



Article by Mary Ann Wallace, MD, MA

Mind-body Medicine, what is it? **www.maryannwallace.com**

Mind-body integration therapy has a different premise from conventional medicine in that what is valued is increased self awareness in addition to relief of symptoms. Disease can be seen as an opportunity for exploring lifestyles – choices – and attitudes.

Allopathic (conventional) and mind-body medicine go hand in hand. To go about curing an illness with the full sum of our allopathic knowledge makes good sense. With some diseases, it is helpful to simultaneously explore our souls for the deeper reasons we may be sick. This is particularly true in illness refractory to conventional treatment.

By tuning into the deeper levels of our selves, we can discover amazing things about our attitudes that may be fostering illness. Altering ourselves at the inner level brings about exactly the kind of change we sometimes need to release patterns of pain and disease.

The mind-body connection is easier to appreciate in some illnesses than others. Chronic pain out of proportion to any organic cause/pathology can often be linked to an emotional state of affairs.

Healing within the context of mind-body therapy has to do with a synchronization of a person's conscious awareness with the way he or she is living his/her life. Harmony between different aspects of the self and congruence between thinking, emotions and behavior are goals unto themselves. To that end, a discomfort might be seen as a clue needing one's focus. The premise of mind-body integration therapy is the pathology is a portal to greater self-understanding. The perennial questions to be answered are "what is the meaning of this in my life?"; "where has this come from in my life?" or "what might I do to potentiate or to relieve the (in a different context)?"

We each have a space of calm from which we can operate, which provides a pervasive healing quality to our thoughts. Decisions made from within the framework tend to be healthier and more in balance for ourselves. Mind-body integration therapy helps us remember this space of peace so we operate with awareness. It is not a "quick fix" – when one starts this therapy, it usually means he or she is willing to do the work needed for the deeper answer to the problem. Suffering dissolves in the face of mind-body work – and often pathology evaporates, too, though that is not necessarily the goal.

Using Imagery to Help the Creative Process

Mary Ann Wallace MD, MA

Things to keep in outer mind as inner mind works:

- 1) Creative response happens in a state of relaxed attention. It is in this state that we have access to our images and are free from continued censorships and old beliefs.
- 2) The active part of the creative process is to do the homework or study, or discipline that requires the use of the will and intellect.
- 3) The receptive part of the creative process is a waiting and tuning in. We must consciously want the response and then be willing to wait for it.
- 4) The creative response comes as an inspiration, or insight, or flash – often when we least expect it. It comes in the state of relaxed attention which we mentioned earlier.
- 5) Immediately write down the insight images or talk about them as soon as they come to you.
- 6) Put your inspirations and insights to work for you. That's what they're there for.

Bry, Adelaide. Visualization

Questions to ask your self:

- 1) Do you really want the answer?
- 2) Do you feel you really deserve it?
- 3) Are you willing to acknowledge whatever comes up, even if it is different from what you had hoped for, or is unflattering, or seems difficult to accomplish?

Bibliography

Achterberg, Jeanne. Imagery in Healing. Boston: New Science Library. 1985

Bry, Adelaide. Visualization. San Francisco: Barnes and Noble Books. 1978

Gawain, Shakti. Creative Visualization. New York: Bantam Books. 1978

Gazzaniga, Michael. "The Split Brain in Man." Scientific American.

Singer, Jerome and Switzer, Ellen. Mind-Play. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. 1980