



# The Zen of Resonance

## The 3 Levels of Touch

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**W**hen giving a Shiatsu, the energy fields of both client and practitioner are essentially the elephant in the room. Neither participant can see these fields, however considering them is crucial to the success of the treatment. As a session progresses, the energy levels of both client and practitioner should gradually become active, and in doing so will naturally try to find synchronicity with one another. This happens whether we are aware of it or not and results in far deeper responses from the client than would simply arise from the pressure of our fingers. The client responds to our entire field, all aspects of our being are important in the treatment and we can use these just as much as our touch to achieve success.

Perhaps when giving Shiatsu you have experienced abstract thoughts or images, directing you in your treatment? These may offer guidance on what to do, or suggest to you the real cause of the client's problems. Sometimes these thoughts may seem completely irrelevant and it is easy to dismiss them as useless, moving back to the security of your diagnosis. It is important not to dismiss these thoughts though, as they mark an essential stage in the treatment: the energy fields of both practitioner and client are now synchronised.

They reflect the resonance between the fields of giver and receiver and may become more apparent as the resonance becomes stronger. During the treatment our subconscious mind is stimulated and resonates with the more rarefied frequencies of the client's condition. In an attempt to balance the field of the receiver, the giver's mind then transforms these into thoughts or images.

When working with a client's energy field, remember it is an incredible phenomenon which, if harnessed well, has the potential to link together every part of the body and mind. When giving Shiatsu it is vital to touch the energy field as this gives your client the optimum chance for healing or change. I picture the subconscious as a river that is constantly flowing through the background of our mind. It contains everything we have experienced throughout our lives as well as everything our conscious mind is experiencing in the present.

Our subconscious is also a source of endless possibilities. What makes the practice of Shiatsu so special is the ability it gives us to tune in to our connection with our clients at any time and on many different levels throughout a session. The feeling of drifting away from our clients is in fact a sign we are very close to them. When I say drifting away, I mean the feeling that we are no longer even performing Shiatsu and have entered an inner state. At this time, understanding is unimportant as we naturally and instinctually navigate the intense connection we have with the other person. I often find that at these times I no longer have to work on the meridians as my touch now resonates with my client's entire being and my thoughts seem beyond this dimension. The more our fields resonate with one another, the more we will gradually move into areas that are beyond our conscious understanding of Shiatsu, Kyo and Jitsu and the meridians.

The longer a treatment lasts, the more your subconscious

mind will have the opportunity to resonate with the client's subconscious and will often translate this view into stories, images or perhaps even visions, in an attempt to help you heal this part of their imbalance. Many of these thoughts are difficult to understand but really it's not so important what stories they are telling, although they can be useful. What is important is that you can recognise them when they appear. Being able to categorise our thoughts during a session gives us vital information about the depth at which our Shiatsu is affecting our client. It's difficult to explain this phenomenon, but once you start to understand that the depth of your consciousness mirrors where the client's mind is in a session, then you can start to use it to navigate.

I will try to give you an idea of how this works by using a more extreme experience I once had during a treatment. In the middle of the session, while working on the client's back, I started to get vivid dreamlike images that I was

spreading some sort of seeds or ashes on what seemed to me to be a rundown landing strip. I knew straight away what was happening, not because of the vivid and obscure nature of what I was imagining but by the way it was resonating with my client. My client started to twitch and shake uncontrollably as if he had entered into a trance-like state. In my experience, it's not what I am thinking that is having this effect on my client, nor does it have anything to do with my client's real life. Instead, the energy these thoughts are bringing to my field, resonate with my client's field through my Shiatsu touch.

A much less extreme but a classic example of this, is when during a session all of a sudden I find out what to make for dinner or I find a solution to a problem that I have been trying solve for a while, again what is important is not the actual realization - the aha experience, but how these thoughts only appear at a certain depth of contact with my client.

It is not enough to assume that an energy field will probably open in a session. Instead, we have to know exactly how this part of the treatment works so we can resonate with it and utilise its full potential. Shiatsu for me now, is only about the depth of contact with a client, besides which nothing else matters.





## THE LEVELS

### Level 1 - Physical / Mechanical / Surface level / Conscious

- My Shiatsu feels more like a massage, I am pushing and pressing the meridians and points
  - This is usually quite painful for the client
- Here I have practically no contact with my own energy body and none at all with the client's
- I am thinking of Shiatsu as structure / technical application. The client is conscious

### Level 2 - Organ / Organ functions

- The connection comes and goes
  - The client may at one point feel pain and in the next second doze off
- The same thing is happening to my own energy body, I feel lots of contact and then none at all
- I am thinking of Shiatsu as organ functions, burning spaces or areas on the body but this is getting interrupted by expanded feelings of oneness or spaces of nothingness
- The client is in an inner state of thought transformation, the everyday thoughts are gliding away and are giving place to some deeper abstract ones

### Level 3 - Energy field / Subconscious / Spirit

- This is the deepest level
  - At this level my connection with my client is in place
- This contact does not come and go, turn on and off. I am in total contact with my own energy field and I can use it when I am treating
  - My Shiatsu feels expanded, everything seems to resonate as one, time can stand still. The client has the sensation of being in a trance-like state, many describe it as like meditation

The body has 3 levels of energetic connection: some meridians start at level 3, others at levels 1 or 2. All the meridians have the possibility to start and function on all 3 levels. When I treat I expect the meridians to start at the following levels:

- **Level 1** - ST, SI, GB, LI,
- **Level 2** - LV, LU, SP, BL
- **Level 3** - TH, KID, HT, HC

It should be noted that the time a meridian is worked on will affect the level at which it becomes active. This is because the longer we are working with a client in a

session, the more our fields merge and the meridians we work on mirror this contact. It is rather like being on a dinner date with someone. During the date, if we are interested in one another, we will start to resonate together - this is what humans do.



## Using the meridians to enter the Field

Having experienced it often, I now know that the meridians will change throughout a Shiatsu session, starting to resonate more and turn into the field. This is no longer a surprise to me anymore and the change of resonance from meridian and field has become a focus of my Shiatsu. I now understand that putting the client in contact with level 3, by opening their energy field, is the most valuable kind of treatment as it connects them with their inner being - spirit.

When working with a client I don't try to remove their symptoms or their problem, but instead help them find more contact with themselves. I find Shiatsu to be the perfect tool as movement of energy equates to movement in the mind - bringing mind and body together.

My way of practising Shiatsu came about through observation of my clients. The more I practised, the more I was able to see what was truly effective and what was superficial. I observed my clients' progression through the 3 different layers of physical, organ function and fields, and in doing so learned to recognise the different levels. The clients who reached the field level 3 in sessions, started to noticeably change and heal faster whereas clients who never reached this stage had far more trouble healing. Working in this way is a process and cannot be forced. Patience is important and when treating a client, I have to hang in there and be open and present in every session to understand where it is heading.

When working with the field it is important to be as unrestricted as possible.

During this process, we are more like passengers than drivers - our job is not to steer or abide by a map. Instead we are simply there to stay in contact with our client, waiting for them to steer so we can follow.

It is important to understand that a treatment's outcome will depend on how openly we perceive a client's prospects from the outset. One thing is certain: the energy between us and our clients will change throughout a session and we must be open and flexible to these changes and whatever they bring with them.

I am not saying that I don't have intentions when working with clients, it's almost impossible not to. My main intention however, is to follow how the client's meridians react to my pressure and let that guide the direction and level at which we interact.





To allow a session to flow, it is important not to think too much. I normally use a basic framework for treatments, using the same 5 or 6 meridians to get me around the body. This allows the client to relax as they can sense that I know where I am going.

In the example below, I am trying to demonstrate how I work using the 3 levels in a session. These are, however, only suggestions on how to use the meridians. The most important thing when working in this way is that you feel you can intuitively resonate with the technique.

### **My basic treatment and how I use the meridians**

I start my treatments working on the Stomach, which is a level 1 meridian. I use it to bond with the client at the start as I find it has a powerful grounding charge and I use it to help my client move from their head into their Hara. At this stage we are still talking and getting to know one another, so our connection is quite physical and mostly superficial. Treating a client who has their eyes open and is talking is fine at the start of a session, but later I find this blocks the treatment's potential to go deeper. I use the Stomach meridian to negotiate depth of pressure with new clients.

I do change my starting meridian sometimes, usually

if I want to shake things up or move some strong blocked symptom. In this case I start with the Liver meridian, but 80% of the time I start with the Stomach.

From there I move up to the Hara again, then up through their chest area using the Gallbladder or Kidney meridians. I start to work on the Lung, a level 2 meridian. Here I'm interested in how the client is breathing. I view the Lung as the real Heart Protector and the flow in the natural internal breathing as the waves in the subconscious.

Without natural relaxed breathing, the door which leads us to the subconscious - our spirit and the field - will not open, and the connection I am looking for will not appear. I never interfere with their breath by telling them how to breathe; I simply observe the natural rhythm. When working on the Lung meridian I am able to get an idea of where the treatment will go. I have found that if I feel my own energy field expands at this point, especially towards the client's body or, even better, their Hara, this is an early sign that this session will go deep.

With the client still lying on her back, I start to work on the Triple Heater in the arm, a level 3 meridian. This is also great when working on physical blocks on level 1. I use the Triple Heater to tune

in and observe the client's outer energy body. I view how open or closed their outer energy body feels, how the chakras are responding to Shiatsu and if there are any dominant blocked areas above the body around the organs. I can use this to gauge between sessions if the treatments are working: if the client is getting better, their outer energy body will gradually become stronger. This is particularly important when treating chronically ill clients. The strength of the outer body mirrors the strength of the inner body. I find the Triple Heater to be incredibly versatile and it's especially useful on level 1, in the realm of physical pain of the neck and shoulders.

Now I ask the client to turn over and start to work on their back.

I start with the Yu points on the Bladder meridian. I expect the deeper part of the session to kick in at any time if it hasn't already. As I work the Yu points I use the client's body movements, especially their hand and finger movements, to indicate which points are active / interesting. Body and finger movements show me which meridians I might enter level 3 on.

When I have the right connection on the Bladder meridian, I use one of the level 3 meridians, the Pericardium, Heart or Kidney,

to open the door to the subconscious and the client's energy field. When this is happening, it feels at first as if the client and I are in free fall: there are no barriers, we are floating together. Time stands still and a void-like presence surrounds me in the treatment room. I usually feel that my touch has expanded from point to field and that there is less or no surface separating me and the client anymore. I know from experience that it is time for me to follow my client as deeply as possible for as long as I can. This phase in a session never lasts more than a few minutes but seems at the time to be a lot longer: you can recognise it because it feels very different from the rest of the session. It is a little like fishing: when you have a fish on the line, you have to be patient and follow it, giving it some slack if necessary and gradually reeling it in.

I believe there are many different forms of Kyo that we can meet and the ones I am looking for manifest in level 3. To really be aware of these small changes, it is important to have a good connection to your own energy body. If you do, you can gradually feel changes in resonance not only in your hands but also in and around your own body, in your Hara and in the space between you and the client and in the room. It is always there, you simply have to train

and harness your sensitivity and open up this further dimension of your Shiatsu.

When the field is open I want to resonate and travel with the client, creating space to explore and to change deep inside their subconscious. This is extremely important as many of the emotional blocks that linger here resonate strongly with the symptoms and the client's life path. If we only move the symptom then the deep, emotional block will just recreate another symptom.

From the lower back, I then move down the legs using the Kidney, another level 3 meridian. When I am working the Kidney meridian on the legs, I expect it to open at level 3 and when it does, I know that my field and the client's field have merged and levels 1-2 are automatically open. If I am treating a client with lower back pain, I don't have to worry about working physically, pressing hard and manipulating the area of pain as I am already doing this in a way, because level 1 is open.

### Now to finish off the session

I ask the client to turn over onto their back again. Holding their wrist gently I observe their outer body, gauging if there are any denser areas around any the chakras or the organs. If there are, I use the rest of the treatment to clear them.

I don't have to do this by work off the body, I can work on related areas of the physical body that affect the outer body. Because of the oneness of our fields at this point, the client's outer field will react to practically anything I do, think or feel. I can also use my own outer energy field as a kind of third hand by letting it resonate with the area in the outer body that I feel is blocked. I have not finished my session until the client's outer body is cleared and has moved, either resonating down to the end of their feet, or has moved high above their head, out of their field. The outer body must be calm and clear: then I know the session is finished.

To finish off, I loosen up their neck, then move down again, holding their wrist and checking the energy field for a final time.

The 3 levels of touch have brought a strong sense of security to my Shiatsu. Knowing precisely how connected I am with my client at each and every point in a session is crucial to the success of the treatment. Working in this way means I now know when I am doing Shiatsu and when I am not. There is a distinct difference between these two states and understanding this is the key to working with the energy field in Shiatsu.