



# Presencing

## Resurrecting the Body – Part II “The Body as the Teacher” by Jack Blackburn

*HH, the main character in Herman Hesse's Journey to the East, has a great surprise when he recognizes Leo, the loyal servant who tended to HH's every need on his failed journey with others exploring Eastern mysteries - searching for the ultimate truth. Leo, HH discovers many years later, was the one that was the repository of the truth all along. We may have the same surprise in store for us. Our bodies are good and loyal servants who cater to our every need and are truthful, even when we don't want to listen. In our need to feel separate and superior, we cast aspersions on our bodies. Every major religion has condemned the body as sinful, deceptive, and deserving of punishment. Perhaps we have been self-deceiving all along. Like HH and his companions, we have been looking in all the wrong places for ultimate truth. Perhaps the body-mind has been our guide to awakening all along. By presencing our bodies we may have been given the tool to grow our conscious awareness and investigate the mystery of Being. Perhaps bodyworkers have a direct role to play in resurrecting the Body.*



When clients report their symptoms to us, if we listen closely to their words, we will often hear, fear related suffering. If there seems to be no external cause or person to blame, clients will fall into blaming themselves like Job: “I have done something wrong for which I’m being punished.” Or, “There must be a mistake, I do not deserve this punishment.” Notice the emphasis on the separated self – I. When we help client’s enter their bodily symptoms things start to change... the first thing that happens is that blame starts to dissolve. The symptoms themselves seem to be beckoning our clients and ourselves towards a deeper experience of our own consciousness. We have crossed a threshold, entered through a passageway that is not predefined by our thoughts and

memories. We know we have entered this new place when our aversion towards the symptoms (practitioner's and client's) recedes.

We enter by using the method of presencing – by presencing our bodily sensations, we finely tune our body-mind instrument. Rumi says we can use the instrument to measure the astronomy of our soul, or what some call our Being. As we apply ourselves to the practice of *presencing*, we start to learn the levels and uses of our own body-minded instrument. As we explore these uses in ourselves we become much better companions for those we wish to help with their journey towards Being. Together, as



bodyworkers and presencing clients, we enter these new awarenesses. The body's signals, especially symptoms, become trustworthy passageways.

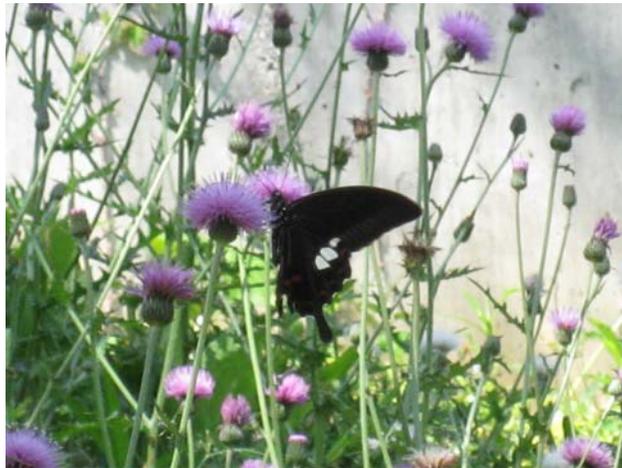
In presencing the thinking mind is being trained (re-schooled) to turn towards observation and curiosity, a sort of internal epistemology. As the mind learns to pay greater attention to the body's communiqués, their combined datum, body and mind, produce the experience of presencing, pre-sensing. Moment to moment observation produces thought at a much deeper level than problem solving and cause and effect reasoning. We are now starting to learn new ways to accompany clients as we take this journey with them.



So what do we mean by “resurrecting the body?” First the body-mind is changed in the process of presencing. Those changes are discernable both to the client and the practitioner – the practitioner can palpate them as tissue response, and the client can feel them proprioceptively. By observing each moment through the body's sensations, the mind center changes from abstract and separative intellect to caring and inclusive sensing. The thoughts evolve from random, self-centered to ordered and heart-centered. The body takes on new meaning when we start to realize what is happening. We feel our thoughts *emerging* from a sensing-self, and we feel something even deeper taking place. The thinking mind is now acting in unison with the feeling body. Thoughts and feelings are arising simultaneously, and

both can be sensed in the body in mutual confirmation. This confirmation of felt thinking produces changes in the body-mind. These changes seem to be accompanied by something like parasympathetic responses in the body that are deeply satisfying and transformative to the body-mind.

This transformation can be felt as the tissue in our bodies changes in response to what might be called en-lighten-ment in the conscious mind. Now the body-mind experiences everything as fresh and new, and the body responds by letting go of old patterns of protection and withdrawal. As the conscious mind reenters the body as *witness* to experience, the body's systems respond with new vitality. Insights begin to emerge that seem to come from joining with life rather than abstracting from it. The lighten-ing and transforming of the body does not require time. In fact sequential time shifts to *Kairos* (meaningful timeless moments) with presencing. Now time becomes the medium of co-creation. The body-mind is participating in it's own re-creation. Experience is the canvas, time and action are the medium, and felt sensing or presencing becomes the expression. In resurrecting the body with presencing, time has become the servant of our whole livingness rather than the ruler of our separated lives.



#### Suggested reading list:

- Damasio, Antonio. [Descartes' Error: Emotion Reason and the Human Brain](#)  
Gendlin, Eugene. [Focusing and A Process Model](#)  
Goenka, S.N. [An Introduction to Vipassana Meditation](#)  
Carter, Robert. [The Nothingness Beyond God: An Introduction to the Philosophy Nishida Kitaro](#)  
Nyanaponika, Thera. [The Heart of Buddhist Meditation](#)  
Ramachandran, V.S. [A Brief Tour of Human Consciousness](#)  
Tolle, Eckhart. [Practicing the Power of Now](#)  
Yuasa, Yasuo. [The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory](#)