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# The Energetic Basis of Our Being

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As a psychologist who specialized in working with clients with severe trauma, it was only a matter of time until I encountered my first client with distinct different personalities. I could tell immediately which of the five different personalities were sitting before me. As the client switched, I could feel a subtle energetic wave move through the room signaling a new alter before me. Often, I pondered how it was possible that one personality could inhabit a body and then seconds later a totally different being was before me. Frequently the various personalities had dissimilar physiology with one personality wearing glasses and the other with perfect sight. In another instance one personality had a severe case of asthma whereas the others were free of all asthmatic symptoms. I could identify which alter was with me as each looked, sounded and acted different even though they were housed in the same body. It was as if a different energetic vibration ran through the body when a different personality emerged. Where did one personality or alter go when the other appeared, and how was it the physical body was so different from one alter to the next?

At the time I was pondering these questions, I felt a strong pull to return to Malaysian Borneo and the remote village where I had served as a Peace Corps volunteer. While visiting, each evening I went to the

house of the local shaman, called the Bomoh. One day he invited my friend and me to travel with him to attend to a man who was dying. The man lived in a distant village built entirely over water and no one knew what was wrong with him. We arrived by boat, then climbed a rickety ladder into a house built on stilts over the water. The house was made of uneven wooden boards with a thatched roof of dried grass. There was no furniture. Everyone sat on the floor on hand-woven mats. The man was bloated and distended with a green pallor. He looked to be in his 80s although he was just 39. I took one look at him and thought he might die at any moment. The Bomoh performed an elaborate ceremony.

First, he prepared a green paste that he smeared over the man's body. He then covered him with newspaper, then waved knives above him while saying prayers and incantations. After the ceremony, the man began to stir. By evening he was sitting up and was able to eat. I asked the Bomoh what had been wrong with him. He told me the man was a fisherman; his boat had capsized in the shark-infested waters of the South China Sea. In most instances, one would be eaten by a shark within a matter of moments. Fearing this, the man left his body anticipating his death, but he was rescued before he was attacked. The fear of being eaten alive was so strong that terror filled his energy body; thereby,



making it impossible for the man's soul to return. Thus, his body was dying without the major part of his soul essence inhabiting it. The Bomoh later told me that all illness — whether physical, emotional or spiritual — is caused by two things: the loss of part of one's core essence and the intrusion of other energies. In this case, the fear and terror of being eaten alive by a shark had almost completely filled the fisherman's energy body, leaving just a faint trace of his soul behind. The Bomoh removed the energy of terror from his energy body and returned the man's soul essence which had popped out of his energetic body through what we in the West understand as the process of dissociation. The Bomoh did a healing for the soul part before he returned it to the man. Chills spread throughout my body as I realized that at last I had answers to my questions. Before the end of my visit, the Bomoh was told by his guides to initiate me to the path of the shaman.

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We are energy. All matter, including our physical bodies are merely slowed down energy. Each of us has an energetic field that extends from the physical body, out to the tips of our fingers on outstretched arms, that swirls holographically within and around our physical body.<sup>3</sup> We also have a dreambody that attaches at the solar plexus, slightly above our

midline, and to the kidneys in the back. Within the dreambody the vibrations of every experience and memory from our present life through all of our previous lifetimes dance in and out of consciousness as they are triggered by our daily experiences. Housed within the dreambody is our soul essence, which enters the body at birth and leaves at the death of the body.<sup>4</sup> As I deepened my shamanic practice and study I became aware there were aspects of shamanism in each of the major theoretical schools of psychology and that each of these schools could be further illuminated by an understanding of the energy body and how it works.

Psychological theories such as psychodynamic and object relation theory deal with the inner or intrapsychic life of a person. These theories come very close to understanding the energetic exchange between people. They talk of introjects, which is the taking in of part of another into the deep recess of the psyche and conversely projections in which one places unprocessed aspects of our own psyche onto another. Novels and films are ripe with images of the wounded father that feels grossly inadequate and spews this inadequacy onto his sons by calling them stupid and worthless as he beats them senseless. These self-hating projections are taken in by the sons who painfully carry the mantle of self-loathing. The energy of the hate is absorbed into the energetic body and is anchored by the cognitive structures of the mind. The words, "You are stupid and worthless" become beliefs or thought forms that the child assumes to be true. This energy and the accompanying beliefs form the foundation of ancestral imprints. Often the message of worthlessness and self-loathing is passed from generation to generation.

A child may absorb into the energy body the dominant energetic imprint of the family by osmosis. If one or more of the parents are depressed, this depressed energy enters the field of the child hanging there like a damp blanket suffocating the natural joy of the child. The same process of absorption applies to anxiety, low self-esteem and the use of addictive



behaviors to soothe oneself. I was blessed to do my post-doc on an adolescent unit that had a strong family therapy approach. Each time I worked with an adolescent who had been sexually abused, I was stunned to find that the mother had been abused at the exact same age as her daughter. Sometimes the mother was unaware of her own abuse, bringing memories into consciousness of her early trauma through her daughter's revelation. Other times, the mother had shoved the memories into the recesses of her mind often blaming herself for what had happened or minimizing its impact on her, all the while energetically drawing into her life those who would harm her children as she had been harmed.<sup>5</sup>

Cognitive behavioral therapy teaches people how to ignore or manage unwanted negative beliefs. As a result of the energetic base of these thoughts, it is hard to let them go. If it were easy, we would all blithely ignore the notion we are stupid, the first time we got an A on a test proving we are not. One can be a straight A student and still feel stupid, or like a fraud, when the person who knows us best repeatedly proclaims we are stupid. I tend to view the cognitive structures of the mind as spikes that, like a tent, hold the energetic imprint in place. We cannot heal and release the energy that holds in our energetic field until the beliefs that anchor the energy are removed; conversely negative or hurtful beliefs cannot be fully transformed until the energy behind these beliefs is healed and transformed.

Systemic theories take into account the role family dynamics play in shaping who we are. In many families, there is a scapegoat who is the person

that holds all of the negative energy and beliefs for the family. Rarely is there a meeting to elect a person to carry this role, but through an unspoken energetic communication the person is subtly chosen. Shamanism views each person through a contextual lens that takes into account not only the family context, but also the community, cultural, spiritual beliefs and customs. In shamanism, everything is interconnected, including the natural world and the elements. Nothing stands alone. It is my belief a major cause of depression, anxiety and addiction in western cultures stems from a loss of awareness of our interconnection as we push towards greater individualism and self-sufficiency.

As I began to integrate my understanding of the energetic base of our being with my work with those who had suffered severe trauma, I came to realize the victim not only takes in the terrifying energy of the event, but also aspects of the person harming them. The violent negative energy of the perpetrator flows into the vacuum where part of the soul essence once had been before the process of dissociation left a vacuum. This explains why every person I worked with who had dissociative identity disorder had another personality or alter who was just like the person who harmed them. The energy, voice and a part of the essence of the abuser lived within, incessantly tormenting their victim, often driving them mad or causing them to appear to be psychotic. Sometimes the perpetrating alter re-enacts the core trauma through self-abuse or the actual abuse of another, in the same way the person was originally abused. This is a very important concept to grasp, as it can alter how we understand PTSD and

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the so called “acting out” or “destructive” behavior of survivors of trauma. It is my hope as well that we can begin to develop compassion and understanding for those who are perpetrators, as the vast majority of perpetrators were abused in the same manner that they are harming others. Through shamanic extraction and soul retrieval, these damaging energies can be healed and transformed and the part of the soul essence that left through the process of being traumatized can be healed and brought back, thereby returning the soul to wholeness.

One might ask, “How is it possible to heal traumatized parts of a person plus remove, heal and transform energies they carry, which are not their own?” Dating back at least 60,000 years, anthropologists have found a common thread throughout cultures in which the process of healing involves evoking the help of other beings who are not part of the physical world. Sometimes they are called power animals and spirit guides, other times saints or divine beings. By going into a trance state, similar to hypnosis, the healer can meet with her guides as she travels or journeys into the dreambody of her client and “sees” the root of the problem, what needs to be healed and what energies do not belong and need to be removed. The guides perform the healing by removing the unwanted energies and healing the traumatized parts.

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Our guides and power animals are actually energetic vibrations who embody the wisdom and power of the animals and spirit guides which are our allies. At

times these vibrations become so strong we can see the holographic outline of these beings. We live in an energetic world and are supported by energetic beings who are both with us while also traveling and existing in other dimensions. When I first delved into shamanic practice, I journeyed to my guides as a form of supervision with my psychotherapy clients. My guides had the uncanny ability to cut to the heart of the problem, illuminating the core issue and what needed to be done to facilitate healing. The results were amazingly effective. I then asked my guides if we could devise a way in which they could speak to me directly while in session. I heard no reply. After several attempts, the awareness arose that from the beginning of my psychotherapy practice, they had been guiding my work with clients. I then reflected on the many times that the right words emerged from my mouth without any cognitive awareness of what I was about to say. Those magical moments when a transformative shift occurred in the work was inspired by my guides. Pause for a moment and reflect on whether the same is also true for you.

Our feelings and emotions are also energetic vibrations that live within and around us. We speak often about the ego and psyche, yet scientists have not defined a place or organ in the physical body or brain where the psychological concepts of ego and psyche reside. My guides have explained they are energetic vibrations in our energy body that are holographic in nature, weaving in and out of the physical and energetic bodies. Different memories recede to the outer edge of awareness, yet can be triggered by an event, smell, touch, tone and words that may first bring an energetic rush to the body, sometimes followed by what is called a body memory as the pain or pleasure of the memory is brought to conscious awareness and may also be experienced physically. These vibrations at the outer edge of the dreambody are like what psychologists call unconscious process. The strong, somewhat coherent, conscious process that is often called the ego or psyche are actually vibrational frequencies at the center of the dreambody. As most are aware, we often struggle with differing thoughts and feelings that are in conflict and grapple to discern our true heart. The



various vibrations from our previous lifetimes, the energies that we carry from our ancestors, the impact of our cultural, ethnic and spiritual identity and our day-to-day experience create our cognitive reality. As we shed the energetic vibrations that belong to others and do not serve our true heart, we come to understand who we truly are. €



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