

Consider that the organization of the human body is designed for our growth as personalities and as spirit. Consider that body sites (one's organs and structures such as the jaw) are actually doorways to accessing and changing the set of rules (the do's and don'ts) which determine the parameters of your choices in life. Also consider that there exists a map which can serve you as a starting point for exploration, discovery, and verification, a map which can be added to as you walk the terrain of your many levels of consciousness.

Fourteen years ago I met Lansing Gresham, the founder of Integrated Awareness®, in John Upledger's Advanced CranioSacral training. Up to that point in my self-directed continuing education I had dedicated myself to learning the many dimensions of osteopathic manual therapy, a process which continues today. As I began attending Lansing's Integrated Awareness workshops in California over the next few years, I became increasingly intrigued with elements of the healing process which had been missing in my other trainings.

The notion of consciousness as the crucial component of healing was not new to me, yet the articulation of the five levels of perception which comprise the range of our wholeness as humans had never before been so simply and clearly described.

What was truly novel to my experience at that time was the ease with which subtle movements during guided floor exercises revealed the labyrinth of my mind's set of rules for my life; rules which previously had eluded me and those which I had been endeavoring to update and change via many forms of therapy for over 25 years.

Additionally, I was drawn to the exquisiteness of energetic touch I experienced and witnessed. I really wanted to learn more of this.

Touch conveys the meaning of life. It is through touch that we all assign our personal stamp on the meaning of life and upon our sense of worth as children. This made absolute sense to me and had been the reason I had moved away from verbal forms of processing toward a body-based orientation, both personally and professionally.

Here, in the context of Integrated Awareness I had found some of the missing elements of healing - ways to expand one's perceptual net, exploring movement patterns in ways which invite different behaviors, feeling states, and thought patterns, and learning qualities of energetic touch which access across the spectrum of spirit, genetics, tissue, fluids, organs, and bone.

Over the ensuing years, Lansing continued to make rather astonishing connections between emotional and spiritual themes, relating body sites to accessing and reconciling feelings of shame, abandonment, and betrayal, to name but a few. He also queried more existential questions relating to whether one has really made the committed choice to be here on earth at all. I used to think this was exclusively a California phenomenon. It is not.

For example, the knees resonate with one's experiences of abandonment, both our experiences of being abandoned and those in which we abandoned others. The spleen resonates with experiences we anchored related to our mothers, deep feelings of disappointment and, to our sense of connectedness or not, to divinity.

Lansing also began teaching the interrelatedness of the body's biomechanics in movement, for example, how the toes reflect and support the functioning of the lumbar vertebrae; and how the fingers correspond to the movements, or lack of movement, of the ribs. These and many many other relationships have been significant contributions to my ability to assist clients who come to my office.

A recent example was a female client with a shoulder problem which rather miraculously disappeared in response to work with her same-sided hand and fingers. Ironically, she reported that not only did her shoulder now function with more ease and strength, she had also experienced an increase in her sensual responsiveness. Could the corresponding mobilization of her ribs not only have freed blood and nerve supply to the shoulder but also have opened the space for her heart to have expanded?

The skills, knowledge, and readiness for change which emerges from experiencing Integrated Awareness® are for all of humanity, not just for us as professional touchers. They are potentially the means through which we may see options where none existed before, allowing us to transform our life experiences in families, in our communities and, I pray, in the whole of our world. We are designed to evolve through our experience of embodiment. As six billion on this planet, we are certainly driving the bus of our collective evolution and present-time survival.

What has been needed is an alphabet and basic comprehension of how psyche and soma truly dance together in oneness. The ancients have told us the answers are all inside. It is my opinion that some day we will look back on this pioneering style of touch and movement exploration with the same degree of appreciation as we view the Periodic Table of Elements and the awe we currently hold for the current research into decoding the human genome.