

The Role of Visualization in Therapeutic Touch

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Working from Center, with compassion and with intention to help are basic principles of Therapeutic Touch. Without these elements, we would be waving our hands in the air with little effect. Visualisation strengthens intentionality in the TT treatment. I teach several exercises in basic and advanced courses to develop the awareness of the role that visualisation plays.

Unruffling Visualisation: Exercise 1

Early in Level 1, I ask students to unruffle the field from shoulder to hand, and to do this with several long movements. After waiting for a minute, I ask what they feel. (*Try this before reading further.*) Most report a heaviness, pressure, tingling or even throbbing in their hands. This occurs because energy builds up in the hand.

Then I ask that they repeat the unruffling, with the visualisation that **energy flows through the arm and hand into the table or into the ground** (grounding visualisation) and then check what they feel after this. (*Again, do this before reading further.*) Most report lightness in the limb, and no more pressure or tingling in the hand.

To an observer, the unruffling movements would appear the same, but to the recipient, the resulting feeling is very different. The only difference in the two unruffings is the intention modified through visualization.

Unruffling Visualisation: Exercise 2

In another exercise, students work in pairs briefly unruffling each other's fields. Then I ask whether they were unruffling the area between the receiver's skin and their hands, or visualizing the work going deeper. Most beginning students think they are only affecting the field outside the skin.

Following a reminder that the field extends through the physical body (each of us is a field), and that the unruffling movement goes through the field (including the body) like a "wave," the students are asked again to unruffle each others' fields, working with that awareness. Afterwards, they report a deeper sense of relaxation. This is made even more profound by adding the visualisation of a wave of blue light moving through the field with the unruffling movements. This "deep blue unruffling" results in even greater relaxation.

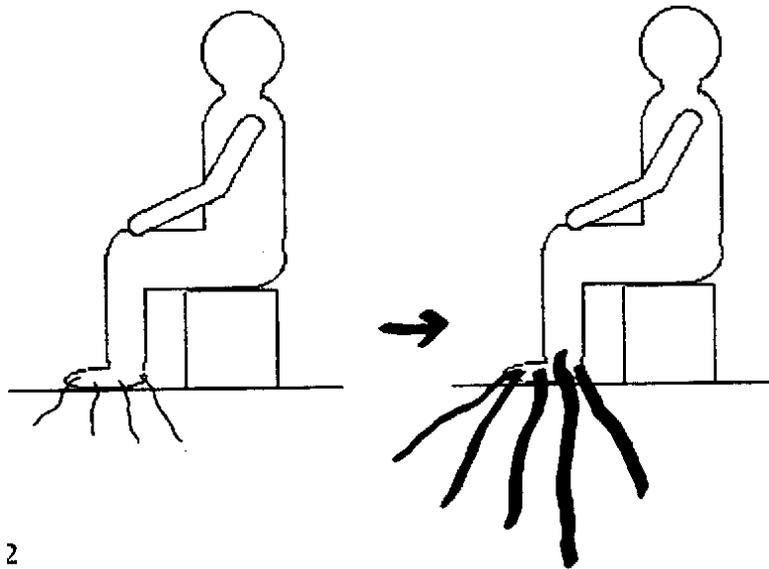
These exercises lead to greater understanding of the role of intention and visualisation in the TT treatment. As people practice TT more and more, they realise that hand movements are really metaphors for thoughts/intentions. Years ago, Donna Logan Van Vliet asked me if a person without hands could do TT. We quickly concluded that answer was "Yes, by doing a visualised treatment."

Grounding-Connecting-Brightening Exercise

Another exercise that I use to strengthen visualisation abilities involves grounding and connections through the bio-energetic field. People work in pairs: the receiver sits on a chair with hands and feet separated, and the practitioner sits on the floor at the partner's feet. If hands are clasped, energy does not

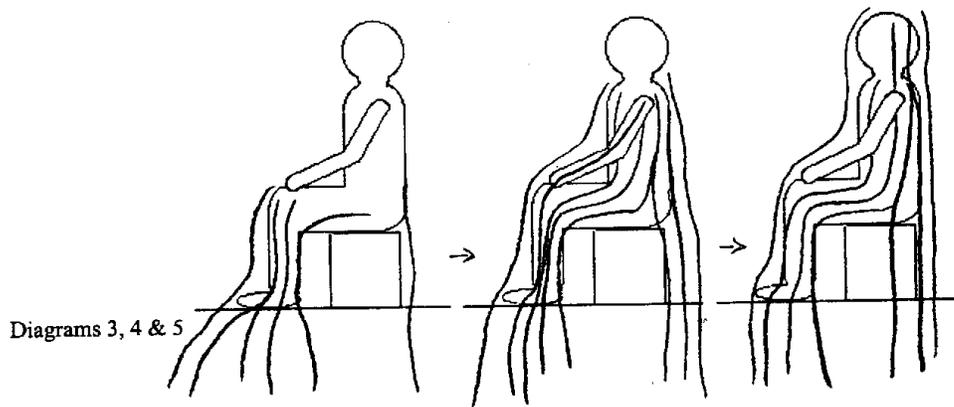
flow from the shoulders, down the arms and into the legs and feet as well. If legs or feet are crossed, or if the angles at the knees and ankles are too tight, energy does not flow through the lower part of the field as easily.

Step 1. With hands on the feet, the practitioner visualises roots from the feet into the ground. Visualising the roots extending from the entire sole, heel, toes and even ankles into the ground--increasing in number and thickness--strengthens the grounding and sets the stage for increased flow through the field.

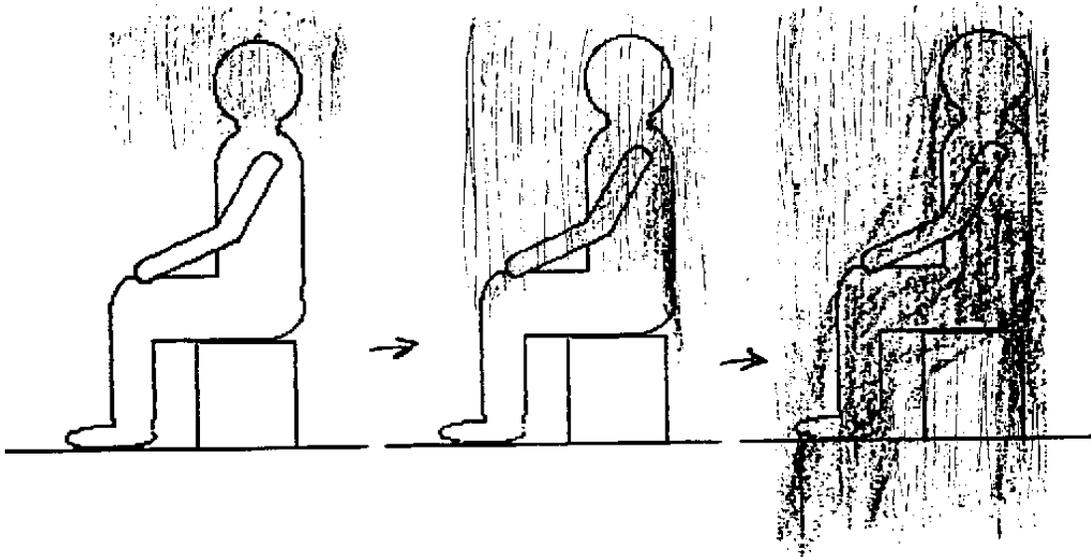


Diagrams 1 & 2

Following this, the practitioner checks to see what parts of the field are connected to these roots: is the field up to the knees connected to the roots? To the hips? Is the tail of the spine rooted directly into the ground? And through this the full length of the spine? Is the field around the digestive tract grounded? Are the major organs connected to the roots? The upper chest? The entire back? The neck? And the head? If at any time, the practitioner has difficulty visualising a portion of the field connecting to the roots, he/she may support the connection with actual unruffling movements in the area.



Step 2. Once the connection through the entire field is visualised, the practitioner then invites light to come in through the crown chakra and gently brighten the field as it flows through. This can be followed and directed through visualisation: light enters the field at the head, and moves smoothly down through the areas of the neck, shoulders-arms, upper chest, the major organs, the back, the digestive tract, through the hips, thighs, knees, lower legs and feet into the ground. The practitioner may “see” the light turn different colours as it moves through the field. The field brightens, and the sense of energy flowing through the field increases.



Diagrams 6, 7 & 8

If at any point the energy does not flow easily through a part of the field, the practitioner must support the flow with actual unruffling movements.

When the light flows freely through the entire field into the ground, the exercise is finished.

Applications of these Visualisation Exercises

By doing the unruffling and visualisation exercises described above, students quickly develop the ability to “make every move count” in the TT treatment. Their centering deepens and their work becomes more efficient and effective.

The visualised grounding-connecting-brightening procedure is particularly useful for treating migraine headaches, where actual unruffling movements might be too painful for the person to endure. In addition, this measure is useful to add near the ending of a conventional TT treatment.

The grounding-connecting-brightening visualisation may be used with animals as well as people. A gentle touch on a paw or tail can support the visualisation and provide a quiet way of treating very ill animals. As well, it can be used in a conventional TT treatment.

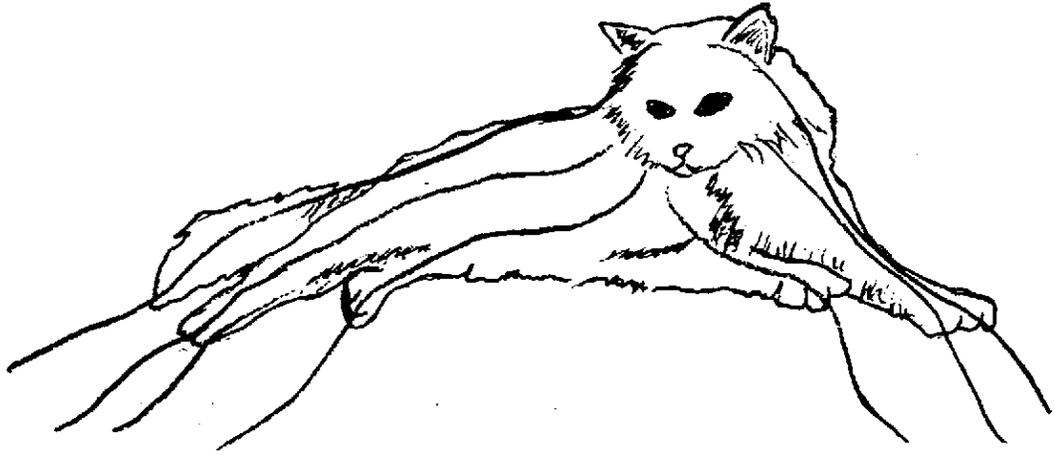


Diagram 9