



CHAPTER 3

Naturopathy's Gift of the Mind-Body Connection

Pythagoras said that the most divine art was that of healing. And if the healing art is most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body; for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly.

—Apollonius of Tyanna

PEOPLE HAVE CALLED naturopathic doctors, “Jacks of all trades, masters of none.” Other professions specializing in their own treatment modality, such as chiropractors, herbalists, or homeopaths, have criticized naturopathy because of this eclecticism. Yet having access to the knowledge of so many different medicines, philosophies, and scientific knowledge, naturopathic medicine has a special ability to unify these different theories and philosophies with science, to demonstrate the connection of the mind and body in healing. By providing the bridges that show how they all relate and interconnect, we have the potential to explain and demonstrate how disharmonies in the mind and emotions result in disease in the body.

Keeping with the essence of the previous chapter, this unification and explication of whole person medicine might not yet be accepted into current scientific theory. This doesn't indicate that we are incapable of understanding based on our current knowledge of healing and science. It just means that it hasn't yet been accepted. In the future, there might be technology to demonstrate all of the philosophy in this chapter. Before then, we can help make it acceptable by trusting in it ourselves and then by sharing it with the public with clear examples and good analogies. The naturopath and healer, having trust in the

treatment modalities that the profession offers, doesn't require absolute proof of the common vein that runs through many of our healing modalities and philosophies. It is at our fingertips to personally experience and understand by intuitive and empirical confirmation. We have a model to remind us that there is a connection between the mind and the body. We have a model that can help uncover many of the mysteries of holistic medicine. And then we can further carry out our role in society as "Doctor as Teacher" by providing this model to our copatients to help them understand their own healing processes.

Let us take a look at the gift that naturopathic medicine has in providing the whole picture in whole person medicine. We will dip into the wells of knowledge of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese medicine, hands on healing, homeopathy, chiropractic, counseling and psychotherapy, physiology and anatomy, and other medicines and scientific knowledge.

The Three Treasures in Chinese Medicine states that the Mind (Shen) governs the Energy (Qi) which governs the Blood (Jing). Blood is the Three Treasure's equivalent to the body. By "governs," it means that the mind can control the flow of the Qi, through the acupuncture meridians, which controls the flow of the blood in the body. When the Qi stops flowing, the blood stops flowing. Once that has occurred, disease begins to manifest in the physical body.

There are two questions to address now—

HOW does the mind control the Qi?

WHY does the mind control the Qi?

First, let's look at HOW. For this, we can examine the relationship between the mind and the chakras, and how the chakras have their influence on the acupuncture meridians and Qi.

There are seven chakras situated on the body. The term "chakra" is a Sanskrit word meaning "wheel." Some people have the ability to see the chakras, the acupuncture meridians, and even the levels of

the energy field surrounding the body, called the aura. Barbara Brennan is a gifted healer who has an amazing ability to see the different levels of the auric field and the chakras. In her books, *Hands of Light* and *Light Emerging*, she describes in remarkable detail the chakras and the different levels of the human energy field. She describes the chakras as funnels of energy that draw in and absorb the universal life energy that we have called Qi (Chinese), Ki (Japanese), Prana (Sanskrit), and Orgone (a term by Wilhelm Reich). I have seen the chakras appear as funnels as well. The Qi/life energy that the chakras provide us from the Universe nourishes our systems with the energy we need to live and be healthy. The Qi that is drawn in through the chakras then passes into the acupuncture meridians, just as lakes and oceans provide the source of water for rivers and streams. These wheels/chakras exist at a high vibrational frequency, so we are generally unable to detect them with the naked eye unless we have developed our high sensory perception or we are able to see high frequencies with the third eye—the chakra situated on the forehead between our eyes. Today, very sensitive low-light cameras and Kirlian photography are able to capture on film the chakras and some of the levels of the auric field.

The seven chakras can be categorized by pairs of front and rear chakras, which have a Yin and Yang relationship with each other. The front chakras are Yin in nature; female, because they are the feeling chakras and they are afferent, meaning that they receive the energy from the Universe and we can only allow their flow to occur, we cannot control it. The rear chakras are Yang in nature; male, because they are the will chakras and are efferent in nature. Through the rear chakras we can control the flow of our energy with our will.

In Chinese medicine, it is said that the Yin organs create the precious and vital fluids and essences of our bodies and the Yang organs store the precious energies or carry them out to fulfill their functions in the body. The same is true of the chakras. The Yin chakras provide all the nourishment of our body by receiving the

universal life energy. The Yang chakras function to bring forth that energy we receive through the Yin chakras to nourish the body. The balance of Yin and Yang in this relationship is vital for the health of the human being. The energy that the chakras provide through the acupuncture meridians nourishes the various nerve plexuses, organs and tissues of the body in the region of that chakra. The blood follows the flow of Qi. When the Qi flows, the blood is invigorated and brings health to the region of the body it supplies. This happens as naturally as the flow of a stream down a mountain. It requires very little input from our own will. In fact, as we will see, it is when we try too hard to control, that our energetic systems become dis-eased.

The powerful flow of life-force that comes with the involuntary divine creative principle cannot be commanded by the ego. Another way to say this is that the goodness within you flows of its own accord; it reaches out in wisdom, love, and caring of its own accord. It does not flow on the command of the ego. The only thing the ego can do is stop it from flowing or get out of its way.

— Barbara Ann Brennan, *Light Emerging*, p. 265

There are four levels of reality in the human being. In naturopathic medicine, we describe these as the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical realms. The upper three levels are solely energetic in nature. Even the physical body is made up of energy that we perceive as something solid and dense because of its slow vibrational frequency. It is made up of molecular structures and cells that are the building blocks that give the human being, and all physical matter, form. The subatomic particles that make up these building blocks of matter are also energetic in nature. It is on the physical realm that the Blood, from the Three Treasures, flows.

As the vibrational frequencies of the energy and matter that make up the human being increase, the result is more difficult to perceive with our eyes, as we discussed with the chakras.

The chakras and the meridians where the Qi flows make up the next realm, higher in vibrational frequency than the physical realm. This emotional realm does not simply contain our emotions, but is also the level of reality in the human being that contains the chakras and the acupuncture meridians. Our emotions are also called our feelings because the emotional realm contains the feeling chakras, which give rise to what we perceive as our feelings. In the Three Treasures, this is the level of Qi. Since the Qi is on a higher level than the physical body (Blood), it governs and influences the body.

The next level, higher in energetic frequency, is the mind; the mental realm. It is difficult to see this level, even with high sensory perception. It is also called "the level of intention" by Barbara Brennan. Our mind is responsible for the intentions that we think, speak, and carry out in action. The mind's intention is the same as our will. We carry out this will in the emotional realm through the rear chakras and in the physical realm through our efferent nervous system, which controls our muscles.

Here is HOW the mind controls the flow of Qi. Since the rear chakras are the will centers, they are governed by the intention of the mind. What we intend, therefore, influences the flow of the chakras. Through the will chakras, we have the ability to control the flow of the feeling chakras. The will chakras can act as a brake to stop or slow the flow in the receptive, nourishing feeling chakras. We do this all the time with our emotions, or our feelings, by blocking the feelings that we do not like to experience. This prevents the proper energizing in those areas of the body nourished by the chakras.

Here we enter the world of counseling and psychotherapy to explain WHY the mind controls the Qi, which will provide us a great link in the picture of whole person medicine.

Quite simply, this has everything to do with our beliefs about reality. Our beliefs about reality are called “belief systems.” Belief systems are concepts and ideas that we have about reality that we hold on to, sometimes cling on to, because we believe we must. In homeopathy, we call these belief systems “delusions.” They are delusions because we believe something about reality that is not necessarily true or accurate, even though to us it has the appearance of truth.

It is not that we *have* beliefs that it makes us sick. If people believe that love is a powerful healing energy, this does not limit them or cause disharmony in their systems. It is when they NEED to believe certain things and have attachments to their ideas that they become sick. Rigidly holding on to fixed belief systems creates disease. Rigidity is the antithesis of life.

We hold on to these beliefs/delusions because we feel they fulfill some ultimate function in our lives, like helping us deal with the pain of life, the loss of love, to justify a harsh reality or to protect us from our fears. A child who learns that he/she needs to become obsequious to gain approval and affection (experienced as love) from his/her parents, will grow up believing that being obsequious earns love. In fact, it will be difficult for the child not to be obsequious in relationships, because the two go hand in hand. People who have been put down in their lives because they didn't conform with the norm, might hold on to the belief that it is not safe to be themselves to avoid the pain of rejection.

Whatever their belief system, human beings feel they must maintain what they have adopted as truth or else they feel their reality is being threatened. It gives us a sense of security to see that what we believe to be true is confirmed in reality. When someone's belief system is challenged, he/she reacts as if something bad has happened. His/her reality is being challenged or threatened. If you grow up believing that people shouldn't show their bellies in public, you will be triggered to feel that something bad is happening when you witness someone's belly being exposed publicly. If you believe that