Wander-Full, Wonder-Filled Thinking

by Caroline Barrow (more info)
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Fishing, golf, the intricacies of knitting or crochet, chair designs of the 20th century… there are an amazing number of different things people think about, get inspired and passionate about. Yet how often do we really take the time to think about new things, different things or even the things we do every day. In fact, what I am getting at is how often do we take a bit of extra time to think about what we are doing as practitioners?

Some therapies rely a lot on the reasoning process, applying a treatment approach after listening to the client's experience as well as their body (e.g. Osteopathy, Chiropractic, Acupuncture, Homeopathy…. to name just a few). Others teach a certain form that, once learned, allows for practitioners to follow their intuition about how they work on any given client. Clearly, however we treat there are always new things to learn about how and why people respond in the way they do and what may actually be going on within the body-mind-spirit.

To 'think', to ponder on a subject, often leads us into wondering (not too different from a sort of delicious wandering about our own brains) about how, why, where… While the process of thought is still a mystery, the gems it can unearth are delightful! How do those memories, things we knew years ago but thought we'd forgotten, intuitions from non-local mind, let alone flashes of inspiration, actually fire the neurological wiring that our brains are so wonderful at coordinating? Who knows?! Yet to make full use of this powerful resource we can combine all the things we have learned, what we know about our therapy, the form of how we treat, the anatomy and physiology that describe how bodies carry out their processes, other models of how the pieces fit together, past experience and take all of this into a wonder-filled meandering as we think about our treatments, what we did and how this affected and made changes for our client.

Make sure you have the physical information. If a client has a particular pain or injury in some part of the body, a pulled muscle, a trapped nerve, high blood pressure, a disease you are not familiar with, treat as best you know but fill in any gaps when you come back and think about it later. Do you know exactly which muscle they had pulled? What type of movement would they have had to do to injure it? What movements would have been compromised after that – was this the case? What else is in the area physically? How do the fascial connections possibly relate to other areas of the body – were these affected? Look up the unfamiliar disease. What are the symptoms the orthodox medical approach would typically observe – is this the case for your client? Why might it be there? Why might the symptoms around high blood pressure be there? Reminding yourself of the causes may help you to ask the key question next time (or that time!) that may help them understand more about it for themselves. It may be as simple as asking if they are drinking enough water – without it the vessels have to constrict to give their walls enough pressure to get the blood around the body which can lead to hypertension. Are there emotional responses, belief systems, other psychological patterns feeding in to the mix?

Drawing from the knowledge base, we can then apply our creative brains. As we wonder about it, our lateral thinking can take over and our intuition and
inspiration has another opportunity. Old pieces of information we have stored somewhere bubble up to the surface. It can be amazing what other facts and experiences are still in our brains waiting to help us help others.

Is it necessary to work so hard at learning? Well, perhaps not. When I was travelling in Guatemala a few years back I was privileged to meet a medicine woman of one of the mountain tribes. She had been 'told' she would take this role on earlier in her life and resisted it – with great personal tragedy occurring as a result (she believed). What happened when she finally decided within herself to take on this mantle? Did she then have years of study to learn the herbs for different conditions, when to pick them, where to find them, how and when to administer them? No. She just knew. She was an inspiration. Her natural interest then led her into doing more study and finding out more about how she was working. While I haven't met anyone over here for whom that was the case, we can, and do, develop our intuition, about how to work. When we link this to other relevant information, our creative thought can then increase our understanding of what the intuition may be directing us to do.

Our clients are fantastic teachers and by thinking, wondering and wandering around what has occurred in a session we get even more from the multitude of lessons they bring us. Each person is a stepping stone into our own greater understanding of the body, our treatment modality, how we make our treatments individual and thus what makes us the practitioners we are. It is an amazing job that we get to do – don't you think?