

# SHEN Therapy

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**SHEN® PhysioEmotional Release Therapy** is a hands-on healing process where the practitioner uses the qi flows from his or her hands to unlock and release trapped emotion from the recipient's body. It is used to accelerate healing after emotional trauma, to assist in emotional growth, and to heal physical disorders that have been caused, at least in part, by trapped, painful emotions; disorders such as anorexia and premenstrual syndrome.

**S**HEN is the outgrowth of a serious attempt, begun in 1977, to discover whether the laws of ordinary physics that govern motion in magnetic fields, hydraulics and weather systems also applied to the biofield that surrounds and permeates the physical body. Until that time, most practitioners of healing by what was called 'energetic touch', or laying-on-of-hands, practiced their work entirely from intuition or internal knowing. Some believed that the biofield coming from their hands had 'intelligence' and knew where to go and what to do without being directed by the practitioner. However, I believed that once the patterns of physics in the field were established and the way it operated understood, new and more effective treatment methods could be devised. Also, if the effects noted by healers could be shown to fit the patterns of ordinary field physics, it would encourage physicists and engineers to develop appropriate measuring devices.

**T**here have been many attempts at linking science with the biofield but the earlier efforts were not conclusive. Since there are no measuring instruments that could detect or measure the direction of the biofield within the body, I had to rely on the most primitive detection device of all, the human hand. It is easy to detect when the flow of the biofield passes from one hand through the recipient's body to the practitioner's other hand and to notice how the recipient responds. Before long I discovered that the recipient's responses are significantly different when the hand placements are reversed.

**F**or example, when the sending hand is placed low on the recipient's spine and the receiving hand is placed higher up on the spine, and the hands held in place for a few minutes, the recipient will relax into a deep state and, when the process is over, feel relaxed and refreshed. However, when the hands are reversed, with the sending hand higher on the spine than the receiving hand, the recipient's heart begins to beat faster and he or she will begin to have unpleasant sensations and become agitated. Clearly, being relaxed and refreshed was healthful and normal, but being agitated and upset was not. These positive and negative results became my mapping tools.

**M**apping of the biofield was a very slow process. It took many, many observations of hand placement results to be

sure that the map was accurate. These observations were confirmed by other practitioners and were checked and re-checked in many ways. As the work progressed, it was noticed that hand placements at certain specific locations on the body resulted in the release of different emotions. It was later discovered that certain physical disorders responded dramatically to treatments that focused on hand placements centered around the physical disorder. It became clear that properly applied SHEN breaks deep tensional holding patterns that surround the sites of painful emotions of shame, sadness and fear. Breaking these tensions fosters the release of the debilitating emotions and allows the return of normal bodily function. With that knowledge, treatments for such disorders as anorexia, premenstrual syndrome and migraine were developed.

**D**uring a typical SHEN session, the client lies fully clothed on a special cradle-topped table. The practitioner moves around the cradle/table, placing his or her hands on the client's body in sequential patterns that have been shown to be effective for the particular disorder being treated. Some of the hand placements are on top of the body, some are underneath. The hands are held lightly so there is little or no feeling of pressure, but there may be sensations of warmth or tingling. There may be jerks or twitches in the hands and arms or feet and legs as long-term muscular tensions are relaxed. Emotions frequently, but not always, occur during the first session. These emotional releases are unlike the usual release of emotions; during SHEN the emotions flow directly out the front of the body at the primary emotional centers – the heart, upper abdomen and lower abdomen – without fist clenching, banging on the table, or shouting.

abdomen and lower abdomen – without clenching the fists, banging on the table, or shouting. The first emotions released are often sadness and grief. Then come deeply held, long-forgotten feelings of anger or fear, hidden emotions that may have affected our daily lives without our knowing it. Cleansing the body of these painful emotions allows the basic emotions of joy and strength to emerge and be experienced. Some report feeling these healthful emotions for the first time since childhood or report feeling them in richer, deeper ways than ever before.

**M**uch of the SHEN work that I do is with people wishing to make their lives richer and more joyful and with sufferers of post traumatic stress disorders. It is deeply satisfying to participate in the process and to watch the person unfold, but it is those who come in severe pain and get major relief from SHEN that affect me the most. One long-term migraine sufferer I treated was staying at a chronic pain clinic in a Fort Worth, Texas hospital. She had suffered frequent attacks for twenty-seven years – since she was nine years old. She had been under conventional treatment for years and recently had been to two other chronic pain clinics seeking

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relief, one of these clinics specialized in migraines. Nothing had produced any results; she continued to have episodes at least every other week, intense episodes that lasted from three to four days. She had recently realized that the migraines nearly always began on Wednesdays. This was Tuesday and she anticipated one the next day. *Many migraine sufferers have episodes that regularly start on the same day of the week because some deeply traumatizing emotional event occurred, years ago on that day and had precipitated the first migraine.*

**B**efore beginning a SHEN series with a new person, I always ask a series of questions designed to uncover the emotional state of the person years ago when the trauma began. But after persistent questioning she had not recalled any emotional trauma when she was nine, nothing upsetting in her family, nothing at all out of the ordinary. When I inquired about possible childhood head injuries that might have contributed to the migraine, she said that recently her cheekbone had been broken, but the injury was so minor that the doctor had been able to press the thin bone back in place from inside her mouth.

**I**began the SHEN migraine treatment protocol. Soon she relaxed deeply and her breathing shallowed. Then, I began to focus the flows from my hands around the region just above the heart. This region contains the aorta, the large blood vessel from the heart and the arterial branches that feed blood to the head and brain. It also the location of the baroreceptors – the biological blood pressure regulators – and the vagus nerve, which wraps itself half-way around the aorta at this point. The vagus nerve is involved with nausea which is common during a migraine episode. This is a critical region for migraine sufferers and SHEN flows there very frequently stop the migraines in mid-episode.

**A**s the biofield flowing between my hands passed through the aorta-vagus region, her breathing deepened and slowed. Suddenly her body visibly relaxed to an even deeper level. After a few minutes of deep stillness, she began to return. This was a very significant event; a sudden deepening like this usually occurs when some deep emotionally charged memory has been touched, at a place far inside the body. The long forgotten, emotionally charged memory is often recalled and becomes the turning point in recovery. I went on to finish the session and sat back, waiting for her to regain full consciousness. When she awoke, she remarked on how rested she was but that she had no dreams or memories to report and I left her to rest.

**L**ater I looked in on her to see how she was doing. She excitedly remarked, *“By the way, I just happened to remember that my parents got divorced when I was nine!”* (and) *“Do you think that this*

*work will help my nightmares – I’ve had them since I was very little; I used to crawl into bed with my parents when I got them.”*

**I** was speechless. It was clear to me that her migraines began when she lost the refuge of her parents’ bed. I have learned that revelations like this often indicate that the migraine series is finished and the migraines will not reoccur. Of course I did not mention this, I wanted to wait and see if her usual Wednesday migraine occurred the next day. It did not.

*However, on Friday she casually mentioned to the therapist that her jaw had been broken by her husband.* Until then she had not told anyone that she was married to a wife-beater.

She received three more SHEN sessions from the SHEN therapist during the next week and did not get a migraine that Wednesday, either. At the end of the week she was discharged from the hospital’s pain clinic. Two and a half months later she walked into the clinic to report that she had divorced her wife-beating husband and that she had not had a migraine in all that time. We lost track of her after two years, but during that period she had no migraine episodes.

**S**HEN treatments are tailored to the individual’s needs. SHEN practitioners are taught how to assess the recipient’s superficial and deeper emotional states and how to plan individualized treatment series. A series of SHEN treatments is shorter than many types of therapy because SHEN acts rapidly and because emotions in the body are difficult to access through mental activity. Many receiving SHEN have found that a brief series of three or four sessions restores them to a happier, more energized

life. They may not return for additional SHEN, until after some future trauma occurs. Others find that once the emotional loosening process has started, deeper, older emotions begin to drift upwards into consciousness and they decide to continue their SHEN.

**S**HEN works very well in conjunction with psychotherapy and with all bodywork methods. SHEN can be of considerable benefit for disorders such as anorexia, anxiety attacks, bulimia, chronic pain without organic cause, emotional depression, nightmares, phobias, non-biological sexual dysfunction, emotionally upset bowels and post traumatic stress disorder. It has been used with great success with children under the age of reason. SHEN should not be given to a psychiatric patient or someone who should be under a psychiatrist’s care unless approved by the client’s psychiatrist.

**R**esearch studies have been compiled for SHEN and major depression, SHEN and migraine, SHEN and menstrual and premenstrual distress. Others studies are in process.

**Richard R. Pavuk**

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