

The Approach and Treatment of States of Fear within the Oriental Methods of the Four “Shins” as applied with Shiatsu Diagnosis and “Ki”.

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REVIEWED

By ALAN NASH at 0:41 am, Feb 28, 2008

The four classical methods of diagnosis:-

Observation	-	Bo Shin
Interview	-	Mon Shin
Listening & Smelling	-	Bun Shin
Touching	-	Setsu Shin

I have found these classical approaches to be understood and applied at several levels. Depending on experience and applications of therapists, these levels may range from simple text book understandings to more intimate levels in the apprehension of patterns of “Ki” directly linked to awareness. A big word which will be discussed further in this article.

Since fear can encompass a large number of known symptom definitions (e.g. claustrophobia), it is necessary to be able to penetrate to more fundamental levels of fear in people which are often masked or rerouted to symptoms which mask the underlying causes or patterns.

It would not always be an obvious approach such as looking for a disharmony in Kidney-Ki or a deficiency of Heart-Yin and treating these symptoms with classical points, although these points may well contribute to reducing the severity of symptoms.

In this way, a not always simple interview (Mon Shin) followed by Diagnosis (“Hara” or “tongue”) and application of Shiatsu (Setsu Shin) would not necessarily reveal the underlying psychological and/or emotional causes of fear.

Bo-Shin looks further then the words or answers, but looks through a person with a yin attitude of internal silence which puts the therapist in a state to discriminate within the deeper feelings of a client.

Mon Shin has a special place in the world of Shiatsu. It is the way we respond with communication, recognition and insight in our verbal en expressive communication with a client.

Bun Shin listens deeply to the undertones and intonations of the voice and where it comes from in the body in response to certain questions and during easy conversation. A therapist can get a very good picture which will give an enormous amount of information.

Of course Setsu Shin touches, literally the heaviest organ of the human body: the skin, which is

deeper than most of us think.

With the accurate feelings, coming from these combined techniques, our abilities take on an almost magical quality which expands and inspires us and the resulting movement of “Ki” has many almost miraculous effects.

It is very difficult to access these underlying causes and place them in an easily accepted structure of analysis which is normally recommended by texts in various books.

Here, I am talking about fears which display behavioural or attitudinal changes which disrupt the “normal” lives of everyday people. These are the kind of disruptions for which Tibetan psychiatry is often recommended. Fortunately, the Tibetans do not hold a monopoly over their methods of approach, thus, with study, work and experience, we are able, in the West, to develop our prowess to achieve the penetration we need to change or reconstitute healthy “Ki” patterns for people with fear afflictions which cannot easily be expressed.

The Oxford dictionary of English defines fear as follows:

- Fear:
1. panic or distress caused by a sense of impending danger, pain, etc.
 2. a state of alarm.
 3. dread or awe (as in a fear of heights).
 4. anxiety.
 5. foresee or expect with unease or regret.
 6. being afraid of something terrible or awful.

A typical everyday example falls regularly within family situations where children develop unresolved feelings of responsibility and guilt when their parents are not content. Here is also the time to mention the multitude of trauma or sickness related fears involving childhood sickness, quarantined hospital wards and invasive treatment or surgery which can not only cause ferocious nightmares but can also stigmatize a child during early development, especially in the way they relate to their peers, or worse, how their peers relate to them. Consistently pushing the “threat” or “derision” and the “you are different” buttons during early development is like allowing a virus of the mind to infect a child or youth without giving the child the required antivirus. Developing long term situations of emotional intensity like this are devastating for the child or children. This kind of situation is at a level of misinterpreted feeling, which, having nothing to do with language or cultural background is universal. In principal, such situations invite solutions which are also independent of culture and history just as an aspirin reduces pain regardless of who is suffering from it. For the reader, it is obvious that such a simple solution does not work using only the term

“fear”. We have to consider indeed the business at hand which is the “state” of fear that we are dealing with, including our own.

Shiatsu, like everything else worth while, becomes more credible as a practitioner increases his or her learning, experience and, very importantly, depth of perception. This is not an easy subject to explain and a swift look around the world of people will show that the use of fear is very well known in culturally acceptable situations and is even admired in terms of risk filled and competitive events.

The first questions to be considered are as follows:

1. Is fear causing someone discomfort?
2. Is the fear tangible? For example fear of violence in the neighborhood?
3. Is the fear intangible? For example fear of something unknown?
4. Is the fear something exciting that is also a chosen risk?
5. Is it actually fear?
6. Is the fear of losing a sense of identity?
7. Is the fear actually a fright as in a surprise?
8. Is the fear related to impressions gathered in childhood or early youth?
9. Is the fear treatable using Shiatsu and how should it be treated?

I am quite sure, dear reader, that you can add quite a few more questions.

Typically, fear is something that we can define or something that we cannot define. In either case we feel fear but in the case of undefined fear, we have a feeling of helplessness in the sense that there is nothing we can fight or grasp and therefore we rest our hope in some kind of faith. After all, something that has not happened yet but is predictable according to our perceptions and intuition is still a state of fear.

Or is it a state of excitement? We all have glands in the brain and in the back which will respond to certain stimuli whether we like it or not and a lot of conscious training is needed to transform the direction that these body chemicals induce. We have to have this stimulus-response system in order to survive and we love to be able to tell the story afterwards even though our heart rates are still above normal and our alertness is at a high level.

One of the problems of writing a piece like this is that being in a relaxed state does not allow the writer to feel the stimuli to relate to fear. One can do better to recapitulate situations which have caused the stimulus response pattern in order to write about it.

So to write this requires that same system to be active in some way and after some self-reflective work, it is possible to transform the relaxed state into a more alert one – in this case it is having a deadline to meet and to focus on the consequences of not meeting it – and believing in all the unpleasant feeling that will follow. This situation is a well known laziness killer for me.

Perhaps the best way to approach this subject is personally and with common sense. According to my experience, the vast proportion of people with fear will try to dismiss it, make it unrecognizable to them selves and consciously or unconsciously convert it into something else. A simple example would be alcohol or drug abuse. Many people who are not able to live or “survive” this fear will be found in psychiatric institutions also as outpatients. Still more will quell their anxiety states by using the general practitioner to provide the necessary pharmaceutical medicines.

I think that Shiatsu therapists would probably be aware of this in their different countries and cultures.

This does not mean that Shiatsu cannot help those people; it simply means that they have not yet been exposed to its possibilities. The Shiatsu therapist or student can already do much to change the mood generated by the kidneys or adrenal glands by placing a warm and steady hand full of ki (chi) firmly and keeping it there with stillness on the “hara” (in this case below the navel) with restful focus and patience. Anyone who is a parent would know this without ever having heard of Shiatsu.

The therapists and teachers attending this congress have all known various states of fear and anxiety personally or they would not be able to relate to their students and clients.

They know that there are several grades and depths of this kind of discomfort and suffering. They know that their own state of being and mood is of paramount importance in helping people with fear and within the depths of their own recognitions are able to ask the precise strategic and tactical questions in order to establish a link to their client. Words without this recognition would be transparent to most clients with fear because the heightened alertness of people with fear would make them more aware of people who cannot relate to them representing an energetic imbalance which more than resembles our well known understandings of “kyo” and “jitsu” (relative emptiness or fullness respectively), and, of course Yin and Yang. Have we not all heard a client say “I feel much better” while the client cannot explain exactly how or why this feeling has changed? Is it not so that we then fill in the blanks with a sympathetic and friendly smile as we explain in simple graspable oriental terms how the system works on their condition or state? Have we not seen the beautifully childlike wonder on the face of an adult as they relate to these new concepts which are suddenly clear and logical to them? What do most people know about Kidney point number 6, Conception Vessel 17, 6 or 5 or the beneficial effects of points on

the sacrum which balance the nervous system?

People with fear who cannot keep still or are in a state of panic may require less likely approaches in the beginning such as a cup of calming tea and a sympathetic ear. While we are listening, such a client gives us the time to acquire and assess information unlocking the door which will allow us to approach with the right words or questions of understanding and many times turns a session into a relationship of mutual understanding as perceived by the client.

This is the wonder of the disciplined therapist whose touch is genuinely “setsu shin”. This is also the reason why exposure to Shiatsu is the only way for any health care institute or doctor to understand what Shiatsu is. Statistical results, even world wide, may be acknowledged and awake interest or even belief, but these conceptions will never be anywhere near to the wonder of the real experience, certainly in the realm of populations who are bombarded by marketing, media and political experts. Personally, I make it my business to show very genuine respect in my attitude toward the courage of a new client who has arrived in my practice to dare to undergo a therapy which they have only heard about through other people. It is indeed like stepping off the known world in the hope that finally, someone will be able to understand and relieve their discomfort by even a small but recognizable percentage. Even better, they can start to believe again that they can get better.

In October 2006 I received unexpectedly a book called “What the Bleep de we know!?” as a present from an intelligent lady and mother. She did not give it to me personally as she had just finished the final day of her diploma course with my esteemed teacher and colleague Y. Kawada and I was elsewhere as the assistant to the Japanese Shiatsu teacher brought me this package. The lady had written all over the first blank page of the book and I would like to quote the substance of her writing here. I do this as an act of gratitude to the student and my gratitude for what it did to me. Not all surprises are frightening.

“Four years of shiatsu training have ended; they have been life-changing! I want to thank you for all those wonderful shiatsu and life lessons which brought me clarity and insight in many things and ways. Sometimes difficult and confronting, many times enlightening and heart warming. Experience of life is different now and you have played a crucial role in this. The lessons might have ended, the learning and growing process is only beginning. With gratitude and love.....”.

I will not expand this further than to add a quote from Dakota Fanning playing the part of an insightful child from the Stephen Spielberg series called Taken.

“People get mean when they’re scared” which brings us to the remarkable organ we all cannot live without – the Liver.

The liver is the fiery she. The yin organ that has such enormous yang inducing properties. The Chinese attribute phenomenal properties to this organ. Ilsa Veith’s translation of the Yellow Emperor (Nei Ching Su Wen) is poetical and well worth a good read if only to discover the above mentioned properties and for people who like detailed analysis Ted Kaptchuk’s – The Web that has no Weaver spends more than a third of his book examining the liver.

So why the quote from Dakota Fanning?

The liver is the house of the emotions and also the unending soul – no wonder humans got very happy when they discovered the varying effects of wine and other alcohol containing brews. Of course, they also could get depressed. There’s nothing like a good shot of schnapps, brandy or something similar to get over some “fear” preferably with a warm atmosphere and some good friends. Yet this same liver sits in the wood element and is renowned for its windy and turbulent disposition where calm planning within the kingdom of the body can give way to gushes of blood to the face, rage, frustration and heat. It can give enough of its wood to the fire of the heart to cause great passion and love and even hysteria is not out of the question.

So again; why the quote from Dakota Fanning?

Where does the liver get all this energy from in the Shen cycle of the five transformations or elements? From the roots of yin and yang, from the organs of will, trust and fear, determination and resignation, keepers of our ancestral ki and the wizards of our own reproduction – the kidneys and adrenal glands. So it is that slow burning fear makes us mean and angry like simmering pots and major fear can be turned into rage – if, of course, we have enough ki energy.

Sooner or later, that consistent button pushing is going to exhaust us or parts of us and here is at least one place we can really begin with our treatment of fear. Here we can begin to explain and get to grips with damage control and technical support. We know the meridians. We know the organs. We know the points. We know about distribution of ki and how to manage it. This is the part where we can perform a healing art which causes people to say “I feel better”. We can relieve pressure and change the lonely mood into “I don’t know what you did but I feel completely different”. Moving ki and giving it a chance to resume its original pattern and design is what we can do. We can talk to a person but not to their mood or emotional state, but we can talk to their emotional state or mood with the language of ki and the channels it flows in.

Here would be a good place to stop writing, or reading, and wish everyone good luck with the practical if not pragmatic approach to the various states of fear, however, the most wonderful way of communication has always worked by telling stories.

If its fear you want, just start with the brothers Grimm and work you way up to the ridiculous

number of B-quality videos available via libraries, video stores or the internet.

It would seem that statistically, a huge portion of the happy civilizations with access to this flood actually spend money and time (lots of it) actually indulging in this “hobby”.

The question, of course, is why? I guess that everyone has an answer or two. One of mine is that they are practicing and testing themselves and another is to be focused on something which is more scary than that which they are already scared of – oh, and one last one; being scared together is better than being scared alone. Now here’s a good story.

Boy meets girl (or other currently acceptable combinations) and one asks the other “Shall we watch a really scary movie together this evening?” and the other says yes. What are they really thinking about and what is happening in the world of the hormones? Yes, that same set of glands and organs can cause fear can be aroused to achieve another kind mood. The kind of mood that causes the heart to beat faster and gives a rosy sense of excitement which we share with many other forms of life on this planet. We can face our doubts with courage and our assertion with competition. We want to run the risk of success or failure. We want to respond to a primal urge, in fact, we like it. In fact, to quote Aldous Huxley (author of ‘Brave New World’ defines as follows – “An intellectual is someone who has found something more interesting to think about than sex”.

Now how many of the world’s people silently go through teenage or pre-teenage life swimming in the confusion of hormone storms without having the benefit of understanding people around them, let alone the benefit of emotionally undisturbed and relaxed parents who have washed away taboos? And how many of these same people come in contact with the kind of sensitivity needed to help them swim to the shore of maturity, emotional or otherwise? Well, there is a lovely combination to play havoc with the ki of the kidneys, liver, heart and lungs. “Lungs?” you ask. Yes, those lungs and throat and windpipe and esophagus do tend to react a little don’t they? The lungs are right there pumping away like the heart when we get worked up about something and they have the extraordinary quality of being able to work on autopilot as well as manually. The trouble is, they can sometimes get confused by scattered or ascending ki and go on autopilot against our will. They are defined as being seriously involved in the balance of communication between ourselves and everything else in reality including the emotions or trains of thought. Ever heard of asthma which is not caused by a clinical condition? That would not be yet another manifestation of fear would it?

If we go back to boy meets girl then here’s a real story. When I was a schoolboy of around 17 years, I had a friend called Leon who felt attracted to a slim slinky girl called Linda who was a friend of Joy who I used to see under all the correct circumstances of the time.... Until, one evening, when Joy’s parents were away, we somehow arrived at her parent’s house and sat looking at each other and nervous giggly attempts at growing up started to happen. Now Leon had a mild form of asthma which did not require much attention, but he always had an inhaler,

just in case. Before everything shifted to easy, and even after that, Leon had more lip contact with his inhaler than with anything else. Looking back, it is possible to say that emotional and sensitive liver was doing something which caused his lungs and windpipe to freeze. Simple really. If I knew then what I know now, then I could have tried connecting Liver 14 to Lung 1 (after all, that is the direction of ki through the cycle of meridians) and maybe I could have helped enormously, however, I was having my own nervous problems at that time. Since then, I have discovered that an acute anything between the emotions and breathing can be miraculously helped with a little patience and two thumbs joining the last place that ki arrives at as it races through the meridian cycle to the first place that it starts, thus completing the circuit and turning all the lights on again.

Understanding and proving this method several times a week in my practice gave me a whole new insight into the “meditation” word.

We all know something about this word even if we have only just heard about it, but even so, it is a comparatively new public word since the second half of the last century. That means that more was talked about than done.

At this time of writing, an enormous number of people, which is still growing, are playing with all kinds of imaginative methods to perform something called meditation, and as usual, supporters of one method have funny ideas about how other people do it, or indeed, where they do it. Comical really, considering that meditation was originally designed to resolve internal conflicts and bring peace and clarity to the performer. In our time, it is being sold in many forms with great enthusiasm about its properties. There are many cases where it is only casually connected with breathing and states of ecstasy may be reached using rituals, dancing, chanting and you can probably fill in a few more. Indeed, it seems undeniable that many people attain states of wonder, light and ecstasy from this rainbow of approaches and some get a sense of relative relaxation after sitting by a quiet river for ten minutes. It all seems too grouped by some semi-conscious public acceptance that it is meditation and it might be good for all sorts of things and people, but what is it really? Maybe an even better question is Who is it really? The mind, the observer, the brain, the feeling are included in verbal answers. Another nice question is whether or not meditation is some kind of repeatable experience in the hands of the performer or some other mode of consciousness which uncontrollable – or – who is doing the driving? If you are a fearful person or perhaps very sensitive, you might find that once you have turned on your meditation, it might not always take you where you want to go.

A young student of mine came to see me for a consultation. He is an enthusiastic business man who does work in the field of personality training and support for other business people. He is sharp, straight faced and clever and having observed me at work walked into my practice as an equal asking me if I could “unlock his Kundalini” for him. I think I must have smiled

benevolently and pointed out to him that this was not only a difficult undertaking but that it involved certain risks as well.

This is a long way from thinking about breathing, liver and lungs and does not appear to have anything to do with fear, or does it?

This kind of fear is a combination of escapism and risk because in the world of ever increasing lust for sensation, fear of boredom is an unacceptable part of life. Being bored today is equated with everything else apart from just being bored. It is a social mark of being anti-social and not pro-active. The idea that a person would get “left behind” is already a stigma which has reached dramatic proportions, as if the densely populated town dwellers have to prove their fitness and wellbeing everyday. You can imagine what it is like in a shiatsu practice in a city like The Hague in Holland. If we all lived in Thailand in a city like Bangkok, apart from not being able to breathe, we would all be having excellent and penetrating massage everyday for less than the price of a glass of wine in a restaurant in Zurich. What would it be like if here became like there. Many ordinary and educated working people tell me that my classical shiatsu school is like a haven where they can not only learn, but also harmoniously escape the continuous barrage of mutually supported pro-active dogma that fills the air. People everywhere are attending any kind of occupational course in order to wrench their minds away from the growing pressure of the mundane and their experiences of this phenomenon gives them whole new subjects to discuss – which leads us back to the lungs and breathing.

When we focus on breathing, and I mean focus, breathing eventually becomes a sort of fascination. We are lead back to more quiet consideration about our bodies. By being conscious of this experience we gain a sensation of our bodies again and also more room than the frantic, and mostly water and fat filled space between our ears.

We can get control back again by sending breath down into the abdomen and supply more oxygen and ki to our kidneys. Oxygen is a powerful burning fuel which delivers yang energy throughout the body. A body that only uses a half or two thirds of its lung capacity is like a person walking on their knees when they have perfectly good feet for that purpose.

The feeling or sensation of reliving in the body again helps enormously with our relationship to ourselves on a regular basis and reconstitutes the starting point of all living things with lungs. We can feel more at home with the basics of who we are and in that way, relieves much anxiety and fear. The lungs are the great communication organs and are breathing patterns are closely associated with how we feel and our environment. If we do not use our lungs, we depress, literally, our communication with the outside world.

Given that most outside world news is not encouraging these days, we need to breathe in a conscious way more than ever before.

This, perhaps, makes the word communication a little more clear. It is a two way affair which involves the irreversible law of give and take and the large intestine most definitely involved in this lifelong process. Often, a little meaningful pressure with intent on Lung point 7 will allow people to feel a difference within less than a minute and yet the classical texts talk about this point as a functional point to use for people who are depressed.

If we want to avoid the pressure of Lung point 7, we could adopt an attitude of breathing consciously and deeply into the abdomen and apart from the wellbeing and emotional communication with ourselves; everyone could become a reasonably good singer as well.

I have to say that learning this seemingly easy little trick is not difficult, but remembering to do it is another story. Sometimes it a terrible battle to constantly hold that steering wheel straight while breathing; in short, we are too easily distracted. Setting apart a time of “meditation” is better than nothing but what a marvel it would be if we could just remember to do it all the time. I am doing it as I type and it does not distract me from my typing, and the same thing works with the large intestine. If we breathe deeply and teach the lower abdomen to accommodate our breathing, we make our large intestine much happier. In fact anything which makes the lower abdomen happy makes us happy too. That is really a powerful weapon against the presence of fear and a producer of self trust and a good will.

Before going a bit deeper into the “meditation” word, it may be a good idea to point out that the adrenaline addicts who still enjoy their conquest of fear with great pride may be left to enjoy themselves until such time as they hit the inevitable brick wall of symptoms which may bring them to our practices. Perhaps, as therapists, we should be offering our services in a humble way to the need who actually want to change or be changed instead of making business cards and websites proclaiming the glory of shiatsu in supporting the people who like their way of life and are willing to pay to have themselves adjusted on a weekly basis like taking a pill for the headache instead of dealing with the cause. A nice philosophy for rich hobbyists but not if your roof and food are provided by your work as a shiatsu therapist. On the other hand, advertising what you cannot deliver is not good for business either.

Alright; back to the “meditation” word. If you don’t mind, I would like to bring another word into the world of “meditation” which does not require quote signs and the word is Perception.

A lot has been written about perception.

The Oxford dictionary of English defines perception as follows:

Perception:

1. the act or faculty of perceiving.

2. intuitive recognition of a truth, aesthetic quality, etc; a way of seeing, understanding
3. apprehend with the sight, observation; apprehend with the mind; understand; see or regard.

Whereas “meditation” is defined in the same book as thoughtful; engagement in contemplation (especially religious); planning mentally.

Interesting to see what intellect can do to minimize the definition to fit into the intellectual boundaries of a lexicologist. This leaves us free to define these words ourselves, just as the same book defines fear at the beginning of this story. The one essential word they left out was “experience”.

Why not try focusing on breathing again until we have an experience of it. It is certain that thoughts and images will clutter and distract our intention to focus and that has been described in almost every oriental book on the subject. The fact is that Asian and oriental people have historically developed an enormous amount of experience in this field over a long period of time and although it is interesting and encouraging to read, what do we really know about it; the word “knowing” being of great consequence in comparison to believing.

In order to arrive at a place of perception (as Don Juan Matus put it) we must first “Stop the world”. Great stuff, but what does it mean and how do we do it? Well, let’s begin with a question. How many people deliver a shiatsu (or other) massage or treatment embellished with “appropriate” music, tinkly bells, etheric oils, incense and other things I have forgotten to mention? Wonderful if you always carry all this stuff around everywhere, but what if your patient does not like some of those things or it is the wrong music. Most of all, do you want them to drift off in a dream or be focused and conscious of what is really going on. Do you want them to dream or believe, or do you want them to experience and know. Penetration is what penetrates, is it not? In fact, one of the English translations of Shia-Tsu is “Penetrate place” (hardly the words you would use to advertise your practice and career).

So Stopping the World means actually stopping the mind reflecting everything we believe we know back at us so we can perceive something else. Not only is this very satisfying but gives all the pleasure of the adrenaline rush in a state of energy and stillness totally without the damage or addiction to adrenaline. It is almost like getting something for nothing. Not different from the first Zen story of the overenthusiastic pupil who arrives at the Zen temple and gushing with gusto encounters a Zen master who, while pouring tea into a cup for his pupil until it overflows onto the table, points out that if the pupil wishes to drink something new, must first empty his cup from whatever is in it; probably starting with his ideas and opinions. It means Yin. It means stillness. It means waiting (a very good substitute for control).

Of course, in our modern times most of us lose our patience and get “sick and tired of waiting”. I

have to tell you that it is amazing to be in a traffic jam and focus on breathing instead of raising blood pressure. It is not required that everyone should be fulfilling impossible requirements in the face of logistic impossibilities. If large groups of people insist on being obsessive about their fixed perception and feel uncomfortable or fearful then perhaps they could try a new kind of medicine that takes a little practice to use. Beginners who have been instructed to breathe with focus and comfort while giving shiatsu to people report very often that they themselves benefit at least and sometimes even more than their patient. Maybe they have not stopped the world, but they have turned down the speed and volume enough to start perceiving all kinds of wonderful things. This has a huge effect on their patient who generally will want to visit them again (for the experience). It makes them feel encouraged to be with someone who can actually do this kind of thing and encouragement means to give courage which is a great destroyer of fear.

By all states of blocked, disrupted, disturbed, stagnated or scattered ki, there are historically proven and sometimes unknown exercises which can be of great value to everyone who knows or experiences abnormal fear. One of the exercises I would like to present and describe sounds very simple and is invisible to anyone else while it is being performed. It can be performed in any situation in which the person involved is not eating, drinking, talking or doing anything else with their mouth. It has an Indian (Hindu) name and appears in a book by M. Kushi called Do-In published by Japan publications, although Kushi's version is incomplete. It is called Kichi-Mudra and as its name suggests, it is a method of completing a circle or circuit.

There are four stages to this exercise which makes it easy to build up over a period of time and whether the world know this or not is automatically performed by unborn babies in the womb. In the first stage of the exercise, the tip of the tongue is gently brought to rest at the root of the upper two front teeth which automatically puts it in contact with the upper palate of the mouth. Most people, if they focus their attention at this meeting place will notice within a short time, mostly under a minute that they can feel a slight tingling sensation, a change in the taste and consistency of the saliva and an increase of saliva in the mouth. The feeling or onset of fear usually causes an unpleasant sensation of a dry mouth where sometimes, the thirst for good water can be very strong, probably to dampen the fire which has affected the upper warmer and the head.

The second stage involves simply folding the tongue so that its back fits neatly into the upper palate filling the closed mouth. The sensation is larger and the feeling is one of fullness instead of emptiness (another association with fear).

The third stage is to bring the tip of the tongue to the root of the uvula and hold it there. There, one discovers a small valley between the end of the upper palate and root of the uvula. This sensation gives a feeling of being held or being at home and helps tremendously with controlling the thoughts which cause fear or are generated by it.

Although these techniques are being only briefly described here, there are great healing powers

attributed to this technique, one of which is the enormous support for an uninterrupted flow of ki through the governor and conception vessels with attention to the elements fire and water. In anatomical terms, the help given to the heart and kidneys including the adrenal glands. It should be remembered that the tip of the tongue gives a diagnostic indication to the condition of the heart and the appearance of the two, almost parallel blood vessels say much about the condition of the kidneys. In the last three (not the first three described; I have not mentioned the fourth tongue position yet.) positions of the tongue, the back of the tongue is stretched which resolves some of the stagnation of kidney energy problems which are also related to unconscious or sub-conscious fears.

For anybody practicing these techniques, its really interesting and good fun to examine the tongue in a mirror before starting these techniques and after some time (from 10 minutes up to an hour or more) to look at the tongue in the mirror again and notice the changes in colour, coating and texture to see what has changed.

What we are examining and, more importantly, experiencing, is a dynamic change in all the systems within the body while invisibly maintaining focus on a combination of bodily sensations, breathing and mood. These techniques sharpen the perceptions and make the mind quiet and are very useful in “Stopping the world”.

Looks of surprise and widening eyes appear in the faces of students and clients who are introduced to these phenomena. Reports come back that peripheral vision increases. Just think what that can do for nervous drivers and the safety of others.

Before describing the fourth position of the tongue, I should point out that it is not likely that everybody will be able to achieve this technique immediately. For most of us, it has been a very long time since our tongue was in that position and of the many people I have known, many had given up too soon and remained with the first three positions. For those of you who are willing to achieve it, I would recommend practicing privately at first and with the help of putting the fingers against the back of the tongue to support its journey to the fourth position.

The fourth position requires going once stage further than the valley by the root of the uvula. The tongue is pushed or put behind the uvula in the cavity behind the bridge of the nose. When it gets there and is comfortable, which may take some time, there is a feeling of a large amount of room; a cooling of the heart and tongue tip and for the people who want to know, after more practice, one can clean the nostrils from inside at the source. Many associations with health and breathing, a lessening of slime and promotions of ki and circulation are not only a theory but an experience when performing this technique. The control of the mind and detachment it produces can and does wonders for fearful and nervous situations and the emotional disruptions that are generally associated with fear are reduced and objectified.

Shiatsu practitioners using these techniques while applying Setsu-shin will discover a whole new dimension in their rapport and sensitivity while working and will notice a serious improvement of their powers of observation and reception without being disturbed themselves. You can guess that if I have stated all of the above techniques and their working that I did not get it from a book but from a teacher who showed me how to do this about 36 years ago. I have discussed with the many of that time who also performed these techniques what they experienced which is too much to write about here.

Having been a nervous person myself with fears about practically everything, I have found the usefulness of these techniques to be one of the best medicines for people with mental and emotional disturbances I have ever heard of or found. It even improves the digestion. It even makes the fear of the unknown into an embrace instead of a pain. It protects people from lies and nonsense and bad impressions and a whole lot more. It is in no way dangerous. Nobody will swallow their tongue, although some people got the cramps by trying all the positions too hard or fast.

There could be a book written only about Kichi Mudra but until a few more people really practice it nobody will believe it.

Before coming to the end of my short story about states of fear, there is one last thing I would like to add.

If you are interested in what is really going on inside people and want to help, you really need to get that inner world to stop and feel like you are riding the horse and not the other way around. The world of the human being in this time is a world of fear and denial in many places in that world. Our denial systems are there to protect us from overload but are far too often superseded by beliefs which are hung on to like a mother’s skirt hem or father’s hand. We did it when we were children and our emotional past still directs much of our world. What we need and what we want or what we think we deserve is mostly something other than what we get or are consistently satisfied with.

Shiatsu is by itself a wonderful way to share and give ourselves and friends, clients and students a helping hand and restores our trust in the ability of the human kind to heal itself if the inspiration and warmth of life is there. I have a history of working in many unlikely jobs and situations and I enjoyed many of them for a while, but the world of Shiatsu and all it embraces is the only job I ever had which lasted more than two years and it looks like its going to last for the rest of my life – conquering the fears on the way

