

The Biology of Consciousness

One Mind, Five Intelligences

By Gilles Marin

Booklet # 1

The Tao of Consciousness and the internal alchemy of our mind

*Lectures and functional meditations to acquire mental clarity,
emotional solidity, and peace of mind and spirit*

Booklet # 1: The Tao of Consciousness – One Mind, Five Intelligences

Booklet # 2: The Lock and Key to Healing: Emotional Digestion

Booklet # 3: The Resonance to the Source of Existence

Booklet # 4: The Round Table – The laws of interaction between the mind's five intelligences

Booklet # 5: From Heart to Guts - Escaping depression and chronic anxiety

Also, by Gilles Marin:

Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang – North Atlantic Books 1990

Five elements, Six Conditions for Healing – North Atlantic Books 2007

Healing Buddha Palms (with Elise and Kaleo Ching) Book and DVD

Audio recordings of directed Functional Meditations:

Bone Dreaming Meditations CD

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"Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. He who looks outwards dreams. He who looks inwards awakens."

Carl Gustav Jung

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Please, be respectful of people's taste and values. What can be music to the ears to someone can be very offensive to someone else.

Please take the time to think and assess who, among the people you personally know, would be able to appreciate this booklet without negative reactions. As you will learn by reading the upcoming free publication of the next booklet on the nature of consciousness, the mind has a very particular way to learn new things that asks for a change in the belief system.

This has to be respected in order not to precipitate someone into a crises and negative reactions.

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**In Touch,
Gilles Marin**

**One Mind, Five Intelligences
and the Internal Alchemy of our Mind
A Taoist Perspective of Biology**

Booklet 1

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Notes and practical considerations

This book is not modeled on any previously written book on Taoism. Rather, it is made of the empiric information I gathered over a whole life as a Taoist Healing Practitioner. It is my intention, as the author, to help the reader explore the practice of self-healing and mind liberation in order to become a healthier and better human being. This book is not intended to be just a scholarly work about Taoism and healing but is designed to be practical and useful to anyone regardless of spiritual orientation or scientific knowledge. It is designed to start you right away on the healing path with basic information, guided practices, and the essential steps to initiate your healing process within the healing field regardless of the quality of your health.

In my opinion it is more important to heal first. From a wholistic perspective, every healing process is unique and proper only to the individual going through it at the moment. The same procedure will not work on someone else the same way. All treatments have to be adapted to the particular needs of each subject treated. Therefore, understanding why and how will only be accessory to satisfying our curious mind but is not at all required for healing. As a matter of fact, and in the tradition of my lineage of Taoist healers, we don't need to be intelligent to heal. It is much better not to understand why we heal than to understand why we don't.

N.B.

All foreign terms are capitalized, meaning that such terms, even though written in English, are not easily translatable with one word and carry with them their corresponding foreign concepts (Chi, Fire, Earth, Metal, Wood, Water, Spleen-Pancreas, Liver, Heart, Kidneys, Lungs, etc...). Such names of internal organs don't only translate into their corresponding anatomical body parts but englobe the whole of the informational and energetical meaning in classical Chinese medicine, hence the capitalization. The author decided to use only the English written form rather than borrow the Romanized spelling of Chinese characters such as qigong for Chi-Kung, pronunciations being varied according to different Chinese dialects (Mandarin, Cantonese...) or languages (Japanese).

INTRODUCTION

Our Western civilization, as a culture, lacks both a true philosophy of life and a solid science of consciousness. That's what makes us, civilized people, most often very unhappy and dissatisfied in life and always hungry for more distraction and entertainment. We do study humanities, religions and psychology but none of these subjects is primarily oriented toward cultivating our already existing natural mental capacities to access personal knowledge through introversion and self-discovery. Instead, we were taught that introversion is a not a healthy attitude and we have learned to replace mental self-observation with what we should think and how we should feel. Furthermore, everything we learn is based on belief, with the fundamental belief that what we are taught is true. Believing is not knowing. Believing is nothing else but exercising our already over-inflated capacity for imagination rather than experiencing true knowledge. We construe a make-believe world of existence and, somehow, somewhere, inside the depth of our being, we know it, and we don't like it! That's why, as well-educated people, we live in a constant fear of what we don't allow ourselves to know about our own deep feelings and in absolute terror of death.

What saved me from being trapped into that alienating mental loop has been a constant and progressive integration of general consciousness provided by the regular practice of meditation formulas and Chi-Kung exercises from the Taoist White Cloud temple, practices that I have been very lucky to learn as a young man from two different Taoist masters: Dr. Stephen T. Chang and Master Mantak Chia. Dr. Chang studied the texts of the Taoist Canon the classical scholarly way and Master Chia grew up in a Taoist temple and learned to practice these formulas directly from one of the last White Cloud monks in existence who escaped to Hong Kong after the destruction of their temple by the Chinese Communist regime in the mid-twentieth century. These formulas, called enlightenment formulas, are designed to awaken the spirit and to cultivate the mind. They were passed down from numerous generations and came all the way from a time and a place where what we call now shamanism, the capacity to be in immediate contact with the spiritual world, was not only much more common but taken as a fact of everyday life. The philosophy supporting such practices is a most natural and universal perennial knowledge that keeps reemerging in humanity when people are open to it. So, for me, Taoism is not Chinese and I don't care much about imitating or appropriating the practice of ancient Taoists or Buddhist Chinese, Tibetan, Mongol, or Indian monks. What interests me is to rediscover a spiritual practice that can be completely adapted and relevant to our personal mental needs today, here and now, in our Western civilization.

Before studying and practicing Taoist meditations I went to college and I got a good formal Western education myself. I studied linguistics and the philosophy of education. Furthermore, I was fortunate to also have been deeply involved, during that time, with Eastern disciplines and philosophies including Aikido and Buddhism. Both prepared me for the Taoist functional meditations and Chi-Kung disciplines that I practice today. This also allowed me, much later in life, to understand what I had been doing in my youth in terms of energy-work and I took for granted then, because of being able to perform extraordinary things and seeing other practitioners also being able to do them. For that reason, I can understand that for anyone non-initiated, Aikido and Chi-Kung can look either completely fake or miraculous. These are great disciplines that teach to accept as normal fact what the rational mind considers impossible. Even to this day

I can recall experiences that I still can't explain but are nevertheless part of my personal experience and enriched greatly my belief system.

I used to read a lot about psychology, especially the works of Sigmund Freud, Wilhelm Reich and Carl Jung. As a young man, in my early thirties, I even took a general psychology class at City College in San Francisco, where I lived. Being a professional in the relatively young but rapidly growing field of the healing business in the 1980's in California, I wanted to have a better understanding of the mental aspects of the healing process and a better academic perspective than the most generally accepted view on psychotherapy, a discipline that had already started to repel me. The class was so uninteresting and the teacher so boring that half the students had left after the first few days of this weekly course. I kept going to class until we were just a handful in attendance and at about halfway into the program. Then, with no hope that the class was going to do anything else but add to my growing dislike for the subject, I quit. I was not only dissatisfied but disappointed with the most cutting-edge perspective on psychology, including what was starting to be called, during the mid-1980s, "somato-psychology". In my opinion, at that time, this was a heroic attempt to reconnect the pieces of a fragmented approach to psychology split between a contemporary philosophy more interested in sociology than medical sciences and a biology that didn't differentiate between the mind and the brain. I started to realize that, maybe, true psychology, as the study of consciousness, did not really exist yet in our culture. To understand the mind, we have to cover much more than analyzing the brain and the thinking process, or barely observing and registering behavior. I was also getting very frustrated with all the terminology around what is supposed to be the "ego", what is "unconscious", "subconscious", "non-conscious", "in denial", "personal", "collective", and profoundly dissatisfied with everything connected with the non-understanding of the memory process, looking for storage cabinets in the brain. In my opinion, not only psychology was missing something essential, it was deliberately avoiding the most central points about life and existence: the existence and the importance of the self, the individual, the personal.

I started to believe that a study of consciousness could not even begin to exist because of such a resistance to and such a poor appreciation of the workings of the mind as a whole. All of this because of a traditional and ancestral general lack of respect for the most basic fact of life: the wholeness of life through its different aspects of consciousness, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. By moving away from a holistic perspective and by becoming more allopathic and behavioral, as well as neurologically oriented, psychology was copping out of the study of consciousness altogether¹.

I couldn't abide either by the general trend to make psychology a science because of its deference to what is commonly accepted as "the" scientific approach. "The" scientific approach of double blind and third person method. How can we possibly study and improve our consciousness if we adopt a method of study that denies the value of the self and of personal experience? Denying personal experience represents for me a form of personal censorship on research and on the need to improve. If we study psychology without the slightest intention of improving oneself and our consciousness, what is the point of studying it?

I was very distraught. I found myself cornered between a scientific approach I didn't fully trust, a spiritually and emotionally disrespectful and mechanical, medical way of thinking, and an

¹ Rupert Sheldrake: The Science Delusion

emotionally depressed academy, with all of them denying the pragmatic existence of spirit, the individuality of the soul, and the very source of life. I felt mentally triangulated by a conventional scientific approach denying the existence of a living force, oriented toward the artificial, the synthetic and the robotic; or a chronically depressed view of life of an academy so traditionally and diametrically opposed to spiritual and religious influences that it became mentally rigidified by its inability to accept what it did not understand; and by an allopathic medical view with no or little understanding of life processes, health and healing, being still under the spell of puritan legacies left by castigatory and punitive religious influences of the past, with their pathological attitudes toward purity and what is aseptic, still, white and stainless as opposed to what is alive, growing, colorful, joyful, and thriving. With such a self-imposed censorship on the understanding of the mind, psychology, for me, was never able to establish a comprehensive and satisfying description of the different components of cognition, and I was left with very little value in terms of understanding consciousness.

After my disappointment with academic psychology, a personal factor that made me also negatively react to the subject was the fact that my conjugal life was being less than satisfying at the time, and, since my spouse had studied psychology and was involved in it, I decided to go through personal psychotherapy myself. Eventually, we also followed couple counseling, which ended by separation and divorce. Divorce was rationally the right path to take for both of us, at the time, but the therapy sessions left me nonetheless with an empty hole in my soul and a bitter taste in my mouth. So, it became obvious then that psychology was not for me. I learned that lesson the hard way. I am not saying here that psychology is worthless. There is actually an urgent need for more and better psychology and psychotherapy, not less. I really believe, considering the troubled times we are living in, that we need more psychology today and more appreciation for our emotional life than ever. However, people need to know that they have an emotional mind completely independent of their rational thinking. Indeed, conventional psychology, as well as our conventional medical approach, needs to become less oriented toward correcting behaviors and more respectful of the emotional needs of individuals. This can only be achieved by a clear discernment of the different components of our consciousness, at least between our rational thinking and the non-rational and highly demanding emotional aspects of our mind.

Fortunately, my involvement with Buddhism, Aikido, Taoist meditations, Chi-Kung, Tai Chi Chuan, Classical Chinese Medicine, and my practice of holistic healing arts in general, made me relatively comfortable with the facts that there are many things in life that cannot be rationally understood but can nonetheless be experienced, appreciated, and can even be successfully repeated with quite good frequency and accuracy. Moreover, not understanding something does not prevent it from existing. This a good lesson that I had already learned in technical high school where I learned electro-technology and electronics while still a teenager: Scientists don't know much about the nature of the electro-magnetic field and the electric current, but that does not prevent us from using them!

My mind and spirit were also saved by my practice and studies of Classical Chinese Medicine and Taoism, mostly with Dr. Stephen T. Chang, and the subsequent practices of Chi-Kung and what I called much latter Taoist Functional Meditations, especially the practices called "The Healing Buddha Palms" and the "Human Potential Fusion Meditations" - previously esoteric monastic disciplines from the tradition of the White Cloud temple of imperial China, with my Taoist Chi-Kung Master Mantak Chia. Thirty plus years of following these disciplines allowed

me to espouse a different perspective on the mind due to a much broader understanding of the nature of life itself.

I was also very lucky to meet very early and during my whole life high spirited individuals who blessed me with their strong influences: Master André Nocquet, first foreign in-house student of O'Sensei Moriei Ueshiba, founder of Aikido; Don José, venerated medicine man of the Huichol Nation; Kittowa, head shaman of the Cherokee Nation; Lama Zopa, a close companion of the Dalai Lama, whom I met at the land of Medicine Buddha monastery near Santa Cruz, California; and other medicine people from all over the world like Elie Yen from the Upper Volta river in the West African Burkina Faso, and other medicine persons from the sources of the Amazon river in the Andes, whom I kept miraculously meeting during the times of my life when I needed most spiritual support and guidance. This is without counting the innumerable clients and students from whom I still keep learning every day, through shared experience, the most valuable facts about life, health and healing. I keep you all dearly deep in my heart.

This book is an attempt to share my understanding of the workings of the mind from a pragmatic, first person experience-based perspective, hoping that it might encourage more individuals in that direction, especially, but not exclusively, members of the scientific and academic community. I made a life commitment to keep developing practices that I don't necessarily understand completely but from which I experience the positive effectiveness on my clients and myself on a daily basis. Whatever it is that brings us better health, more inner calm and peace of mind, more power for love and enjoyment of life, clearer intelligence, more emotional wisdom and maturity, higher and warmer spirit, in short, whatever it is that makes us better human beings.

To maintain that perspective, I had to distance myself from the most widely accepted approach that the path to knowledge mandates to study and understand first, then practice. So, this book is not a scholarly product based on research and studying the history and the stories on already published work about Taoism. My knowledge of Taoism comes primarily by lineage transmission, through direct practice of meditation, and through the systematic applications of the most basic principles of Taoism. I am also a Taoist scholar, but I am, above all, a Taoist practitioner. Therefore, in this book, I won't discuss, argue, or adopt any school system, but simply share the product and realizations that came to me during these years of daily practice in the hope that it will help others to better understand the nature of their mind and consciousness.

CHAPTER 1

Taoism, the perennial philosophy

This book is an attempt to connect you with your own inner wisdom. There is nothing in what I say here that you don't already know somewhere within yourself. Consciousness is universal and human consciousness is part of an informational grid which is accessed by every human individual on earth. Every individual yearns to delve deeper into that source of knowledge. This is a lesson I learned throughout a life-long practice of meditations. The main obstacle I encountered to being connected to the source of wisdom is a so called good academic education, an education based on understanding rather than knowing, an education focused on rational thinking and problem solving - which, in itself would be good if it allowed the acceptance of what is not rational instead of making it another problem to solve - an education based on imitating, repeating and memorizing rather than connecting to the source of knowledge, an education provided by a rather violent educational system that abuses the natural biological mental order already existing within oneself instead of respecting, supporting and enhancing its natural capacities. The mental risks resulting from such a good academic education are mental rigidity, lack of true identity, emotional fragility, and the loss of spiritual self-guidance.

Also, people are taught to identify with their thinking process, with what we have called intelligence, which implies restricting rational thinking mostly in order to look at things from an analytic standpoint and to solve problems. Actually, our rational thinking process is the least personal of all the mental capacities we have. Every piece of knowledge, every thought we have, every analytical method we have adopted, we learned from someone else. Everything we memorized was written by someone else. And yet, rational thinking is still a very important part of our mind because that's where our consciousness, this extraordinary capacity to step out of the present and take a detached perspective of the world resides. But this capacity for thinking is not the only intelligence we have and it certainly should not be abused into usurping other mental functions. As we will explore deeper later, we have five distinct intelligences that compose our mind:

1 - Yes, we have rational thinking, that extraordinary ability to step out of the present, step back, to consider, ponder, contemplate and analyze. This is the capacity to know better all the time by bringing knowledge to consciousness. This intelligence is here to give us the widest range of choices possible, to solve problems, to understand always more clearly, and even to explore further possibilities beyond reality through pure imagination. There is no end to understanding better, to imagining more, to creating. This gives us knowledge, understanding and clarity of mind and brings us also into the infinite realms of imagination and entertainment. But most importantly, rational thinking gives us the belief system that we keep building and adjusting throughout our life.

2 – However, we also have an emotional intelligence, which is non-rational, but has the fundamental of giving us social wisdom and maturity along with our capacity to grow as a person in order to build emotional solidity, honesty, personal dignity, and a solid sense of ethics and of responsibility. What we call maturity is what gives us the social skill of sharing feelings by developing our capacity for connecting meaningfully to others and also to ourselves. This is our capacity to listen, to respect, and to be true to ourselves as well as to be able to respect the

feelings of others. Feeling good about oneself is not coming from the same place of the mind as rational thinking. There is no calculation here, there is no choice to make. We don't choose our feelings the same way we can choose our thoughts. This emotional intelligence gives us a social presence, self-respect, respect of others, dignity and pride, as well as an appreciation for beauty that completely eludes the rational mind.

3 - We also have a spiritual intelligence that guides us toward our life purpose by making us drawn to and love specific things. This is another non-rational part of our mind moved by what we find attractive, lovable, admirable and beautiful. Spiritual intelligence guides us into making the most important decisions in life including the choice of mates, friends, place to live, our work, and our way of life. Because of not being always rational, spirit involves taking risks, taking chances, daring. Spirit is shared like fire is shared. It is love and human warmth and gives us enthusiasm for life.

4 – Furthermore, we also have an instinct, this intelligence coming from the depth of our congenital, ethnic and cultural background that gives us familiarity with a whole system of habits, integrated knowledge, and ancestral lessons hard-wired into our system. This is our Water intelligence coming from knowledge acquired within the depth of ancestry. Water intelligence gives us the respect for old traditions and admiration for antiquities. Every single live cell in our body contains DNA, a generic term I will use to cover the wide spectrum of genetic information held within ourselves, not only at the chromosome level, but also at the protein level, the morphogenetic level, and so many more physical levels that we might not be able to bring them all to mind. This is a cosmic sized collection of information covering not only our personal genetic background but the whole history of the evolution of life.

5 - And, we also have this basic earthy intelligence that allows us to take our time, to catch a ball, to enjoy being with ourselves and others where we are. This intelligence allows us to be present and to spontaneously connect with the right idea at the right time, at the right place, with the right people. That intelligence, which we often call cleverness or smartness, spontaneous thinking, we find by being present and open to what is happening here and now. It gives us conviviality and the pleasure to share things in the present moment. This Earth intelligence is the grand central intelligence of the mind. It is where all other intelligences meet. This is the place of the “I am”; the place of self-recognition; the place of presence and the awareness of the extension of that presence throughout our whole zone of influence. This is a place in our mind where no question arises, only answers reside. Our body knows everything about health and life. Our body is holding a tremendous amount of information. So, true knowledge does not need to be sought anywhere else than within oneself. Now, to reach for information into the depth of the subconscious and to be able to bring it to the surface of our consciousness requires education, cultivation, training and practice, but it is accessible to all.

This series of booklets is designed to uncover information you already have within yourself. It is composed in a way to allow a precise and progressive reintegration of a perennial wisdom that has always existed but has been covered up by a cultural weight that put in doubt the validity of such knowledge. So first, before we get involved into practice, let's check the origins, the cultural lineage, and what makes Taoism an efficient way to tap into that source of knowledge.

History

Taoism is the philosophy at the origin of Chinese civilization. It predates by a long shot the first recorded early Chinese dynasties, arising about 7000 years ago. Oral tradition, markings on turtle shells, carved scapulae, and tally sticks relating to the I'Ching, the mathematical and philosophical foundation of Taoism, were found from the very beginning of Chinese civilization. However, there is no record of the development of Taoism during the whole history of China. Only discourses, commentaries and different ways of interpreting the I'Ching. Yet, the practice of Taoism brought to China agriculture, writing, literature, an exquisite form of art mixing painting and poetry and brought also the development of sciences, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, geology, architecture, medicine, and even some esoteric sciences for us like Fong-Shue, or the art of geomancy, as well as different forms of Kung-Fu and other martial arts. Taoism brought Chinese culture to the highest level of refinement, all by following the directive of the I'Ching, the same I'Ching we continue to study to this day. Theories abound about the existence of an ancient and highly developed human civilization responsible for passing on a treasure of wisdom encoded into the I'Ching and the practices described inside the Taoist Canon (Tao-Zang), a civilization which disappeared long before China ever existed. However, Taoism left a deep impression inside Chinese culture and it is finding its way today into our modern Western way of life².

Tao

Tao means "the way", the way things are. The first line of the Tao-Te-Ching, Lao-Tzu's attempt to describe the Tao as precisely and concisely as he could before he left China, around 600 BCE, defines it primarily as alive and present. Lao-Tzu, the "Old Master", the first Taoist historical philosopher who wrote the foundation of philosophical Taoism, was, and still is, a central figure in Chinese culture. Since then, Lao-Tzu's philosophy has been adopted by many progressive, non-violent and anti-authoritarian movements in many countries. A legendary character, he is the subject of many stories. One of my favorite versions represents him as a court official in charge of the keeping of the imperial archives. He therefore knew all the classics. He was the Grand Historian and the astrologer in charge of rituals for the royal court. However, because of the decline in morality around him and in the kingdom in general, and because he probably predicted the warring that was going to happen in the next centuries following the past eight hundred years of relative peace, he decided to leave China. He went West, sitting on a buffalo, to leave the country for good. The legend says that during these ancient times, the guardians of the gates, at the border, were highly educated in meditations, Chi-Kung, and all kinds of Taoist disciplines such as the Kung-Fu of reading the clouds. Reading the clouds was a necessary art on the borders to be able to detect invading armies, bandits, and spies, or even unwanted individuals of poor moral qualities, before they could be seen with plain eyes. Hence, the guardian of the Western Gate, remembered as a legendary character named Yin-Hse, saw one day an unusually beautiful cloud approaching the gate from the inside of the country. According to his knowledge, such beautiful cloud could only be generated by the presence of a person of great wisdom. When he saw the old man sitting on his buffalo asking for the gate to open to let him go toward India, Yin-Hse recognized him as the cause of the beautiful cloud. Yin-Hse went down on his knees to beg the old man to be his guest and to spend some time with him, to share

² Fritjof Capra: The Tao of Physics, J.F. Yan: DNA and the I'Ching, Gary Zukav: Dancing Wu Li Masters, An Overview of the New Physics

his solitude at the gate and to teach him, or to write something, anything, in order to leave some of his wisdom behind. The legend says that Lao-Tzu first refused. But Yin-Hse was so persuasive and probably showed so much strength and rectitude of character that Lao-Tzu finally accepted to spend a month with him and to write a book. That's how and when the Tao-Te-Ching was written. While in India, legends describe Lao-Tzu as Siddhartha's teacher, and Siddhartha became to be known as Gautama Buddha.

" The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named is not the eternal Name."

Right there, at the first line of Lao-Tzu's Tao-Te-Ching, we are already confronted with the limits of our consciousness: Tao represents the change eternally established in the present. However, thinking is not designed to apprehend the present: the present is gone as soon as we can think of it! The delayed reaction accompanying the thinking process is long enough to take us away from reality, from "the way" things are in the present. This is the Tao, this is the way things are.

"The Tao is the way things are right here and now
and this will change
by the time we can verbalize the first attempt to define It. "

Tao is what rules existence, it is non-local and non-temporal, meaning that it is nowhere and everywhere at the same time (nowhere and now here), and it is the absolute source of energy and information at the origin of existence. It is creation in the making, it is existence right here, right now. This is a scientific definition for the Creator, or God, or whoever or whatever is responsible for existence. The translation in Chinese for the word God, in the Chinese Christian bible, is Tao.

道
TAO

What is present in life is submitted to the power of Tao - The Way Things Are - The Order of The Universe, God, which gives it its constant change. Change is the only constant in the universe: the law of change, whose description is defined in the I'Ching, the study of universal laws, of numerology and mathematics, the language of Mother Nature or God.

Life forces, chemistry or alchemy?

In the West, we know of the four forces of physics: Gravitational, electromagnetic, strong and weak nuclear forces, but these forces are studied for mechanical purposes only, not biological. Furthermore, we will see later that these four forces are only partial attributes of only one

elemental power, which is Earth power, and this is far from being complete since we still need to address the biological attributes of the Earth power rather than just its mechanical attributes in order to understand its function in life.

To understand life energy, from a true scientific perspective, we need to understand what is alchemy as opposed to chemistry. Chemistry is the study of the elements we find in our universe, the building blocks of matter and the components of all things. However, no matter how reactive or even explosive certain elements are in relation to each other, no amount of chemistry can create the energy of life. To have life we need to have biological forces. It is the study and the use of these biological forces that we call alchemy.

Alchemy is the study of the natural sources of life. This is why the terms sorcerer or sorceress exist. Etymologically speaking, a sorcerer is someone who knows how to get to the spiritual source of life. As you probably know, the terms sorcerer, or sorceress, have been properly demonized long ago by our culture so they would not interfere with either religion or academy.

Life comes from life. It is a transmission. It is a transmission called reproduction and reproduction comes from the interaction of male and female principles. This interaction of genders, seen from a Taoist perspective, is universal. The interaction of male and female in the world of living is nothing else but the repercussion of a more universal mode of interaction called Yin and Yang interaction, which is the very engine of all movements and the very essence of life and existence.

Yin and Yang

Yin and Yang are the manifestation of the perpetual law of change, the unchanging law that rules existence. There is no Yin without Yang and no Yang without Yin. They both create the engine that moves the wheel of life and are responsible for cyclicalities such as birth and death, wakefulness and sleep, the cycle of days and nights, weeks, month, seasons, years, and everything else cyclical and changing.

Yin is that which is essential, like the unmoving central point of a turning wheel. Yin gives support but is hidden at the center of things, it is the shadow made by the light, it is hidden in the dark and, therefore, lives often in the cold. It is in the depth and at the heart of things. It is also stillness, passivity and the resting time that allows high periods of activities.

Yang is that which is substantial, visible, on top, superficial, active and, therefore, often hot and bright, it is most apparent, the visible parts of events. It represents the period of activity that follows passivity and rest.

Yin and Yang continuously alternate and are manifesting the perpetual change experienced by existence. For example, when you use your hand and make a fist, the Yang part, the active part, is your knuckles and back of the hand while the Yin part is your palm hidden inside your closed hand. However, when you are slapping something with your palm, your palm inside your open hand then becomes Yang, active and directing, while the back of your hand becomes Yin, passive and following but nevertheless supportive and deeply involved. Yin or Yang depends on

the action and the way things are interacting with each other and they can alternate according to the nature of the function.

Yin and Yang are also the polarities creating the difference of potential responsible for the flow of biological energy called Chi, with its accompanying field of information that allows life to exist. Like electricity, Chi follows a direction given by the difference of potential (Negative-Positive, Yin-Yang) created by Nature. Yang Chi goes down like the light on earth and Yin Chi goes up like water from the ground. It is the constant marriage of Yin and Yang that keeps the life-force (Chi) circulating.

The source of life

What is the real difference between a live being and a corpse? Well, it is pretty obvious at first sight: A living being is moving around, talking, and is full of life. A corpse has turned into an empty inert object. However, if we give it a closer look, especially just after death occurred, there is not much difference between a living body and a corpse in terms of anatomy and physiology. Same body, same organs, even some metabolical functions still working, but no real life. A corpse is like a machine left unplugged from the source of energy. So, what represents the plug in a living being, and what kind of energy runs through that plug?

It is difficult for rational thinkers to believe what they don't see, however, even though we don't see thoughts or emotions, we know we have them, and, at the age of wireless communication and Wi-Fi, we are aware of the reality of virtual communication and wireless electronic connectedness. Through Asian culture, and especially with Traditional Chinese Medicine, we know of an internal biological wiring system called the meridian system that we can't see, but that we can often feel through acupuncture or acupressure. It does not matter how stubborn we can be about "not believing" in it, we can't deny the experience of more sensitive individuals and thousands of years of practice that have kept whole civilizations in good health for so long.

Going back to our empty corpse, what is it that animates in a living being? It is a person filled with a personality and a mind: it is the information carried by the energy running through the body of the person. In a corpse the mind and the personality are gone along with the energy that carries them. We would like to believe that a corpse is still a person... We offer flowers, prayers, candles and incense, and a nice resting place. However, the person is gone, and what's left is just the empty physical manifestation and it is fast decomposing. Now, somehow, the person has left. He or she checked out of the body, and by doing so, turned the power off or pulled the plug from the energy source. Like the best computer or electric appliance when left unplugged, nothing responds to commands. Even the most sophisticated program is out of service without a connection to a reliable source of energy. That energy is the source of life.

Now, there is always that question that remains, especially to the best educated among us, rational thinkers, where is the person? What's after death? More on that later.

Chi



Chi, breath and rice pictographs

We do not have a word in English to translate the Chinese pictograph: Chi. We have to use paraphrases like "life force", "energy and information of life", "biological energy", "breath of God", or just "breath power", which do not carry its full meaning. In Japanese, we have the same pictograph pronounced differently: Ki. In Polynesian Hawaiian it is called Mana, in Ayurvedic medicine it is called Prana, and there are many other names in the world meaning the same thing. Not so in English, French, Spanish, German, or any of the languages constituting our Western culture.

The classical Chinese character for Chi is composed of two ideographs: the first on the top, formally written in four strokes, represents a flow meaning vapor, or air, or breathing, which we translate as "the flow of breath" and the second ideograph, on the bottom, formally written in six strokes, represents the notion of "essence", as well as "rice". The rice ideograph symbolizes the presence of the life force in food, the energy contained in every grain of rice. It is the spark of life. Together the two ideographs composing the pictograph Chi represent the flow of the life force: the energy and the information that brings life. Chi is therefore not neutral as in electrical power or energy. Chi is the energy carrying the deliberate intent to promote life and existence. It is a power that comes with a purpose. It is a very intelligent power. It is the breath of creation. For this reason, Chi is often translated as "The breath of the Creator", "the breath of the Divine", "The breath of Tao", or "the breath of God." It is then understandable why the essentially atheist Chinese Communist ideology chose to "simplify" the character Chi by removing the spiritual "spark of life contained in a single grain of rice" ideograph, keeping only the "flow of breath" ideograph, thereby eliminating any connection with the concept of life creation, divinity and God, and translating it as the more neutral medical concept of energy contained in breath.

Even though the presence or absence of Chi determines the difference between a live person and a dead body, Chi is not yet recognized in contemporary conventional Western biology. Nevertheless, Chi is constantly used in acupuncture treatments and in hands-on Asian healing modalities where its flow and directions have been very precisely described by Chi-Kung experts and put in very well-known acupuncture charts recognized the world over. However, since these recognitions were made at the first-person level - instead of the third - Chi is not recognized by our Western scientific system - the same way that we, in the West, don't have yet a system of recognition of all the components of consciousness, it being the domain of philosophy and psychology, a department belonging to the humanities and not really accepted as scientific by a community more attached to something more substantial and visible such as neurology.

Chi is energy pregnant with information and this energy is inseparable from the information that it holds: the principles of life and the laws of existence. Chi feeds the various functions in our body and takes on the qualities of these functions. The energy and information that constitute our Chi are subject to evolution and improvement through learning, growing and self-cultivation.

When applied to a skill, it is called Kung-Fu, and when applied to health, Chi-Kung. When applied to hands-on healing of internal organs it is called Chi-Nei-Tsang.

The nature of Chi in the body

The Chi permeates an array of metabolic functions from the depth of the cellular level to the surface of the skin, animating all different organs, tissues, cells, cell organelles, and their multiple tasks. So, Chi in the body is divided and defined according to its multiple functions.³ We can roughly compare it to the energy system of a house where the electric power comes from a main source and is transformed into light, heat, refrigeration, air conditioning, information, music, and can feed power tools, and all kinds of electronic equipment. But at the difference of electricity where the energy carries information in its magnetic field, it is the information of life, in biology, that allows the life force to flow: it is, by itself, alive! Life comes from life. Dead electricity can only give the illusion of life through motion and programmed functions. There is no live person there, no sentiment, no thoughts, just applications of programs disconnected from the rest of existence and the network of life.

The protective layer of Chi around us is called Wei-Chi and the internal nutritive Chi from digestion is called Ying Chi. The Chi flowing downward to our feet is called Yang Chi and the Chi rising from the ground is called Yin Chi. This flow of energy circulates very similarly to the flow of blood divided into arterial flow and venous flow. Yin Chi runs our vital force upward from the nurturing ground and Yang Chi carries used-up energy and its by-products downward, back to the ground to be recycled.

Each metabolic system follows information given by their corresponding energy system or energy grid distributed by their corresponding meridian system. This energy grid feeds vitality to the different body systems and it also carries the energy holding the five intelligences of the mind.

³ Healing from Within with Chi Nei Tsang – Gilles Marin 1990 North Atlantic Books

CHAPTER 2

Internal Alchemy

The Five Alchemical Elemental Forces

The Taoist cosmology speaks of the Five Elemental Forces, described in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) - the post revolution remnants of Classical Chinese Medicine - as "The Five Elements". These elements, in Classical Chinese medicine are not dead elements. They are described as alchemical rather than purely elemental, meaning that they are alive, have personality, character, behavioral tendencies, intelligence, responsibilities and feelings. They are the energetic and informational manifestation of what is closest to animist deities responsible for life and existence in other cultures. These five forces of nature, when interacting together, bestow life and give their constitution and behavior to their corresponding element. They are forces with intention, the intention to interact with each other to manifest life, and to run it according to the laws of life and the Way things are, the Tao. Thus, these Five Elemental Forces are integral parts of the Tao and manifest Nature's laws in anything alive⁴.

The Five Principles of Existence

The whole universe, the whole of creation, the whole of existence, as well as our own mind follow the five principles of existence:

- 1 - An origin transmitted by the universal Water principle holding the memory of life**
- 2 - A direction and a purpose given by the universal Fire principle of attraction of life**
- 3 - A location in space and time given by the universal Earth principle of manifestation of life**
- 4 - An upward expanding phase for youth, awakening, growing, belief system building and for the expansion of consciousness given by the universal Wood principle**
- 5 - A downward condensing phase for refining, perfecting, crystalizing, taking shape, aging, acquiring respect, maturity, glamour, dignity, and fulfilling responsibilities given by the universal Metal principle**

The Three essences

In a living being, the five principles of existence animate the three essences:

Spirit = Inner Fire + Inner Water	=	Informational potential for life
Body = Inner Earth	=	Physical manifestation of life
Soul = Inner Wood + Inner Metal	=	Personification of life

This is the way the universe is set up by the Tao. This is The Way (Tao) things are.

⁴ Five Elements, Six Conditions for Healing – Gilles Marin 2007 North Atlantic Books

The origins of the Five Intelligences of our mind

1 - The power of Water: Everything in existence has an origin

- We are born from our parents, who themselves had parents and grand-parents, a long lineage with no beginning like a long, cosmic energetic river. The principle of origins is led by the spirit of Water feeding our roots, carrying the heritage of our past, the patterns of our ancestral habits, genetic background, and our instinctive knowledge. Our inner Water intelligence carries what is most familiar to us including all our patterns of habit. Habits imprinted in our genetic background, cultural, educational, ethnic heritage, social status, geographical influences, and more...

Water power gives us our instinct from the accumulated ancestral knowledge and carries the issues we need to work out in our lifetime by clarifying and changing our used Water energy from the past. This is a big part of our growing and healing process. Hence, Water, through our instinctual intelligence, allows us to pay attention, to be careful, because the results of positive experiences from the past will not necessarily be repeated in the present, and mistakes from the past are not to be repeated. So, our Water intelligence, somehow, in a subconscious way, remembers all of our ancestral and personal life lessons.

2 - The power of Fire: Everything in existence has a purpose

- We are born for a reason. We all have a life purpose. The principle of purpose is led by the spirit of Fire that gives us our own spirit and a direction toward our future and our destiny. Fire gives us our heart and our capacity for love.

The light of our inner Fire guides us throughout our life and gives us intuition and enthusiasm for what we are supposed to do. Our inner Fire intelligence, our intuition, the voice of our spirit, guides us through our most important decisions in life and makes us choose our mate, our career, a place to live, our lifestyle, our social life, and our way of life. If, for some reason, we fall out of this way of life set up by our inner guide, our spirit gives us a sickness or an accident so we have to go through a healing process to get back on track. Our spirit is responsible for both admitting a disease in ourselves when we need a healing crisis to make us grow, and for curing it when the necessary changes happened.

3 - The power of Earth: Everything in existence is contained and shares a time and a space

- We are born to be part of this world. Our presence is needed here. The binding principle of the Earth force harmonizes our presence in the world with others and within ourselves. Earth gives us presence, solidity, consistency, balance, rhythm, a frequency, and our space and time in life. The Earth power gives us the present, the singularity at the center of space and time along with its ability to provide maintenance, sustenance and the support that is holding us in place in existence.

Our inner Earth holds our sense of self, our identity, our sense of belonging and our personal tastes. Earth makes us clever, practical and functional with the capacity to be at the right place,

at the right time, doing the right thing, for the right purpose, with the right people. For us to exist, the Earth power has to feed us from this universe, so we can be part of it. So, Earth power gives us our digestive system to sustain our body so our mind can manifest itself through our physical body in the physical world. The vitality in our physical body is what gives our mind its power but also its limitations.

4 - The power of Wood: The whole universe is in a state of constant expansion, so is human consciousness

- We are born to know and to learn more. The expanding principle of Wood makes us grow, produce, reproduce, and multiply. Wood gives us our mental capacity for always learning more and knowing better. Wood is the green power of youth, of ever expending knowledge, the power of creativity, better understanding, and clarity of perception. Wood intelligence gives us the ability for problem solving, obstacle surmounting, and the potential for perpetual prosperity, generosity and abundance. In Wood we find also our sex drive and our urge to reproduce and multiply that is fed by Water.

The Wood mental power can bring us beyond the limits of reality: Wood gives us the extraordinary capacity for imagination, fantasy and entertainment.

5 - The power of Metal: Everything in existence has a shape with boundaries and a surface contact clearly defined to differentiate it from the rest of the world and also to carry the light of life everywhere. The Metal Force manifests the shape, the character and singular beauty of everything alive and non-alive. Everything has a given space to breathe. That space to breathe, regardless of how subtle it can be, is the essence of the Metal force. Within that surface contact are the inner bridges that we make to establish a connection with all levels of consciousness. Metal conducts energy from the breath to every membrane in our body and makes us feel alive and well.

- We are born to feel alive, to enjoy it, to share the joy, and to participate in existence. Metal carries the Chi, the breath of creation. It induces life by providing breathing, the capacity to inhale the new and to exhale and eliminate the old. That movement of breath is the physical inner bridge that connects both the flow of consciousness and the life-giving force to all parts of a living body.

Metal provides the power of abstraction, sophistication and elegance with its accompanying spectrum of feelings and sentiments. Metal creates the soul that crystallizes the identity in every being. As we live, we refine and condense the emotional product of our life experience into our soul.

The essential principle of Metal constitutes the surface tension that gives shape to every part of the universe. It has the refining capacity of very precisely differentiating the world into parts and gives the whole universe its morphology. Metal is finely polished to reflect the light of Fire and spirit so we can see brightness and beauty in every part of the world. Metal is the power of reflection of the mirror, which depends on the shine of the metal behind the layer of glass, and the quality of the light that reflects the picture.

In a landscape, the power of Metal represents the surface tension between each two elements: ground, water and space. Between the wind and the waves, between the leaves of the tree and the sky. For that reason, in other cultures, and also because of breathing, Metal is often called Air or Ether. But even though associated with air, Air is not air, no more that Metal is scrap metal. Please stop confusing the element (chemistry) and the elemental force (alchemy). I believe that this confusion is at the origin of the spiritual dark age we fell into ever since the Renaissance.

These are the five principles of the dynamics of existence, bound together into five powers resulting into five life forces and five life intelligences. Let's now explore how these five principles translate into consciousness.

CHAPTER 3

Mind, Body, Soul and Spirit

The two axes of our mind

Our mind works on two different fields based on time and space.

1 - The temporal axis of our spirit:

There is the temporal field of the past, future and present with our instinct from the past, and intuition leading us to our future, both anchored into the present within our physical consciousness. This establishes our spirit that we share with others.

2 - The non-temporal axis of our soul:

This is the non-temporal mental space of thoughts and emotions. We accurately call it “spacing out” when caught up there. Its Yang manifesting aspect of thoughts can be so active and go so far that it can be completely disconnected from space and time, and from reality itself, in the realms of pure imagination. It is the realm of other potentials and possibilities. At the opposite of thoughts, the totality of its Yin emotional aspects lives inside the eternity of the here and now, in the depth of the unconscious and the subconscious, only letting surface to consciousness that which the coordinating down-to-earth, central, and functional physical intelligence judges appropriate for the present moment.

The soul, thus made of both our thinking and feeling powers, establishes what we recognize as being personal. Our character. Even though we might share our thoughts with many, we are responsible for the way we coordinate them into a personal belief system of opinions and paradigms, and, in terms of emotions, no one feels exactly the way we do. This establishes our personality and our identity as a person.

I believe that this differentiation into two different mental fields allows for a better integration of what we have called the collective unconscious, which is not so unconscious if we pay enough attention, and is not so collective because not shared exactly the same way with everyone.

In any case, such awareness of the differentiation of the mind into five intelligences, allows for the creation of a clearer mental space, better detailed mental perception, allowing each intelligence to be heard and respected for what they really are: Five different voices coming from five different origins, each of them needing to be heard, validated, and acknowledged; behavior and decisions taking place only from an integrated centered intelligence in agreement with the different factors that establish our personality according to the needs of the moment.

The Anatomy of Consciousness

What tissue in our body is holding our consciousness? Where is our soul? What holds our spirit?

In order to establish an anatomy of consciousness, we must deduce from Classical Chinese Medicine and Taoist bio-dynamic meditations that we exist at the informational and energy levels first; then, we manifest at the physical level. Meaning that the physical body is the infrastructure holding the person. Vital energy runs through the body through a meridian system that feeds all different tissues according to their respective power of origin, Water, Wood, Fire, Earth and Metal, each carrying its own intelligence. Furthermore, I believe that the endocrine functions present in the endocrine glands and in all tissues have a major role in carrying the information of each intelligence to our whole system, integrating them into one mind.

- **Instinct** = Water power: Genetic background, DNA, bone tissue, reproductive glands = **Carries ancestral memory, habits and what is familiar**
- **Intuition** = Fire power: Heart, endocrine system, hormones and blood, thymus = **Attracts toward life purpose and building an ever better future for the next generations**
- **Cleverness** = Earth power: Digestive system, flesh, pancreas = **Establishes personality and presence by doing the right thing at the right time, with the right people for the right purpose**
- **Thoughts** = Wood power: Brain, nervous system, liver = **Grows a belief system**
- **Feelings** = Metal: Lungs, diaphragm, mesentery, large intestine, skin, and fasciae = **Refines emotional maturity**

The integrity of a person is the resultant of the relationship between these different forces within their respective organs, which forge our personal body, soul and spirit.

Anatomy of the spirit

Our spirit manifests itself through the temporal axis of Water, Earth and Fire. Past, present, future. Water power carries the old and ancestral part of our spirit to the present while the Fire power attracts it toward our future. Our spirit is personalized in our body in the two physical manifestations of the Water-Fire axis.

- At the Water level our spirit is stored in our DNA and shapes our bones. At the Fire level our spirit manifests itself through our endocrine system, our heart, and our blood.
- At the Water level, communication and information can be found in the cellular DNA. DNA, here generically, is a term used for anything connected with a genetic, cultural, ethnic, historic and geographical background. It encompasses a much wider range of physical aspects than the human genome.
- At the Fire level communication and information can be found in the hormones and carried by the blood. Hormones are secreted not only by the main endocrine glands but also by all the endocrine functions found in every tissue in the body. Hormones are what the body uses to

know instantly what is going on in every body part, and for every body part to know what the whole person is about. Hormones can be understood as a very sophisticated and wide-ranging communication system much like the essential oils in plants that allows a wide range of inter-species communication. Every cell in the body is able to “smell” instantly what is going on in the matter of feelings, emotions, state of the body, mind and spirit.

Our spirit guides us toward procreating via sexual attraction, enhanced social communication, sharing genes and spirit. This is done by one of the fundamental functions of our spirit: to guide us and to communicate. Finding our life companion by sharing the spirit, sharing enthusiasm for certain things, sharing passions. This is being in love.

Anatomy of the soul

Our soul manifests itself through the non-temporal axis of Wood and Metal, of thoughts and emotions being solidly anchored inside our body while alive. Our soul ranges from our nervous system, which brings us awareness and consciousness along with our capacity to think and analyze, to our breath, which carries our specific psychological profile and establishes the inner bridges that bring the consciousness of emotions and physical sensations as well as physical awareness to every part of ourselves. We find in our soul the characterization of ourselves, our personality, our identity.

Our soul is manifested in everything that contributes to breath and movement, to the awareness of feelings, and to the processing of emotions into the making of the character and the level of maturity of a person. That includes our lungs, our diaphragm, our skin and the whole enteric nervous system involved in the distillation of feelings into emotions and their digestion in order to feed our soul. It is the ability to extract the quintessence of these feelings and to eliminate, or recycle the rest into independent particles of pure energy liberated from any negative emotional charge that might make emotional digestion difficult. This involves in a big part our intestines and mesentery, and especially our large intestine, the most enervated internal organ of our body after our brain. Our large intestine, as well as the enteric nervous system and the whole of the mesentery, are our organs of emotional life.

Anatomy of our personality: Where are we in our body?

Well, this depends upon which part of our mind, which intelligence, we focus our attention on at any moment in time. Unfortunately, mostly because of lack of practice and adequate education, our attention can be quite volatile and jump from one intelligence to the next without warning. Similarly to the quantity of blood in our body that can't allow us to run, digest and think at the same time, we don't have enough energy in our body to pay attention to all of our intelligences at any given moment. We have to choose and prioritize or we get poor results in any of these activities.

- When we don't pay much attention we easily fall back into old patterns of habits, our Water intelligence, connected to the depth of our ancestral genetic background. No reflection needed there. We walk, run and move exactly like our ancestors did before us. Then we react by

reflexes according to a system of habits that's older than we are, without thinking. We are then more into our bones and our adrenals and behave by instinct.

- When involved in doing things we like and being with people we care about, with passion, with love, doing nice things for ourselves and others we like, we are more inside our heart and blood and behave through our spirit.
- When taking care of every day's necessities, when present for oneself and others, we are more inside our Earth intelligence, inside our solar plexus, our stomach, and we function from a perspective of bringing comfort and satisfaction to oneself and others. Taking care of priorities. Only then are we fully present, at ease, and sure about what we do.
- When thinking, reflecting, analyzing, planning and inventing, we are more within our nervous system, our brain, and the parts of us that nourish such functions such as our liver (Chinese medicine). That makes us behave in a way that's so detached from the present that we often feel hesitant and awkward.
- When completely in touch with our emotions, we are more inside our breath, our lungs, our skin and deep inside our guts. Then our behavior is spontaneous but can easily be out of control, too fast for our thinking mind.

Where are our memories?

Because of our controlling Wood dominant consciousness, we have the tendency to associate memory to what we have learned and what we have to do. So, we have established as long term memory what is essential and what we learned to memorized, what is essential to know all the time such as our ID and phone number, date, time of the year, social situations, names of family members and close friends, etc. And short-term memory about what we just decided to do, where we parked our car, what we had for lunch, etc.

However, from the Taoist perspective, there is no such thing as forgetting. Nothing is ever forgotten. Everything is deeply and clearly imprinted into the tapestry of existence without any possibility of ever hiding or erasing anything. The real question is, how can we possibly forget anything? Somehow, we don't forget anything, we choose not to remember. A so-called loss of memory always comes from a definite strategy of our mind aimed either at saving energy for other tasks at hand or at choosing to protect the current mental state, either belief system or emotional stability, because of it not being the right time, the right place, or because of not enough energy, or not enough maturity. In the case of the young child, for example, it is important not to remember traumatic events as long as the child does not have the maturity, the energy and the support system for a healing process to take place.

In the case of the elderly, what is important is the healing process taking place at the emotional level, mostly subconscious, going over old events and preparing for the spiritual transition that approaching death requires. All this takes a tremendous amount of energy and leaves the short-term memory on the back burner. This is actually close to the loss of short-term memory of the young children who can't remember where they put their shoes while gone playing. Memory has nothing to do with the age of neurons. Young and old will have different needs of putting less energy and less attention into matters less important at any given moment.

“Memory loss” is often due to emotional blocks connected with how the person feels or is made to feel at the time. The kind of anxiety, when passing examination, that makes people not remember anything they just learned, for example, can be seen as symptomatic of the need to outgrow criticism and to affirm oneself as a person.

The different memories according to their corresponding alchemy

- **Water memory:** Memory of life, ancestral memories and memory of habits, of the traditional. Manifests through DNA and all aspects of genetic heritage. Spiritual access to ancestral lives, previous lives, all lives.
- **Metal memory:** Memories of sensations, smells, feelings, emotions - Manifests in the breath, in appearance, through shape and form. Memory of smell and touch. Spatial memory, spaces and boundaries, morphic resonances. They manifest through epithelial tissue, connective tissue, diaphragm, lungs and skin, and hold the memory of the psychological profile of the person.
- **Earth memory:** Physical memory, memories of the familiar, memory of taste, movement and rhythms. Manifests through muscle tissue. Central intelligence management. Responsible for choosing not to remember something in particular. Holds the memory of the self, of identity.
- **Wood memory:** Memory of the acquired, the learned, the understood. Manifests in the nerve organization through the brain. Holds the memory of the belief system of the person.
- **Fire memory:** Memory of communication and intimate relationship. Manifests through the endocrine system and hormones, Heart and blood. Memory of love, passion, spiritual access to collective consciousness.

What about our brain?

The brain, in our highly mechanized and materially oriented Western civilization, has been over rated to the point of being a synonym of the mind. However, our brain is no more and no less than any other parts of our body, no more and no less important than the rest of our physical body to keep us alive and to carry and manifest our mind. Our mind expresses itself, but not exclusively through our brain. Our brain, without our mind is just dead meat. As the main part of our central nervous system our brain is, of course, extremely important to manifest not only the Wood intelligence with its capacity for rational thinking, logic and clear consciousness, but also to establish the connections with feelings, emotions and the whole axis of our soul and spirit bodies. Our brain is the organ of choice for our ancestral spiritual axis to transmit instinctual intelligence with the justly named reptilian brain. Our brain establishes a wonderful switchboard for our mind. Furthermore, our brain connects to the whole chain of endocrine glands through the base of our hypothalamus with the pituitary and pineal glands. This chain of endocrine glands connects our personal spirit to our guiding spirits. It has been called Fountain of Life, Tree of Life in the Jewish tradition, Chain of Chakras in the Ayurvedic culture, Stem of the Sacred Pipe in Lakota and other American First Nations, Heart Controller in Traditional Chinese

Medicine, the Central Spiritual Channel in Taoist practices and The Seven Levels of Individuation of the Fountain of Life in my TaoTouch system.

Our brain is extremely resourceful in terms of being able to grow more synapses, and to adopt new circuitry. As our knowledge improves, our mind expands and our consciousness grows. During neurological healing processes our brain is able to let go completely of old connections and old neurons, and replace them with an updated operating system of new neurons and synapses. It is the organ that allows us to improve connections among all of our intelligences and, eventually, to expand our consciousness. So, yes, taking care of the health of our brain can allow us to expand our mind as we are able to make more synapses, to establish more and better nerve connections with all the other parts of our body, connections used by our whole mind to manifest itself into higher skills. However, our brain cannot grow on its own. It needs to be supported by a strong endocrine system - especially to be able to reverse the stress response by replacing excess adrenaline by more serotonin. So, even though our brain plays a major part in our cognitive abilities it is not the unique organ used to manifest our mind.

CHAPTER 4

The serotonin-adrenalin axis

Excess adrenalin is created when under stress and mental pressure for too long. When on adrenalin response, you can't walk, meditate or eat slowly as your body is flooded with stress hormones and functions on a fight or flight, or freeze mode. You have to hurry, no matter what, or you feel stuck. Things have to be done fast... You are always anxious about something, you are constantly either ahead of yourself, thinking of what to do next, or in the past, ruminating on your last misadventure, thinking while holding your breath. You are never present, never aware of the color of the sky, or, that there are such things like roses to be smelled around you. If you want to be healthy and live a long and happy life, this has to change.

Serotonin is created by order of your pineal gland, which is photo sensitive: when the light turns on and the sun rises your pineal gland awakens your consciousness and tells the rest of your body that you are alive, that this is a new day and you need to enjoy it. When on serotonin response, even though you might feel more awake and alert than ever, you are much calmer and are able to take your time, to walk slowly, to meditate, to eat slowly and taste the food, and appreciate life without needing constantly to remind yourself to do so. And, you are able to sleep on command!

The whole production of new serotonin in your body during the day turns into melatonin at night to make you sleep better. When you sleep deep at night and are able to put energy into dreamtime your pineal gland makes melatonin. Melatonin turns into serotonin during day time allowing you to be more awake, energized and vital. Dreaming is essential for your emotional health. For this you have to invest into your sleep time and go to bed not too late after sunset, way before 10pm in order to avoid being caught into the insomnia cycle that kicks in at 11pm.⁵

If you are in a healing or recovering process, especially if you want to recover from nerve and brain damage, brain surgery, Lyme disease, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Alzheimer's, Cerebral Palsy, there is no fixing the old system of damaged nerves any longer, only an upgrade can bring recovery. You need to go to bed according to the season, following the length of night, going to bed earlier and earlier toward Winter so you can sleep around the clock, up to 12 to 15 hours, during the time of the Winter solstice. Then, you'll be able to shorten your nights as you go toward Summer solstice, maybe down to 8 hours, but rarely less in order to have a satisfying recovering sleep. This is the only way for your nerves to heal. You use the plasticity of your brain to build a new set of synapses, and to upgrade the operating system of your whole nervous system from the old, inefficient, and damaged neurons.

Sleep and Sunning can do what no amounts of drug, herbs, and other treatments can.

⁵ The bio clock, Five Elements, Six Conditions - Illustrated central section

Getting started with physical training

First thing first: Chemistry

The most difficult part of meditation and Chi-Kung exercises is not so much the practices themselves because they all are very simple and not difficult to perform. What is difficult is to take the time to do them. Why is it so difficult for us, well-educated Westerners to sit down and meditate, or to do repetitive movements slowly and consciously without straining? Or even just to take some time to do some art work, play music, or dance? To take the time to cook, to attend daily to a small backyard vegetable or flower garden? Or just to take the time for a cup of tea and to listen to music, read a book or just have a nap?

It boils down to a very simple thing: chemistry.

If the ratio adrenalin-serotonin leans toward adrenalin, which is what happens more increasingly in our civilization, we can't even eat slowly. Everything we do, we have to do fast because we are already thinking about what we have to do next.

There is nothing wrong with adrenalin and about doing certain things fast. However, when you can't help but do everything fast that means only one thing: There is so much stress in your life and you are so tired as a result, that your organism does not have the energy to rest completely and deeply enough before you have to crank up your nervous system again. Your nervous system, then, stays cranked up and saves the energy it takes to go back and forth from a tensed up active response to a relaxed and recovery response. To go back and forth would require the firing of two different branches of the nervous system - sympathetic and parasympathetic – requiring a change in body's chemistry.

A sympathetic nervous response requires the acidic adrenalin production for faster nerve transmission, while the parasympathetic nervous response needs the more alkaline serotonin for a slower calming down, resting and recovering process. That means that the more tired we get, the more difficult it is to calm down and rest, the more difficult it becomes to sleep soundly and even to get any rest out of sleeping. This is the dangerous vicious cycle that brings us to insomnia, unrest, chronic anxiety, depression, and a propensity to get early symptoms of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's diseases and dementia as a result of the brain not being able to rebuild fast enough the neurons that are burned during an unrelenting stress response.

What to do???

There are two natural ways to produce serotonin and both are triggered by the pineal gland at the base of the hypothalamus of our brain. This tiny gland shaped like a pine cone is responsible for our well-being. It is photo-sensitive, meaning that the light and the appreciation of light makes it trigger the production of serotonin. It is the gland of enjoyment of life. It is the gland of awakening in a good mood. If you wake up with not enough serotonin, you will be most likely tired, upset to have to get up, with a list of chores and things to be done today. Excess adrenalin is already putting you ahead of yourself. However, with a healthy level of serotonin collected from the previous days and a good night of sleep, you will wake up thinking about how you are going to enjoy your coffee and what you are in a mood for in order to enjoy your day.

Two efficient ways to produce more serotonin:

1 – Sunning functional meditation

2 – Sleeping more: going to bed earlier and staying in bed longer.

The Sunning Functional Meditation is a must for everyone going through any kind of transition time, growing, healing, or both. It helps replace our usual stress related adrenaline response, that ends up weakening us, by the calming and healing serotonin response that makes us stable, stronger and healthier. Sunning awakens and uplifts the spirit. It is also quite impossible to function on serotonin mode and remain depressed. Some years ago, I used to prescribe the Sunning Functional Meditation only for insomniacs and depressed people. It helped them to get effortlessly and efficiently to sleep regularly and to become independent from their serotonin re-uptake inhibitor medications without the debilitating side-effects that come when you forget to take your daily dose. It was so successful that, since then, I have been prescribing this exercise to anyone going through their healing process, no matter what the main symptoms are, with amazing results.

Beside the benefits to the entire mind, the list of metabolic benefits is so long that I will just mention a few most important here.

The Sunning Biodynamic Meditation

- Unlocks and enhances serotonin production with its calming and healing process.
- Enhances the production of skin protectant and skin cancer fighting melanin
- Enhances the production of vitamin D
- Anchors calcium into our bones
- Promotes all functions of the whole endocrine system and balances up the productions of all hormones by the main endocrine glands and endocrine functions including pituitary, thyroid, thymus, pancreas, liver, adrenals, kidneys, ovaries, and testicles
- Enhances the production of the sleep hormone melatonin
- Inhibits the production of adrenalin, and other stress hormones
- Helps relieve anxiety and depression
- Inhibits the production of cortisol
- Reduces inflammatory conditions
- Inhibits the over-production of insulin for hypoglycemic people
- Allows for a better functioning of the insulin receptors for diabetic people
- Improves our nerve-endocrine relationship
- Enhances the production of pain-relieving endorphins
- And, most important, all the serotonin produced during day time turns into melatonin at night. Melatonin is the hormone of sleep. The more awake you are and the better your mood is during the day the better and deeper you'll sleep at night, to find yourself more awake, better rested and in a good mood in the morning.

Basic description of the Sunning practice⁶

- Closing your eyes and facing the sun slowly count to 200.
- Allow the warmth and the light to slowly penetrate your eyeballs through your closed eyelids.
- Mentally draw the light and the warmth along the optic nerves at the back of your eyeballs all the way to your brain and let the warmth and the light bathe your brain in a calming and soothing manner.
- Expand the feeling into the back of your brain and down your spinal cord to all the nerves in your body all the way to the surface of your skin.
- Feel your skin becoming translucent and absorbing the light directly from the sun.
- After three minutes open your eyes and look around. You should feel like you are wearing sunglasses and are not affected by glare.
- If the glare is still too bright, do an extra minute. But don't worry, you'll get better and better day after day. There is no failure possible.

What happened?

In order not to be affected by sun glare, your pupils have to shrink. To shrink your pupils, you have to be on the parasympathetic mode. To get down to the parasympathetic mode in three minutes you have to have had a raise of serotonin. This is how you can coerce your body into making more serotonin.

Recommendations:

1 - No melatonin supplement. Any hormonal intake confuses the body and interferes with the natural production and use of that hormone; meaning that the body will not produce the hormones when it feels invaded by it.

2 - Doing the Sunning at least three times daily to get the body into the habit of producing more serotonin and less adrenaline.

3 - Going to bed earlier and earlier as the serotonin production turns into melatonin production at night. 8 hours minimum recommended time of sleep during Summer and up to 12 hours and more during Winter. This might include daytime naps. In my opinion sleeping is the only way to recover from nerve damage. It is imperative to go to sleep not too late after sunset. There are laws in Chinese medicine based on the flow of the life force into the meridian system that explains the need for the body to be asleep between 11pm and 3am to rebuild our nervous system, to be asleep between 3am and 7am to process emotional charges through dreams, and to take naps in the afternoon between 3pm and 5pm to recover from exhaustion.

4 – Adopt the serotonin attitude. At the beginning you might feel tired or without energy. It is because, in fact, you will have less energy from adrenalin. So, you will be slower. This is good. Being driven by frenzy, especially when you get used to it, is not a healthy attitude. To lose that frenzy habit might feel awkward first, but soon, you will be able to appreciate your newly acquired solid presence and calm efficiency.

⁶ Different levels of the Sunning meditation audio recordings downloadable at: <https://www.chineitsang.com/audio-downloads>

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RECOMMENDED READING

Fritjof Capra: The Tao of Physics
Steven T. Chang: The Great Tao
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Gary Zukav: Dancing Wu Li Masters, An Overview of the New Physics