



## **GUIDED SELF HEALING: A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS BASED MODEL OF PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE HEALING AND EVOLUTION**

*Andrew H. Hahn, Psy.D. with Linda K. Crawford, L.I.C.S.W.*

In psychology there are four standard models of understanding and doing clinical work. Broadly put, we can call the first one cognitive/behavioral, focusing on material level symptoms, the second one, psychodynamic, focusing on internal conflict, the third one, existential, focusing on qualities of being, and the fourth one, systemic, focusing on how each of us is a conscious cell in the consciousness of some larger field and ultimately, of life itself. While these four models are analogous to the four levels of working that we describe as literal/material, symbolic/soul, metaphysical/spiritual and the archetypal/collective, in my view none of them takes all four levels into account. In order to do this, we have to build a psychospiritual model based on consciousness and our experience of consciousness in our energetic field/body. This model becomes inclusive in that we can focus on the transformation of surface symptoms, the meaning underneath these symptoms, how the symptoms and the meaning relate to our most fundamental yearnings as human beings and how we, as conscious cells in the consciousness of life itself, help life evolve through us.

To illustrate this, let's explore the case of a woman who came to therapy because she was having panic attacks at the idea of a blood draw which was part of a necessary medical exam so she could graduate from a graduate program of ministry. If we were to work on the literal level, we might do some kind of therapeutic intervention to desensitize her to the procedure or to clear her symptom energetically. Cognitive/behavioral therapy or hypnosis are common forms of such desensitization processes and EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) or TFT (Thought Field Therapy) are examples of energetic field interventions used to shift the trauma symptom presentation.

If we were to work on the symbolic level, the meaning of the symptom would become fundamentally important. For example, we might ask what blood means to her particularly considering her personal relationship to Christ. We might ask what it means to her to go to a male doctor with whatever authority issues this evokes, or we might explore what the significance of penetration means to her. By exploring all of these, we might become aware that her fear of having her blood drawn symbolically recapitulates a terrible history of sexual abuse in this lifetime of which she had been consciously unaware. We might further become aware that even this history of sexual abuse and her new calling to the ministry are linked to a powerful narrative in which she was a spiritual leader who had abused power herself.

If we were to work on the metaphysical level, we would have to explore the deepest yearnings of her soul and what she felt most called to do in this lifetime. We might discover her calling to be with people in their deepest pain and her commitment to be with her own deepest pain no matter where this might lead her. If we were to work on the archetypal level, we would have to explore how this woman is an exemplar of a myriad of facets of feminine evolution.

None of these levels is intrinsically any better than any other and all of them are necessary in doing a complete piece of therapeutic work with this woman. It is important that we have tools that can balance this woman's trauma shock. It is also important that we understand the meaning of her symptoms. It is equally important that we can witness her heart's desire and mission, that which quickens her soul. Lastly, it is important that we understand that we can broaden our perspective far beyond the personal. Consciousness, with its implications of choice and the capacity and willingness to place our attention intentionally where ever it is most useful in the service and stewarding of transformation, is an inclusive model that can incorporate the other four.

Guided Self Healing (GSH) is such a consciousness model. It is a psychospiritual, mind/body, energetic framework for doing healing and transformational work. What does this mean? It is psychospiritual in that the psyche is about soul, and soul comes through in deep universal narratives that are archetypal in nature. By archetypal we mean they are deep structures and our surface stories really are our own idiosyncratic representations of much deeper stories which inform our life and give it a sense of larger meaning and purpose. It is spiritual in the sense that we come to recognize that we are connected to much larger systems and ultimately that we are all one consciousness. We could say that it is this one consciousness that is the healing and transmuting element.

People talk about mind/body connections. In my experience there is no such thing as a mind/body connection because two things that are exactly the same cannot be connected. They are one. To put it differently, who we are fundamentally is a mind/body field. The consequence of this, as Carolyn Myss and many others have said, is that our biology is our biography and our biography is our biology. It is within the mind/body field that we can find the deepest truths.

The simplest way to access the mind/body field is through sensation. Most of us experience these sensations in our body. When we are traumatized, the sensations reveal themselves as some kind of discomfort - pain, emptiness, queasiness, heaviness etc. When we are in expanded states, they reveal themselves in a heightened body awareness that we might call flow - a quickening of the heart, an expanded experience of the mind, a lightness in the body. For many of us, these "sensations" are not strictly limited to the physical body; they may be experienced through the larger electromagnetic body, the mental body, the intuitive body and the spiritual body as lower or heightened vibration.

GSH is an energetic framework in that it suggests that if I identify myself as Andy, while this is valid, we may also say that this is incomplete. Perhaps a more complete experience of the consciousness of self would be to say that everything is fields, centers, and flows of energy. As fields, we are holographic and morphogenic. (See for example the various works of Bohm, Sheldrake and Talbot). Holographically, each part of us is held by the whole and the whole is held totally within each part. Morphically, we are parts of much greater fields and have access to all of the wisdom and understanding within these fields as they have access to all of our understanding and wisdom.

Centers, whether we discuss them in terms of the seven chakras or the three centers of mind, heart and belly, connect and bond different aspects of being focusing on relationship. Flow is the movement that happens within fields and centers and speaks to the element of communication in

the in-between. When we are balanced, our fields are integrated, our relationships have clarity and we are in the flow.

For our purposes, recognizing that we are fields, centers and flows of energy, we can now begin to describe what happens in trauma structures. Trauma does one or more of three things. It can fracture the field leading to the paradoxical experience of being here while simultaneously not being all here. It can cloud the centers leading to a blurring of relationship or it can block the flow leading to a phenomenon that is likened to a river that gets blocked and polluted, leading to a deadening or stagnation of energy. Any or all of these eventually manifest in symptoms, be they physical, emotional, mental, relational or spiritual. Thus, as healers what we fundamentally do is reintegrate the fields, align and clarify the centers, and unblock the flows.

What further distinguishes GSH is its emphasis on core understanding in contrast to approaches that focus on symptoms. This core understanding particularly derives from exploring universal archetypal stories that are often out of our awareness. On ego levels, these stories can govern our actions and/or manifest in symptoms that we find self-defeating and/or counterproductive. On soul levels, when we recognize that everything serves life, these stories can open us to the possibility of initiation and evolution. GSH is also different from many therapies in that it sees people as being fundamentally oriented toward meaning-making and pattern recognition, and acknowledges that because of this, coming to know our stories and having them acknowledged is critical to our growth and initiation into new stages of development. In GSH, this is particularly powerful because the client finds the story within himself; he is not dependent on the “expert” guide.

There are four Gems that give a beginning overview of GSH.

**GEM NUMBER ONE –*The body never lies. Always focus on the experience in the body.***

Just as there are three personal levels of working, literal/material, symbolic/soul and metaphysical/spiritual, so too are there three equivalent levels of wisdom, the wisdom of the conscious mind, the wisdom of the unconscious mind and the wisdom/energy that animates our body, which is also our deepest intuitive knowing. There is a fourth level of knowing which is the equivalent of consciousness or infinite levels of knowing. This level can also be called true enlightenment. If we arbitrarily assign a value of one to the conscious levels of knowing, we might say the third level of knowing could have the value of the speed of light squared. In my experience, everyone talks about this third level of knowing in the same way: as a full, body-based knowing. They describe it as a felt sense, “I just knew it was the truth. It wasn’t like I had to figure it out. It wasn’t like I had an emotion about it. I could just sense it.” Such a sense of knowing is something we might stake our lives on.

The interesting thing is, since this is a body based knowing, we can ask our bodies to be a means of communication for this knowing. This is the foundation of what we call kinesiology/muscle testing (MT). We can ask our body questions by testing a muscle and our bodies will give answers that, in my experience, lead us in the direction of evolutionary growth.

A second way to access the wisdom of the body, which is perhaps even more elegant, is that we can always become aware of, bring our attention to and talk with our body sensations. If we have a willingness to listen actively and receptively, these sensations can be our greatest guides.

The beauty of GSH is that we can start with the body sensations themselves or find sensations of which we not have been aware by using inducting statements. By inducting statements we mean asking the client to state in one sentence the central theme which exemplifies the core experience of the archetypal story. For example, the pattern called Wounded Holy One uses the inducting statement, "I have betrayed a sacred trust." These inducting statements help us discover our unique and idiosyncratic variations of universal archetypal experiences. Whichever way we begin, our ultimate intention is to induct ourselves into the awareness of a meaningful body sensation and be receptive to its story and experiences.

**GEN NUMBER TWO - *Everything is part of the process.***

The second gem of GSH is that once the session begins, everything that happens becomes enfolded into the session, even those statements or beliefs that the client is sure are simply content level statements about the here and now. To give but one obvious example, suppose the client says in the course of doing some imaginal or regression work, "I can't see anything." What the client may believe he means is that he is unable to do this process because no images are coming to him. It is much more likely that his content level reaction is in reality a process level comment, i.e. the client is in a story where he can't see anything. If this is in fact the case, we can gain movement by saying, "You're in a memory. What do you suppose is keeping you from seeing anything?" I continually encounter examples of this, and it is the realization that these content level statements are a part of the narrative itself that each time powerfully moves the process forward. ***This is a crucial point in the decision making of the flow of any session.*** If practitioners move to exploring the "problem" or to the metaphoric or to self-doubt and miss the opening, the session will veer off track. Staying in the concrete literal will always bring us home.

**GEM NUMBER THREE - *Matrices of experience can shift simultaneously.***

Most of the energetic systems target one symptom or disturbance at a time. With GSH, it is easily possible not only to diagnose multi-dimensionally but to balance entire trans-dimensional matrices by working on deep structures at root cause. We often note far-reaching and non-linearly apparent consequences following GSH sessions. By opening to the deep structure and transforming these deep structures, many surface structures transform which on a more material level may have seemed to have little or nothing to do with each other.

To illustrate this, when I was doing a talk/demonstration in front of over 100 people, I selected a woman who came up and while starting to shake told us that she had a terrible fear of being in front of crowds. She also told us that she had ongoing mild depression and feelings of helplessness. She described it as being weighed down, unable to move and feeling hopeless. Muscle testing revealed, however, that none of these were her true Highest Priority Intention (HPI). Moreover, we discovered that we were unable to work directly on any of these because there was an intention that was more important and foundational to the other intentions and that she did not have a name for this intention.

Our multi-dimensional diagnostic revealed that her true HPI was a Deathwish. We invited her to say the inducting statement for the Deathwish Pattern, “A part of me wants to die.” As she said this, she reported having a severe pain in her neck (which she later informed us had been chronically unresponsive to other treatment). Focusing her consciousness on the neck pain, she started to wrench her neck as though she were trying to get away from something. She reported that she was looking up, unblindfolded and saw a guillotine coming down at her. She felt weighed down, unable to move, hopeless and helpless. Typically many therapists are trained to interpret these kinds of statement at a symbolic level and not listen to them as concrete, literal body memories. (*See Gem 2*). She described being in front of a crowd of people who were all jeering her in the most humiliating ways.

As we transformed this particular Deathwish Pattern that focused around a guillotine beheading in front of a jeering crowd, she relaxed and began talking to the audience about what her experience had been. Who would have guessed that her fear of being in front of crowds, her helplessness, her impending sense of betrayal and doom in relationship, which she hadn't even mentioned to us at the beginning, and her chronic neck pain, were surface structures which were enfolded into one archetypal narrative. It is at times amazing, but clear, that by transforming the story of an unfinished death, within moments she was standing in front of the whole crowd with no anxiety, a sense of lightness that she hadn't remembered ever feeling, an ability to move her neck for the first time easily and a new sense of hope for the possibility of relationship. Complex matrices of experience often transform simultaneously leading to unforeseen positive consequences.

**GEM NUMBER FOUR -*The client often knows what intervention they need to clear the blocked energy.***

Always ask first if the client knows what they need. In our experience, frequently, they do know, and if they didn't know that they knew, then realizing that they did is a great gift. Moreover, if it turns out that they in fact did not know, this too can be extremely freeing because they no longer have to blame themselves for not being able to resolve the difficulty. In some cases, clients have matched such interventions as sacred dance that they didn't even know they knew, going to their car to scream or singing a song to clear an energy block. We also always have the option of standard energetic interventions matched with MT from our intervention list. In a field of high energetic frequency, often conscious awareness of the story while focusing consciousness in the body sensation is a sufficient intervention.

**CASE EXAMPLE**

A full case example can help illustrate a GSH approach to a common clinical problem. Last year, a colleague referred his son for evaluation before he made an appointment for a medication evaluation. The family was well versed in multi-generational clinical depression and approached the young man's symptoms from an open, if somewhat resigned, position. Four generations of family members had exhibited the standard clinical signs of depression and two of Nate's siblings were already medicated, so his symptoms looked all too familiar to him and his family. What follows is a single, completed session.

Nate is a well-built, soft-spoken man of 19. He came for a session because he had been experiencing a moderate depression in freshman year of college. Generally optimistic, he had been feeling little sense of hope, crabby, and very flat. He had been eating less and, instead of being his usual happy go lucky self, he had been waking with a lack of joy. This was the second straight year he had had these symptoms. In his senior year of high school, he had had a slightly milder version of these symptoms that had lasted for 2½ months. He was not able to find any precipitant for either depression and assumed that they were strictly biological because there had been a history of depression on both sides of his family.

MT revealed that Nate's HPI was a blocked identity (Identity Pattern in the material realms). I was therefore able to tell him that what he called his depression was in fact a choice he had made at an earlier time. While this was the best choice he could have made at the time, it was now limiting him tremendously. Nate understood my words, yet could not relate it to his own life. MT revealed that the pattern originated in this lifetime and paralleled some aspect of his relationship with his father. He knew that there had been very difficult times with his father when Nate was very young, yet he could not consciously see the connection between his current depression and the earlier relationship.

I invited Nate to experience the depression in his body and he immediately felt the contraction in his stomach. A scene came to him that he had had memories of before. This time it came with many more details and much more feeling. He saw himself as a very young boy in his basement with his father. He was very excited about a toy and went with great exuberance to his father to share that excitement. He vividly recalled his father walking out of the room and his chasing after his father. He could see with great detail walking onto the gravel driveway and his father getting into the family truck and driving off leaving him standing there alone.

MT revealed that we did not have to dialogue with this identity about the history of its relationship with Nate, how it served/limited Nate etc. It affirmed that we could continue with the process. I invited Nate to use his imagination to place the image of that scene across the room. Then I invited him to make a different choice about his depression.

"You chose to bring it in; it was the best choice you could have made at the time. While it served to protect you, it was a fear-based protection that has limited you a lot and has generalized to similar situations. You can now make a different choice if you so desire. Just use your consciousness to externalize the cramping in your stomach. Since you chose to bring it in, you can choose to bring it outside of yourself." Nate could easily do this even though it seemed "weird." I then invited him to tell me what he could imagine outside himself. "Tightly wound oatmeal." I said to him, "You are a pure channel of Source energy. Channel this Source energy through you and into the oatmeal until it is totally infused with it, and then send back that loving protection to the much younger you like a gift from a much older, wiser, brother. That much younger you needs protection. He only knew about a fear-based protection. You can choose to change that protection to one based in love."

Nate did this and reported that the younger him seemed much happier. He himself said that he felt much lighter and more spacious. I invited Nate to go into the lighter more spacious feeling and find the much truer him that had been obscured and was hiding under what had been the tightly wound oatmeal. As he did this, he said, "I see a beautiful blue light that looks like the Aurora

Borealis with an intense flowing white energy. I invited him to put his hand lovingly on his body where that energy had been hiding and let it come out and touch his hand and expand forward and back, up and down and left and right so that he was that energy. I told him that the energy got to retain its childlike wonder and grow up very fast.

Nate said gleefully, "I am the light." He started smiling and bubbling he said, "I haven't just felt like smiling in weeks," and he gave me a playful hug. He then said, "I know why I got depressed this year. My father didn't come to my play. I said it was no big deal, but now I know it is. I did the same choice here, I deadened myself without knowing it." Yes," I said, and what about last year?" Nate, said, "It makes no sense. He came last year." MT revealed that it wasn't about his father. Then he brightened, "I know. I never made this connection. I gave my girlfriend what I thought was a very special gift and instead of receiving it, she was so preoccupied with herself, she just complained and walked out of the room. I must have made the same choice again." With that he exclaimed, "God, I'm really hungry. I haven't felt this hungry in weeks."

A few minutes later, with a big smile on his face, he went off to get a big breakfast. I have seen Nate periodically since this session. He reports that he went back to being his optimistic, happy-go-lucky self and he hasn't felt anything like the depression since.

## **CONCLUSION**

My experience with Nate is not unusual. In fact, I feel deep gratitude and appreciation because I participate in such sessions daily. I know this from my experience; I would invite you, while being skeptical, also to be curious. GSH can often shift in a simple session what other forms of therapy can not so effectively treat. It is also true that GSH is often used as an exploratory and healing process overtime.

Using the multidimensional framework that is GSH, we can transmute:

- 1) the limiting beliefs that cause us our greatest anxiety,
- 2) our deepest fears of experiencing our feelings, and
- 3) overly rigid or permeable boundaries.

We can transform stories that affect all of our centers - stories that include betrayal of trust, traumatic death, unmet longing, curses, and others far too numerous to mention here. Finally, we can realize that we can make different choices and rediscover and experience our essential and truest selves.

When we complete we find something interesting. It's not so much that our stories change, it is that our capacity for awareness grows and as it does our relationship to our stories change. It is as though we are seeing the world through a distorted pair of glasses and then we take them off we perceive the world in a new way-with more clarity and this makes all the difference at the end of every session we ask a series of questions to make sure the work is complete and to allow the client to bring it into the world. As people experience more sessions, they begin to be able to become more attuned and easily grounded in body awareness. They also become generally less reactive and learn to recognize patterns in larger systems.

While it is often over-applied, we truly are in the beginning phases of a full paradigm shift in the clinical field. If it is experience that changes paradigms, GSH is highly experiential work held in a solid, theoretical diagnostic and treatment framework. As more practitioners are trained and begin to work in this way, we will begin to formulate and integrate more broadly our understanding not only of symptom formation but of consciousness itself.

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