

ט"ס



הן והסד

Refuas HaNefesh - Refuas Haguf

Traditional 5 Element Acupuncture

Classical Homeopathy

Integrative Bodywork

Trauma Recovery

When asked by my patients “Yaakov, what are you doing, how does this work.”? I sometimes half-jokingly answer “Do you want to hear the Pshat (simple answer), Remez (implied), Drash (deeper) or Sod(hidden)”? This is not to imply any connection to Judaism or the Torah; L’havdil, just referring to the different levels of understanding that are possible for those who are interested in the various, yet complementary methods that I use.

Acupuncture

Pshat: There are 12 main channels of energy in the body through which our life-force flows; each associated with an internal organ. These channels can be accessed by 365 different points. Acupuncture needles can open up blockages and imbalances in these meridians and restore optimal flow.

Remez: Different points have been shown to affect our physiology in specific ways. Certain points can be used to treat medical conditions such balancing hormones, calming anxiety, improving digestion, and stopping acute attacks of asthma. Other points are used to treat the general constitution from the viewpoint of Chinese medicine. Some examples are releasing heat, strengthening and smoothing the flow of energy, resolving dampness, expelling wind and tonifying the blood.

Drash: Man is viewed as a microcosm of the natural world; he reflects the interrelationship of the 5 elements as in Nature. An elemental imbalance within a person is often the root source of disease and can be corrected by acupuncture.*

Sod: To the ancient Chinese the primary role of the physician was to prevent diseases and to assist the patient to fulfill his heavenly proscribed destiny here on earth. Many acupuncture points relate to specific stages in psychological and spiritual development and their use at the appropriate time can be extraordinarily effective in facilitating personal growth.*

*These levels are usually only reached by practitioners of 5 element acupuncture

Homeopathy

Pshat: Like cures like. Since ancient times, many medicinal substances have been known to cure by mimicking or exaggerating symptoms rather than suppressing or opposing them. Dr. Hahnemann, the founder of modern homeopathy proved this on himself. By taking quinine; a medicine still used today to treat malaria, he experienced the chills, the fever, and other symptoms of the disease. To this day all homeopathy medicines are proven on healthy subjects to determine which physical and emotional symptoms they are most likely to cure.

Remez: Less is more. In Hahnemann's time, doctors were giving patients large doses of toxic substances such as sulfur, arsenic and mercury. He found that giving smaller doses were just as effective (in the cases where the medicine was coincidentally homeopathic for the disease). He then began diluting the substances to the point that there was little or none left and to his surprise found that they were even more effective.

Drash: He discovered that by vigorously shaking the medicine after each dilution the potency of it was increased tremendously, resulting in quicker and longer lasting cures. He also discovered that with this method he could release the healing potentials of substances such as salt, gold or sand; that until then had no known medicinal use.

Sod: Homeopathic physicians have noticed how disease tendencies and even emotional and behavioral patterns can be passed from generation to generation. I believe

that there is an “Energetic Blueprint” that is complimentary to, and maybe even primary to the genetic blueprint found in our DNA. What is left in a homeopathic remedy after many dilutions is the “energy” of that substance. Homeopathy is “energetic medicine” that has the unique ability to affect our energetic blueprint, even changing patterns that were inherited. Its ability to effectively cure many serious conditions has been well documented.

Trager Psychophysical Integration

Pshat: Gentle rocking motions guided by soft, non-intrusive gentle hands can be deeply and profoundly relaxing.

Remez: We learn by experiencing our bodies in movement. Many other forms of bodywork and relaxation techniques can be effective means of reducing tension. However, the rhythmic motion of Trager work influences more areas of the brain. Through the complex feedback loops of our sensory-motor system the image of moving more freely is reinforced in both our conscious and unconscious minds. The effects are long lasting and can be further reinforced by a clients active recall and self-care movements.

Drash: We are how we move. Dr. Trager taught that every physical restriction has a concomitant restriction in the unconscious mind. The intention of each gentle touch and guided movement of the Trager practitioner is to reach that place in the unconscious mind.

Sod: The benefits of Trager are not just the release of physical pain and restriction. The experience of moving freely can also have a profound impact on our outlook on life. Trager is not only an antidote to the constant feelings of struggle that fill most of our lives; but is a contradiction to the underlying beliefs that perpetuate that struggle. We do not always have to be in control. Our endeavors do not always have to be filled with the struggle to be productive. Growth does not always necessitate pain. There is way of being that is lighter, that is freer. With Trager we can learn that way.

Cranio-sacral Therapy

Pshat: In an adult skull, the 22 different bones that make up our cranium seem to be solidly fused together. However, a closer look reveals that there is a possibility of movement along these joints, known as sutures. This movement is designed to accommodate an increase in pressure of our cerebrospinal fluid. Although this expansion is very subtle, it can be felt by a practitioner of CST.

Remez: Cerebrospinal fluid surrounds and nourishes the brain and spinal cord and is maintained within the meningeal membranes. Unknown to most conventional physicians, the pressure of CST rises and falls at a rate between 6–14 times per minute. We call this rhythm the cranio-sacral rhythm.

Drash: Restrictions in the sutures and in the meningeal membranes can impede the flow of cerebrospinal fluid. This can affect our general vitality and interfere with the optimal functioning of our brain and nervous system. It can even have profound effects on our physiology and behavior, as was demonstrated in the experiments of Dr. William Sutherland, the founder of Cranial Osteopathy. Cranio-sacral therapists can detect and correct these restrictions.

Sod: Tension, suppressed emotions, trauma and even forgotten memories can be stored in these membranes and in other tissues in the body. Cranio-sacral therapists can gently unwind these tensions; facilitating profound relaxation, emotional openness, and trauma resolution. These principles can also be used to release the trauma that often accompanies birth; thus ensuring a healthier and happier childhood.

Visceral Manipulation

Pshat: All our internal organs are surrounded by connective tissue and are supported by ligaments. These ligaments connect each organ to its neighboring organs and to the musculoskeletal system.

Remez: Tension and restriction in these ligaments reduces the mobility of an organ. Effective breathing, digestion, and other physiological functions depend on the mobility of each organ. Due to the ligamentous connection to the musculoskeletal system these restrictions are often the cause of many painful conditions.. Dr. J.P. Barral, the developer of Visceral Manipulation, estimates that up to 75% of lower back pain can be attributed to dysfunction of the pelvic organs.

Drash: Each internal organ has its own motility (inherent motion). This motility has a rhythm of approximately 2 times per minute and seems to recapitulate the embryonic development of that organ. In most organs this can be felt as a tide like motion towards and away from the body's midline.

Sod: The motility of each organ can be used to gauge its inherent vitality. Visceral Manipulation can be used to prevent serious disease and sometimes alleviate existing conditions. Like Chinese medicine it can also be used to release and integrate suppressed emotions that have been stored in those organs.

Yoga

Pshat: Yoga postures are energizing, relaxing and balancing.

Remez: Standard exercises, sports, aerobics etc. usually strengthen only the larger, more superficial muscles of the body. They often accentuate existing postural and structural imbalances. Yoga strengthens all the muscles and organs of the body. It relaxes and stretches muscles that are too tight and tones up those that are too lax and underused.

Drash: It has been used to alleviate a wide range of conditions, including asthma, digestive disorders, scoliosis and osteoporosis. When used properly it can also be extremely useful in calming anxiety.

Sod: Yoga can increase our concentration, stamina, and the ability to go past our limitations. Consistent yoga practice develops greater self-confidence and is conducive to greater success in all areas of our lives.

Zero Balancing

Pshat: We have both a physical and energetic body. Most types of alternative medicine work with one or the other. For example, chiropractic and massage work primarily with the physical body, and acupuncture and homeopathy work primarily with the energy body. Zero Balancing works with both. More specifically, Zero Balancing works with the interconnection between our physical and our energetic bodies, facilitating the flow of energy through our skeletal structure. Zero Balancing can be very effective in many cases where the physical injury has healed but there is still chronic pain or dysfunction.

Remez: In Zero Balancing the energy body is contacted by “taking the slack” out of the physical body. Blocks to the flow of energy can be palpated and are usually located within joints that allow for little voluntary motion, i.e. the sacroiliac, the large bones of the foot, the joints between vertebrae and between each vertebra and its adjacent ribs. Freeing these blocks using gentle pressure and traction creates in the client a “clearer and stronger energetic field”; one that is more resilient to physical and emotional stress.

Drash: The techniques used by a Zero Balancing practitioner allows the client to feel deeply touched; while at the same time maintaining a clear sense of energetic boundaries. This facilitates for the client an experience of feeling deeply connected to his or herself.

Sod: Working with the energy that flows through our skeletal structure, the seemingly simple manipulations of the Zero Balancing practitioner can contact a person on a profound level. As reflected in the Hebrew language, “atzamot (bones), atzma’ut (independence), etzem (essence)” the bones are reflection of our deepest sense

of self. Zero Balancing can be very effective in working with issues of self-esteem and grounding. It can help us feel more connected to ourselves, facilitate having clearer energetic boundaries in our relationships and to clear out the toxic effects of shame. It can be a deeply relaxing experience that helps us connect to the still, quiet place beyond the emotional waves of our daily experiences.

Network

Pshat: When the nervous system is in the “fight or flight mode” our bodies naturally assume a more defensive posture. This usually includes muscular contraction, tension in the dural membranes, spinal misalignment and other postural imbalances. It can also include a sense of “disconnection” to parts of the spine relating to feelings that are emotionally unsafe. Network practitioners can palpate these imbalances and use gentle touch to bring them to the awareness of the higher brain.

Remez: The fight or flight response is located in the lower brain centers, the safety response is located in the higher brain centers. Through the quality of their touch and use of special “gateways” to the parasympathetic nervous system, Network practitioners elicit a safety response that facilitates our natural tendency for more flow and openness.

Drash: Repeatedly bringing the client to a position of safety allows for deeper layers of feeling unsafe to surface and be resolved.

Sod: Repeatedly coming to a place of safety reinforces our ability to bring peace into our lives. This feeling then begins to replace the many physical symptoms and difficulties that bring people into treatment. Negativity is then replaced by our natural feelings of love, joy, gratitude and an enhanced ability to express these feelings to others.

Trauma Resolution

Pshat: Our nervous system has two basic modes of functioning. At rest it's called the parasympathetic, and when we need to go into action (fight or flight) it's called the sympathetic. Each has its own set of physiological correlates. The sympathetic nervous system is characterized by high levels of adrenaline, increased heart and breathing rate, slower digestion, high blood pressure, and increased muscular tension. Parasympathetic is like being in neutral.

Remez: When we are in a situation that is physically or emotionally threatening (even an imaginary one) our sympathetic nervous system becomes engaged. Optimally, which is the case in most of the animal kingdom, after the danger has passed the system quickly returns to neutral. Trauma is an event that is so overwhelming or happens so frequently that our ability to return to neutral is severely compromised.

Drash: For many reasons, people living in modern industrial societies have become severely limited in their ability to recover from trauma. Many of our most common ailments, such as high blood pressure, anxiety, digestive difficulties, immune system disorders, muscular tension, sleep disorders, and "burnout" are simply the result of an overactive sympathetic nervous system.

Sod: The effects of unresolved trauma, including birth trauma, can have a profound and far reaching impact on our lives. It severely affects our physical health, productivity, and our ability to be in fulfilling relationships. Many of us unknowingly suffer the effects of trauma. This is because it often happens at an early age, or was so overwhelming that the memory was suppressed, or because our dysfunctional family seemed normal to us. The on and off switch of the autonomic nervous system is located in the lower centers of the brain, so that verbal and cognitive based therapies often have little effect on what is essentially a very deep physiological as well as psychological process. However there are many therapies

that can help us safely release trauma and restore our nervous system to a more normal and neutral functioning, including all of those mentioned above.

“Alternative” Pediatric Care

Pshat: Stress and trauma can be the cause of many of the most common pediatric difficulties. These include colic, ear and throat infections, sleeping and eating issues, ADD, and other behavioral and learning difficulties.

Remez: Just like adults, young infants store stress and tension in their bodies. Even before birth they are already sensitive to stress in their emotional environment. The tension surrounding a normal hospital birth can be traumatic. All the more so if there are medical procedures, vaccinations or any other additional stressful situations.

Drash: Crying, when not because of hunger or other physical stress, is the baby's way of relieving stress. Constantly giving a breast or bottle even when they are not hungry deprives them of this outlet.

Sod: My approach to pediatric care is first and foremost just love them. I want to make the experience seem as different as possible from a regular doctor's office. To help them feel as comfortable as possible, I ask for the parents help in setting boundaries only when absolutely necessary. The treatment of choice is usually Cranio-sacral therapy and/or classical homeopathy.

Healthier Eating

Pshat: Anyone can feel better by reducing the amount of non-nutritious junk food from their diet – packaged foods, sweets and cakes, processed meats, carbonated drinks, alcohol and coffee.

Remez: Most people will notice a big difference if they eliminate wheat and dairy and, of course, any other foods that they suspect they may be allergic to.

Drash: Different blood types do best on different diets. For example, type Os thrive on a high protein diet, while type A's can healthily do so on a balanced vegetarian diet.

Sod: Chinese medicine and other eastern approaches classify foods mainly according to their energetic properties rather than their nutritional attributes. Using this wisdom we can adjust our diet to be in balance with the seasons, our locality, our physical needs and the ups and downs of our emotional life. We can develop the sensitivity to give ourselves just what our body and soul need with every meal, truly eating l'shem shamayim.

In summary, with whatever method I am using I strive to treat the whole person; to understand the interrelationship between mind, body and spirit. I try to find the root of the problem and not just treat the symptoms. I have learned to trust the inherent healing potential within each of us so my goal is to use the minimum intervention that is needed. Our attitudes and lifestyle can influence the healing process so I like to remind my patients that there are three partners in real healing; the patient, the doctor and Hakodesh Boruch Hu.



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