

Energy Flows Where Your Attention Goes

Energy Healing: An Ancient Science in Modern Times to Enhance OT Practice

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Energy healing is a gentle yet powerful healing approach that can easily be integrated into occupational therapy practice to enhance an individual's life on many levels. Energy healing is being used more in hospitals, clinics, and private practice as it can help with health, wellness prevention, recovery from illness, and decrease length of stay.

What is Energy Healing?

First, it is important to understand what energy is and the human energy system. A simple way to understand energy is how we tend to talk about it in everyday language. For example, someone might say, "the room had a lot of energy," "my energy is down," or "she seemed really up." We may also notice how much energy we have by how we feel inside our bodies and if we're feeling "full of energy", lethargic, "spent," or just so-so. Where we spend our time and who we're with can affect our energy. We may notice that being in a particular environment such as nature "restores our energy reserves." Being with a particular person or group can leave us feeling drained or "lift our spirits or energy."

Take a moment and feel yourself in your physical body. Take a few breaths and notice where in your body you feel the most alive, calm, centered or peaceful. This is where your energy is flowing the most. Where do you feel tight, constricted, in pain, or discomfort? This is where your energy is restricted.

Energy also known as qi (chi), pronounced "chee", is the vital force in and around our bodies that gives and maintains life. Some may refer to it as our spirit, soul, or universal life energy. Some say it is what is carried in the breath that keeps us in this world; also known as prana. When it is flowing properly we feel at our best. When it is constricted, limited or blocked we may not feel that we're operating as well. Our energy can impact us in all areas of our life. Energy is a virtual blueprint and foundation of our being; the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

Our energy can become depleted, blocked, or even excessive due to many factors: family lineage/DNA, what we eat, our thoughts, emotions, belief patterns, the environment, relationships to ourselves/others, our higher power, and our activity level in relationship to our rest. How we are feeling can be directly related to our emotions that, in addition to biochemistry, carry their own form of energy. Our energy can be impacted if we're feeling sad, happy, angry, or fearful.

Energy healing has been used in all cultures for many years. In some cultures it has its root in healing temples known as "laying on of hands" where the person receives divine life force channeled through the energy healer. In traditional Chinese medicine part of the energy system can be seen in an acupuncture chart. This is a map of the main energy channels or meridians that circulate energy to all of the internal organs and all aspects of a person. The larger energy centers are known as chakras, which means "spinning wheel of light" in Sanskrit. There are seven main chakras along the spine, and one on each palm of the hands and the soles of the

feet. The aura or energy field is energy around your body. The energy can be too open, closed, or aligned and functioning harmoniously.

Energy Healing Benefits

Energy healing is the art and science of bringing energy into balance to live the fullest life. It gets to the root of what may be causing symptoms, disease, or dis-harmony within and in relation to all aspects of a person's life. It can help heal illness, prevent illness, or stay well. It gets to the core of who we are.

It can lower physical and emotional pain, and induce the relaxation response which has many researched benefits including healing all the way to the genetic level and how genes express by turning off disease-enhancing genes and turning on health-promoting genes. The relaxation response has been shown to have a variety of health enhancing qualities including lower blood pressure, improved respiration, and boosting of the immune system.

Energy healing can be easily practiced anywhere as there are no special tools required, only an open, loving, and compassionate heart of the practitioner. It can enhance the mind and mental health as the recipient often experiences the subtle shifts of their energy which creates a sense of calm, relaxation, and sense of well-being.

It can enhance the functioning of the physical body as the shifts in energy are the foundation for the physical body. A person still may need physical movement or exercises, or even surgery at times, but the energy healing can help heal what is at the core of the imbalance in the first place.

The connection to spirituality, higher power, God, or higher self will often be enhanced through energy healing as it conjures up a connection to something that is not easily seen or understood with our rational, logical, and linear minds. An increased sense of connection to spirituality and a higher power has been shown to enhance health outcomes.

Energy Healing Styles

There are many styles of energy healing. All of them help return the energy back to balance. Some forms use touch and some use non-touch. Qigong, Reiki, healing touch, and therapeutic touch use no touch or very light pressure on the body to return the flow of energy in and around the body of the recipient. The energy healer practitioner will use their hands and intuition to assess where the energy is flowing, blocked, or stagnant. They may move their hands above and around the recipient's body to remove unwanted energy, bring in, and align the energy system.

Acupressure, craniosacral therapy, and reflexology are also forms of energy healing that may stimulate or sedate the energy system through gentle touch and pressure. Yoga can help open and balance the energy system and acupuncture uses needles to remove restrictions for health and wellness. Guided imagery, somato-emotional release, emotional freedom technique (EFT) Hakomi, and body talk combine psychology, emotions, and thoughts with energy healing principles to transform limiting thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and emotions, and open to positive outcomes.

If you have never experienced an energy healing session, give it a try. You might open a doorway that may truly transform areas in your life in unique and wonderful ways. Having an energy healing session can be very calming and insightful. All energy healers have a unique style. We are trained to use all of our senses to assess your energy and restore it to balance.

An OT's Energy Healing Story

When I first heard of it I thought it was not real. After studying, practicing, receiving it, and looking at research for over 15 years -- I know it's real. I often begin my sessions with an energy assessment. This informs where the energy is flowing or is restricted in a person's being. This gives me direction on what best tools, techniques, and guidance I can provide my client for the optimum healing results.

I was trained in Medical qigong. My teacher trained with qigong masters in China and brought this knowledge to the U.S. QiGong means energy movement. I learned how to feel with my hands, intuition, and all my senses where the energy was flowing or constricted in and around the body and how to assist the energy to flow more easily. I learned to assess the meridians of acupuncture, the aura, and the chakras. I learned self-healing meditations that I often teach to my clients and students in classes.

I like to see and feel where it is flowing well and what areas need more connecting. I often see images or hear words or messages that give me and the individual insight in to what areas need to be addressed. The energy will be encouraged to restore to a harmonious balance. Restoring these areas are foundational to all areas of your life. I often use a combination of on and off-body techniques along with guided imagery, meditations, and EFT as energy can express itself as emotions in the body and can be held in the body.

Over many years of providing energy healing in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, private practice, and classes, I am convinced of its ability to be an effective assessment tool for understanding the core of what is flowing and harmonious for an individual and what areas need assistance, and for assisting with restoring health. Assessing with energy healing allows a practitioner to get to the core of what may be limiting someone that may not be so readily evident or knowable with health history, interviews, or other assessments.

It is also a great tool, because you can train your clients to connect with their own vital life force through energy practices and meditations. They can be empowered and improve their sense of control by learning simple daily practices that can assist them for a life time. Some of these approaches involve gentle movements such as t'ai chi, qigong, or yoga. Some of these practices are simple breathing techniques, and some of them are using Imagery to direct and guide their own energy in and around them. Learning about your energy system directly links you to your intuition which can guide you in all aspects of your life. It can also strengthen one's spirituality and connection to their God or Higher power, if so desired.

You can also learn to share basic energy healing techniques that can be taught to caregivers who often feel helpless with how to help their loved one feel better. I have taught chakra connection, heaven-earth connection, and aura cleansing technique to caregivers. This helped the caregiver feel like they had tools to help their loved one, and the person receiving the care felt their love, care, and energy flow. They often reported feeling more calm, less anxious, more

relaxed, and less physical pain. Many of the caregivers easily sensed the energy and the recipients reported being able to feel the energy moving in and around them.

Energy Healing Resources

If you would like to learn more about Energy Healing you can read a book, visit websites, listen to Energy meditations, take a class, and of course, receive a session. Here are a few resources for you:

Books: "Light Emerging: The Journey of Personal Healing" by Barbara Ann Brennan. "Staying Healthy with the Seasons" by Elson M. Haas, MD. "Touch for Health: A Practical Guide to Natural Health with Acupressure Touch" by John Thie, DC and Matthew Thie, MEd. "The Therapeutic Touch: How to Use Your Hands to Help or Heal" by Dolores Krieger, PhD, RN. "Acupressure's Potent Points: A Guide to Self-Care for Common Ailments" by Michael Reed Gach.

Organizations and Research: Healing Touch International is a nursing organization with Energy Healing courses taught all over the world (<http://www.healingtouchinternational.org>). The National Qigong Association is QiGong community dedicated to helping everyone live a full, productive and enjoyable life for as long as possible (<http://nqa.org>).

Free Meditations: Assess, balance, and ground your energy with the Small Universe Meditation and Chakra Meditation. Do not listen to while driving a car. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/EmmyVadnais>).

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