some of the sensations seemed very powerful, almost to the point of being uncomfortable. The results of changing the qualities of his drinking water were interesting as well. I worked with Tom periodically for two years. We never got him out of his wheelchair, but he advanced to the point, he told me, where he could get a cold beer from the refrigerator without assistance.

I later took more energy training classes, these with a Chinese version of subtle energy healing called Qigong. These were taught by Chinese Qigong master Chun Yi Linn, now a Twin Cities resident. His methods paralleled Mietek's, though in somewhat more depth from the Chinese perspective, and they helped nudge me along on my learning curve. My right hemisphere seemed to be becoming steadily more responsive.

Learning to use Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)

In June of 2000, I flew to Colorado to take in the ISSSEEM conference as suggested by Mietek. Apart from an opportunity to rub elbows and brains with those far more experienced in healing than I was, I chanced to attend a two-hour workshop by Crystal Hawk, a Canadian therapist who introduced us to the Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) version of energy psychology, as developed by Dr. Roger Callahan and simplified by human performance enthusiast and Stanford University electrical engineering grad Gary Craig. I was too conservative to be very impressed at this first exposure to EFT, but stuffed the papers in my bag just in case they should be helpful later.

It was a few months later that I had a minor revelation: If I was even going to be able to pay the light bill for this new profession I was sliding into, I needed clients! The way it worked was that clients first pay me, then I can pay my own bills. I decided to place a twenty-dollar classified ad in *The Edge*, an alternative news medium in the Twin Cities. (I did not promise much, for I knew almost nothing.) I received exactly one call, from a client who was to pay me exactly twenty dollars, but who in return was to give me the confidence to add EFT to my healing tool kit.

'Francisco' was an immigrant from Germany. When I answered his call, I asked, "What can I help you with?" He replied rather vaguely, "I simply cannot get my life organized." "What the heck do I know about organization?" I silently asked myself - the guy whose university office had perennially mirrored the aftermath of a prairie tornado. I finally replied with an air of pseudo-confidence, "I learned about a new tool called EFT at a conference last summer. I will send you the instructions. Read them over and call me in a week, and we will do it over the phone."

A part of me was secretly hoping I'd heard the last of Francisco, but the following Friday the phone rang again. Francisco was ready to do EFT. Part of the classical protocol for EFT is to first get an intuitive sense of just how serious the issue is. I asked him, "We like to measure the problem's intensity as we do EFT, so we know if we're making progress. Here's how you can help me. We use a subjective scale from "0" to "10," where "10" is the most intense. Without thinking deeply about it, pretty much just taking the first number that comes into your head, give me your best guess as to the intensity."

I'd never asked this question of another person before and was secretly delighted when he quickly gave it a "9." We then did the Setup for the tapping - an acknowledgement that while all may not be perfect with the client, he's okay with himself nonetheless. I led him in proclaiming, "Even though I cannot get my life organized, I love myself deeply and completely." This was stated with emphasis and repeated a few times, while accompanied by light finger tapping on the 'karate chop' point of EFT, located on the fleshy side of the palm. He then followed my lead in finger tapping on a dozen upper body points, representing the endpoints of energy meridians (lines of energy identified in acupuncture, running throughout the body). Meanwhile, he repeated a few words that reminded him of why he's doing this weird process. At that point, we rested for a moment, assessed the new intensity level and repeated the process as many rounds as necessary to bring the subjective intensity close to zero.

Within twenty minutes, Francisco had brought his intensity level to zero. This was amazing to me, since I was not sure this process would work at all. He still had a half hour left on his clock, so I asked him if there was another issue we could work on with the time remaining. "You know," he responded, "I really don't like myself very much." I asked, "And what do you feel the intensity level of that issue is?" It was nearly a "10".

We worked on self-esteem in the same way we had with the lack of organization issue. That intensity also declined quickly. At the end of an hour, we seemed to have deflated both of these major issues, all for the grand sum of twenty dollars.

Notwithstanding the "90 Percent Plus" reputation of success held by many EFT practitioners, you never quite know if you've collapsed the intensity of all of the aspects of an issue, so it's important to check after a period of time. I said I would call him in seven days.

A week later, Francisco was again on the phone, and by the exuberant tone of his voice, I could tell that good things were happening. "You would not believe how I am getting my apartment organized," he said, and he went on about all he had accomplished. I listened patiently for ten minutes. All the green lights were flashing on the work we had done. He then said something that floored me: "And you know, Charles, whenever I walk by a mirror, and I look at my face in the mirror, I smile!" Wow, his self-esteem was really up. That was a good day for both of us.

I called Francisco a few months later, and he was still doing great by his own measures. Something good had transpired for him, in record time.

I now sought to validate the new tool with another client, so I called my friend Tom once again at his South Dakota ranch. "Tom, do you have some emotional hangup that we could work on, such as a fear or a guilt?" Tom is a careful thinker, and he paused for a minute. "I do have this fear of heights," he said, slowly. Tom had been on the crew of a custom combining (harvesting) operation. They start in Texas and work their way up into Canada, harvesting the small grain as they go. Tom had been at the controls of one of the huge machines, and somehow the thing had nearly gotten away from him and started rolling down a hill. He got it stopped and no one was hurt, but it spooked him. That fear had been with him ever since. I asked him why he worried about a

fear of heights, as his days of climbing windmills were over; his legs no longer worked. However, he now had a van equipped with hand controls and he said that whenever he had to drive the steep hills of western South Dakota, it bothered him big time. His initial intensity was a strong "10."

Tom and I used EFT on his fear of heights for about 45 minutes and brought it down to a zero in that time. As with Francisco, we needed to test it. Tom soon had a suggestion: Tom's son 'Ben' was a wrestler, and Tom and his wife 'Joanne' would be driving to Pierre on the weekend for the high school wrestling tournament. I asked Tom to ring me on their return.

Tom called the following Tuesday morning. Trying to remain calm, I asked him, "How did the Pierre thing go?" "Pretty well!" he said. "Ben came in third in the state overall, and first in his weight class." Tom, the proud father, went on with more of the details and I listened patiently. Finally, finally, I got a word in edgewise to ask, "Tom..... How did the driving go?" I was greeted with 45 seconds of dead silence on a phone that up to that point had been most lively. Nothing but silence. Finally, Tom said, "You know, I guess I never thought about it!" That was the answer I was really hoping to hear. He had collapsed the unreasonable fear of heights that had bothered him for more than twenty years. It just wasn't there anymore. I was convinced that EFT was going to be a useful tool, and it has truly been so.

'Tiny' writes about his experience with EFT:

"I suffered for months with chronic low back pain, trying everything I could get my hands on for relief. I stopped in to Helping to Heal and Mr. Reinert helped me with by using EFT and most recently with an earthing mat. I can work hard and play hard and (a)wake(n) with no back pain, well rested for another day.

Tiny stopped in one morning with serious low back pain, which had been triggered by "stepping into a low spot" in the concrete floor of the tire changing area at his job with Wal Mart. Aafter a month or more of chronic back pain, he had gone to chiropractors and to a physician, all of whom seemed unable to do anything for the painTiny said that the last professional he had seen was a back specialist, who said, "I can do nothing for you until you are in such pain that you can only crawl into my office. Then we will do back surgery." Tiny chose to come to us instead to see if I could help. I spent about 15 minutes explaining how EFT works, and about 10 minutes actually using EFT with him.

Here is the EFT protocol I used with Tiny:

I first spent about 15 minutes acquainting Tiny with how EFT seems to work. I told him a few stories about how it has worked for me in the past, to get him comfortable with the idea that it could work for him also. In the course of telling these stories, I also demonstrated the tapping sequence for EFT, and invited him to tap right along with me, so that he would know what to expect. (I do this with most EFT clients, so that by the time I've finished demonstrating, and I have completed their tapping protocol, the clients pretty well know how the whole thing goes, so they can take the protocol home with them and use it themselves. I also furnish all clients a handout illustrating tapping points and protocols for typical problems, such as fear of mice, fear of heights, etc. As an old professor, at least half of what I do in working with a client is teaching. (It gets in your blood!)

"OK, are you ready? Now you know the tapping points we use. Now, it's often easiest if I tap on you, so that you don't have to think about where to tap. Is that okay?" (Client agrees.)

"Now, before we start, I want to get a sense of just how bad the pain seems to be. So, on a scale

of 0 to 10 (0 = no pain, 10 is big time pain), just pretty much taking the first number that comes into your head, how bad does the pain seem to be, now? Tiny: "About a 10")
 "OK, we'll just remember that and see if we can work it down."

"We're going to start our tapping with the Karate Chop point, on the fleshy side of the palm. Repeat after me, with great emphasis: Even though i have this lower back pain and it hurts like blazes, I deeply and completely love and accept myself. (We did this three times.

"Great! Now, we're going to tap on the individual points-- the top of the head, inner end of the eyebrow, outside of the eye, under the eye, under the nose, under the lips, collar bone points, under the arm, inside of the wrist and outside of the wrist, meanwhile repeating a couple of words that remind us of why we're doing this weird tapping! Let's just say, "This lower back pain." We then tapped a few times on each of these points, meanwhile repeating the short phrase, "This lower back pain" at each point.

"OK, take a drink of that cool water, and we'll just relax for a moment. Kind of a weird technique, but the nice part is that the darned thing works, just about every time! (We relax for a minute or two, perhaps talk about his work at Wal Mart etc.)

"OK, now before we do any more, let's check to see how intense the pain is now? We usually have you just take the first number that comes into your head, without doing much thinking about it. What does it seem to be, now?" Tiny: "About a 6." Tiny's numbers usually came down very rapidly, about two points per round.

"Ready to do it again? Here we go. This time we acknowledge that we've made some progress but we aren't quite there yet, so we use:

"Even though i still have some lower back pain, I deeply love and accept myself" (repeated three times while tapping on the Karate Chop point.

And then we tapped on the individual points-- top of the head, etc. while using a shortened phrase, "Still some lower back pain."

We then took a break for a drink of cool water and chatted a bit. Then I said to Tiny: "Now, let's take a moment to check out this pain. You've been sitting down while we did this. See if you can gently rise up from your seat, and without hurting yourself, move around a little bit and see how the pain feels now...."

Tiny is a giant of a young man - 6 feet 5 or so, not obese, just big (reminding me of Mr. Clean from the television commercials). He rose gingerly from his chair, slowly moved one way then another, and then (I still remember it!) a big grin spread across his face. "It's all gone!" he said, with glee.

That was all I did for him. The actual therapy probably didn't take more than 15 minutes.

I'd guess it was 4 years later that he contacted me again for lower back pain. I was then experimenting with the 'earthing' concept of electrically grounding the body to reduce inflammation and promote better nighttime sleep. Tiny purchased an earthing pad to sleep on, and then wrote me another nice testimonial about the benefits of the pad in eliminating his back pain. He's a happy camper!.

Thank you! You have something amazing in your earthing mat, I have more energy than I have had in a long time, my back doesn't hurt any more [and] I'm sleeping great. I will be telling my

friends and family and more about the Earthing product. I'll stop in the first chance I get but I just wanted to say Thanks!!"

More tools

I now had two possibly useful tools to help me reinvent myself, possibly even to help me make a living. I needed to pick up a few more, so I enrolled at Clayton College of Natural Health for their Naturopathic Doctor (ND) program. I was not overly impressed with the program, but could not afford the expense nor the time away from home to do a stint at a four year ND college. Later on, I found that the ND degree did open doors for me when I needed to purchase nutritional supplements for our clients, and naturopathy as a philosophy helped me to look more holistically at the factors influencing a client's condition. I also picked up some basic training in hypnotherapy at a hypnosis school in the Twin Cities, partly because I'd long been intrigued with that art, and partly because I had earlier attended an introductory class in hypnosis co-taught by Helen Erickson, granddaughter of the famous psychiatrist and world-renowned hypnotherapist, Dr. Milton Erickson. I was particularly interested in her grandfather's 'Giddyap 'N Go' technique, whereby he would take the client a little deeper than with his usually light hypnotic induction, seemingly speak with an aspect of the client's personality which he called their 'Inner Wisdom,' and from that conversation glean useful treatment information. I tried that Giddyap N Go technique a year later with "Ann." Here's her story.

The story of Ann

The people with whom I began to work in southwest Minnesota are no-nonsense folks. Honed and toughened by years of blizzards, feisty winds and unpredictable farm prices, they keep careful watch over their dollars and their health. When faced with a serious health problem, they go first to their local physician and then are typically referred to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, or to similar facilities in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Sometimes these referrals are satisfying, but when the remedies and methods of western medicine are found lacking, folks often come to us at the little downtown clinic we've called "Helping to Heal." Ann was such a person.

It was the year 2002. We were seeing patients in a one room office on Tracy's 3rd Street. Ann was at the door. She and her husband wanted to start a family but her pregnancy was not happening and they'd gone the western medical route without success. My colleague, Master Wu (a Qigong master trained in China at the age of 10), checked her over and was satisfied that physically she was just fine. What to do next? While exploring for emotional issues with some basic EFT, I happened to take hold of her hands and noted that they were cold. "They're always cold. My feet are cold too," she said, in exasperation. Cold extremities are one indication of a low functioning thyroid, so we did a few rounds of EFT with a view toward boosting the thyroid function. (In addition to their utility for assisting with emotional issues, the methods of EFT are helpful for changing certain aspects of the physiology, such as metabolism and blood pressure.) I then asked her to return in a week so we could determine if the thyroid adjustment had held.

In the interim, I pondered her case. The infertility problem was critical to the couple, and just how certain was I that the low thyroid was primary in preventing pregnancy? My references listed it as a contributing factor but never up there at the top of the list. Consequently, when Ann returned I told her about Erickson and Giddyap 'N Go. She went for it and we did a hypnotic induction on the spot. The result became an important teaching moment for me.

Here's what happened. When Ann seemed well relaxed, I asked, "Where do you seem to be?" She responded with the low, slow voice of one under hypnosis, "I seem to be sitting on a

dock, at the edge of a lake...” That was just fine with me, as we like our subjects to feel relaxed, and sitting on a dock at the edge of a lake is about as relaxed as most Minnesotans can get.

“Is there room for your Inner Wisdom to sit next to you?” I asked. “Yes,” she replied. “Let’s let that happen. May I speak to your Inner Wisdom?” Again, she replied, “Yes.”

I now formulated what I felt certain would be the clincher: “What is the condition of Ann’s thyroid?” I received a one-word answer from her Inner Wisdom: “LOW.” “Aha,” I thought to myself with some conviction, “this medical stuff is even easier than I had thought.” I needed to be more certain, so I asked a followup question: “Is this the principal reason why she has been unable to become pregnant?” Again, I received a one-word answer, but not the one I’d expected: “NO!” (as in, “No, you idiot!”) It blew me right off my scholarly pedestal. On recovering, I asked, “What then is the principal reason for her infertility?” “STRESS.” “Stress where?” And the Inner Wisdom laid them out: It was stress with her job - attempting to satisfy picky customers in a home furnishings store; stress with her new husband; and stress with money. That gave me the answers we sought.

I emerged her immediately, used EFT to reduce her reactions to those stressors, and a few months later I heard that she was pregnant. The couple subsequently had two healthy children. That event made me a believer in the Inner Wisdom of my patients.

Practicing

We all know the customary meaning of the word ‘practice.’ When my small son practiced with his bow and arrows, he gradually got better. Then, there is also the medical meaning of the word, as in ‘setting up a practice.’ I gradually came to understand my own meaning of that term, for when I hung out my shingle as a healer I was just a novice. As the years went by and I practiced with my patients, I became a bit better. I came to understand more and more clearly that I was an apprentice and that the Master was there somewhere, patiently guiding me as I grew. The first patients who came to see me didn’t have many serious problems, so I was able to practice and gain confidence as I treated a sore knee or aching muscle that I was able to fix with my limited knowledge of subtle energy healing. No one brought me a major challenge such as a brain tumor. As I grew to know more, the issues presented by my clientele became more complex. These days, we do see brain tumors and are able to offer some assistance. (For instance, a current patient has a glioblastoma, a rapidly growing brain tumor.) As I stumbled along my learning curve, I came to realize in retrospect that I seemed never to have been given a problem that lay beyond my reach. Let me share a few more examples.

Dealing with grief

From time to time, patients come to us with issues of unresolved grief from the passing of a loved one. As someone who has gone through that process, I fully understand how grief can be a terrible roadblock to getting on with Life. In my case, it was the death of an 8 year-old daughter due to a drunk driver that brought me to a standstill, with waves of grief coming unbidden for many months. It seemed that only the birth of another child was able to bring me out of that trauma and get me back among the living. Much later, in a conversation with a current member of our staff, EFT master and NLP master Rehana Webster (now in New Zealand), I learned a means of resolving intense grief. This approach was taken, as she recalled, from neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)). I have now used it with a half dozen patients, and in each case it seems to have collapsed their grief issue quickly, gently and with finality.

Most recently I used it with Scott, a young man whose sister had left life suddenly by choice. I worked with him twice, though the second session served only to confirm that the necessary healing had indeed taken place. Scott has been with us now for several months as a clinic volunteer and perhaps moving into the role of a healer apprentice. By all appearances and in all conversation, the trauma of his sister's passing has been completely resolved.

Here's what we did:

"Scott, let's see if we can help you with the grief from your sister's passing. I'm going to invite you to simply relax into that recliner, adjust the neck pillow and blanket so that you're really comfortable, and close your eyes when you're ready. This is a kind of visual imagery journey. Ready? (He nodded).

Let's suppose that you've had a good night's sleep. You awaken in the morning, peer outside and see a lovely morning! The sun is shining, it's quiet, and you can hear birds tweeting in the morning dew. Hey, it's a great morning to take a walk! You put on a pair of walking shoes and a light jacket, and open the front door. Hmm... That's interesting - there's a nice little footpath which you'd not noticed before, that's leading through a pleasant grassy area. It seems to be inviting you, so you think, 'Why not?', and begin to walk leisurely down that path.

You wonder where that footpath came from, but the question is soon lost as you see flowers of various kinds lining the path on both sides, flowers of your favorite kind, whatever that may be. There are birds chirping, as though inviting you to continue along that pleasant path. There are just a few clouds in the sunny, blue sky, and just a very gentle breeze, enough to keep the insects at bay. You can feel a few pebbles in the path, through the soles of your walking shoes. The air temperature seems just right for your stroll.

It's a great morning for a walk, and you're glad that you decided to do it. The path wanders just a bit, as though it was carefully thought out by an artist. After a few moments, you come upon a pretty little footbridge. It's made of stone, just like the bridges in children's storybooks. It's just the right width, rises just the right amount, and you can hear the burbling of a tiny little stream which passes beneath the bridge. There might even be a few fish in the stream; it's clear and looks pleasantly cool if you wanted to stop and dip your toes in it. But, the footpath leads you on. The going is easy and a walk in the morning seems just the thing to start the day...

Now, as you walk, remarking to yourself at the pretty scenery, you see something ahead on your path. It's far away when you first notice it and it's difficult to know what it is, but it seems like some sort of interruption in the path. Maybe it's made of wood... As you come closer, it looks like... it REALLY looks like... could it be...? It looks like an altar, like the altars you remember from visiting a church. It *is* an altar, of a religious or spiritual kind, and it seems as though the altar is there deliberately, as a part of the experience you are having this morning! What in the world could an altar be doing in the middle of your footpath?

Now, you've come much closer to this altar, and you notice there seems to be something hiding behind the altar... You can tell that it is a person, and in fact it is that special loved one whom you've been missing all this time, ever since she left you so suddenly, not so long ago. She comes out from behind the altar, and there is a part of you that wants to run and hug her, but... somehow it seems that you cannot quite do that. So, the two of you stand, not so far apart, smiling at one another like two long-lost friends who have so missed one another, and now are back together again!

You are now able to tell her, by thought messages, just how much you have missed her, and she as well to you, communicating without the need for speaking, communicating just what is in your heart and what is in hers. It's so good to be back in touch. However, in the parting, it seems that there are always words and thoughts which you wanted to express, but did not think of in those last moments, and now comes your chance to share those parting thoughts, so cherished and special to both of you. The two of you allow just the right amount of time to express those silent thoughts.

Finally, it seems that the time to part has come. You prepare to turn and walk back, as does she... and you can see a path extending back beyond her just as your path is there to lead you back home. But something is wrong.... Although you are happy that you had this chance, and she seems happy to have seen you for a last time, there is a tear, slowly moving down her cheek. Why the teardrops? And now you see something you'd not noticed before. There is still a connection between you and your departed loved one. Looking carefully, there is a 'something' between you... Perhaps it's a silver cord connecting the two of you that you'd not noticed before. Could this be the reason for the teardrops? Could something be holding her back from moving on in her new life? Could it be?

Suddenly, you are aware of something in your jacket pocket that you'd not noticed before. It feels like.... it is a scissors, in your pocket. It has appeared just as mysteriously as the footpath appeared this morning, and evidently it's meant to be there. The scissors seem to gently glow with a silvery light as you remove them from your pocket. Now the reason for the scissors is clear. You very carefully apply the scissors to that cord connecting you to your loved one, and as it falls away into nothingness, so do the teardrops disappear from her cheeks, to be replaced by a brilliant smile as her face lights up. Now, you know what was holding her back from her further growth! You know now that all has been resolved, and you both are free to follow your paths. You blow her a kiss, and she returns the blessing. She turns to follow her path, and you follow yours. All is now right with the world...! "

Learning what's going on

As we performed only unlicensed therapies at our small clinic, the issue of "What actually is the patient's problem?" came up repeatedly and I needed to find a noninvasive means of making my own determination of root causes. In addition to Dr. Erickson's Giddyup 'N Go hypnosis technique, muscle testing has been another helpful means for inviting the unconscious mind to communicate with the conscious. I use a simplified method in which I stand vertically and ask questions of the patient's Inner Wisdom. When my body leans forward it usually signifies an affirmative response; leaning backward indicates a negative one, and when my body remains motionless or wobbles, that suggests to me that the answer was not available for some reason. The process seems to work reliably when I do it for the client and it's sufficiently teachable so that clients can quickly learn to do it for themselves as well.

Intuition seems to be like a mental muscle that grows stronger the more it is used. The more I use muscle testing, the more open I seem to be to my intuition, so long as I don't get too cocky and think that I know all the answers. The responses from muscle testing form a kind of knowing which I add to my clinical observations and to the advice from medical references and colleagues. My colleague Master Wu uses his own version of intuitive fact finding, which he refers to as his "mental MRI."

All things considered

I've been practicing this new profession for a dozen years. It's been quite the trip – from sharing the

clinic of a chiropractor, to a one-room office, to now having our own two-story facility, web presence, and blogs. We now have a group practice in natural therapies, including Qigong, hypnotherapy, EFT, visual imagery, hyperthermia, oral chelation and other detox approaches, Reiki, naturopathy, nutrition, massage, Zumba and yoga. We've done phone work with clients from about half the US states and two foreign countries, and we have worked in clinic with folks who live within a radius of a few hundred miles. We have chosen not to work with health insurance providers, nor would most of these wish to work with us, as we use only license free therapies. Patients come to us knowing that they must pay out of pocket. Many start the dialogue by saying they do not like the "15 minutes, here's your Rx" methods of western medicine and they've come to us hoping for something better. Our average consult lasts 75 minutes; and our asking fees range from \$50 per hour for massage to \$125 per hour for sophisticated qigong.

We do a certain percentage of pro bono work for those who have no money. To date we've had only one NSF check and only a handful of folks who have not paid us for our services. I've been paid with garden produce, frozen chickens, canned pasta sauce and a Masonic ceremonial sword. I have no idea what the future will bring, what with new health care initiatives, but as I have done in the past, we trust The Universe/God/The Great Spirit to provide, as S/He has done in the past. This has not been a profitable road in the usual Wall Street sense. I'm still working for \$50 per month to be sure the bills get paid while the long term debt is being retired.

What I can say, without reservation, is that it's been immensely profitable spiritually. I would not trade these past twelve years for any amount of money. It's been a hoot, as my children would say.

Have we helped every patient? If our success is measured by what we shared with them, by their increased feelings of confidence and satisfaction with life, then I'd say we're up around 90%. I myself have had great rewards in working with these kind souls who consented to share their stories with me and even pay me something for the privilege of listening to them. If I were to do it over, would I have started a natural therapies practice in a sparsely populated, tiny prairie town, far from Colorado or Southern California? Yes. Not a great place to make much money if that is one's goal, but a wonderful place to learn, to teach, to live, and to meet and work with folks who seem to need us.

All of the facets of my life come together in my work. I utilize some of my analytical skills developed as a physicist. When I work with my patients, the teacher in me won't keep quiet, and I feel the need to instruct them as to how they can stay healthy without spending huge amounts of money. Some of the folksy ways of communication I learned as a farm boy come to the fore when I deal with those who do agriculture for a living. My prior profession as a beekeeper has helped me to work with my patients rather than doing things to them. My knowledge base has expanded to include a respectable understanding of the human body. I returned to my hometown with the purpose of giving back to the community, which had given me such a fine start in my younger days. Was I sufficiently well trained to help these folks? I had no medical degree as such, although a PhD in physics opened some doors and the workshops I attended were valuable. Invariably, it seemed that when a patient appeared with a health issue, I was directed by the 'Folks Upstairs' to guide them, and experience pretty regularly confirms I am understanding this guidance largely correctly. I never felt that I was alone in this endeavor.

The fact that I was already of near retirement age when I began this later career has given me some advantages. There's nothing like outranking your patients by a few years for encouraging them to pay attention to your advice. And, especially for my patients with emotional issues, it seemed comforting to them that I had gone through my share of hell, just as they had. I'd had two divorces, lost a child to a drunk driver, and two business startups had met an early demise. I had served time in the trenches.

In closing, I'd like to thank Dr. Dan Benor for encouraging me to share my experiences with readers, and to express my deep appreciation to those who allowed me to practice on them. Some names have been changed for reasons of privacy. Thanks to Dr. Benor and to my son, Peter Reinert, for their assistance in editing, and to my wife, Lois, my family members and our Helping to Heal staff and volunteers for tolerating my one-track-mindedness over those years as I sought to re-invent myself. It's been an interesting journey!

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