

The Three Functions of Potency

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William Garner Sutherland, the founder of osteopathy in the cranial field, perceived that life is supported and maintained by a sacred presence that he called the “Breath of Life.” The Breath of Life maintains the relationship of all created things to the origin or Source of creation. When its presence comes to the forefront of one’s awareness, one’s heart is cast open in love and empathy. In 1945, when treating a dying person, it was Dr. Sutherland’s direct experience of the Breath of Life that dramatically changed his relationship to his work. The Breath of Life seems to arise from a depth of stillness—a ground state called *Dynamic Stillness* in biodynamic work. Sutherland clearly sensed that the Breath of Life generates fundamental ordering and healing forces active throughout the universe and throughout life itself. He called its most basic expression the “groundswell of the Breath of Life.” In session work the groundswell may be sensed in a depth of stillness as a deep and slow impulse that moves through all things and seems to support interconnection and wholeness—where, like in new physics—every part is an expression of the whole, and the whole is affected by every part. From the groundswell of the Breath of Life, specific expressions of its creative intentions, called *primary respiration*, are generated.

Sutherland discovered that primary respiration manifests both as a vast field phenomenon and as an embodied life force within and around the human system. He spoke of the natural expression of primary respiration as the *Tide*, also called the *Long Tide* by his protégé, Rollin Becker DO. Sutherland called its presence *Intelligence with a capital “I”* (Sutherland 1990). These creative forces generate and support all specific forms in our universe, from galaxies and solar systems, to life on our planet.

Sutherland discovered that primary respiration, as the Tide, is a totally stable rhythmic phenomenon, maintaining and supporting life even in the most challenging conditions. The Long Tide manifests in stable 100 second cycles, as a tide-like phenomenon which the Tibetans called the *unconditioned winds of the vital forces*—a primary ordering principle which maintains and supports all of life’s forms and conditions. Each tidal expression of primary respiration in its 100-second cycle is specific to the entity or form being supported, yet is also not separate from the vast expression of primary respiration sensed throughout all of life. Awareness of Long Tide, and the Dynamic Stillness from which it arises, is so important when working with trauma and activation in the human system. It is a stable presence that supports all conditions—yet is not affected by them, and can be sensed as a ground of support even in the most severe circumstances.

Sutherland also wrote of a *transmutation, or change in state* from the Tide into the fluids of the body, manifesting as an embodied ordering principle that he called *potency*. In this perceptual understanding, primary respiration—as Long Tide, transmutes, or changes in state, to become an embodied life force within the body’s fluids, an intelligent bioenergy which maintains order and organization throughout life.

Sutherland wrote:

...there is an invisible element that I call the “Breath of Life.” I want you to visualize this Breath of Life as a fluid within the fluid, something that makes it move ... Visualize a potency, an intelligent potency, that is more intelligent than your own human mentality ... the Tide fluctuates: it ebbs and flows,

comes in and goes out, like the tide of the ocean. You will have observed its potency and also its Intelligence, spelled with a capital *I*. It is something that you can depend upon to do the work for you, In other words, don't try to drive the mechanism through any external forces. Rely upon the Tide. (Sutherland 1990 p. 14)

This Intelligence, he stressed, is a function of the Breath of Life—the sacred and creative presence introduced above—that is the wellspring from which all life arises and is maintained. The Breath of life manifests a “fluid within the fluid,” an enlivening and empowering potency within the fluids of the body. This is similar to the concept of *jing*, or *vital essence*, in Chinese philosophy and medicine. Jing is the embodiment, or transmutation, of what is called *cosmic chi*—a vast field of Intelligence that orders and supports all of creation. Cosmic chi is a manifestation of Tao—the eternally nameless, sacred essence of all things. Like the Long Tide, cosmic chi arises out of a depth of stillness, the gateway to our essential nature. Mantak Chia, a renowned chi kung master, writes,

Cosmic Chi is born out of the original chi of Tao and literally carries the intelligence and essence of life. Guided by this intelligence, it spreads out into the universe and manifests in different densities and forms defined by cosmic laws. This is how stars, planets, human cells, subatomic particles and all other forms of life take form and are nourished” (Chia 2004 p. 1)

Having been involved in Chinese philosophy and chi kung practices for many years, it has always struck me how amazing it is that Sutherland perceived the action of the primary forces in the human system so resonantly with Chinese philosophy, chi kung practice and Chinese medicine. His understanding of primary respiration both as a field phenomena and embodied life force so deeply mirrors this ancient wisdom. Thus Sutherland's usage of the term *potency* as an embodied, intelligent life force is very important to understand.

The Functions of Potency

As we shall see, potency, like jing, has three basic functions in the human system: *organizational*, *protective* and *healing*. It is important for the practitioner to recognize when these functions come to the forefront and to have an appropriate relationship to each of its expressions.

Organizational: Potency acts from the moment of conception to organize cellular differentiation and embryonic development, maintaining tissue morphology and order throughout life, and—given the unresolved conditions present within the system—will further act to generate the best possible overall cellular-tissue organization in a moment-to-moment fashion. It is important to perceptually experience this ordering force at work in clinical sessions and, indeed, within our own system. This most basic ordering function is a primordial expression of the Intelligence that Sutherland spoke of—an Intelligence with a capital *I* (Sutherland 1990). In relatively recent research from Tufts University, research scientists discovered that the folding of the frog embryo into a body form has nothing to do with genes, but is an expression of bioelectric forces at work between cells, within the fluids of the embryo! In Sutherland's terms, this is an illustration of the primordial organizing forces within the fluids of the body, that he called potency (Vandenberg L. N., Morrie R. D., and Adams D. S. 2011).

During session work, when unresolved history and related inertial issues and fulcrums resolve, you may sense the organizational function of potency coming to the forefront. Here a period of reorganization occurs, where the fluid-tissue field is reorganized into new relationships as conditional forces are resolved and are no longer organizing factors. You may sense, as this occurs, a resurgence of the potencies/life forces that folded the embryo into a body shape, as the primal midline surges and the tissues, suspended in fluid body, are reorganized into a new compensatory form.

Protective: When the conditions of life are met—and conditional forces enter the mind-body system—potency will also act in some way to protect the system from its effects. It initially does this by confining the conditional force to as small an area as possible in order to localize and minimize its effects on the system. To achieve this, potency densifies, or coalesces locally where a conditional force has impinged upon the system. This can be readily seen in William Seifriz's 1950's research on the stable 50-second cycle of streaming within the fluids of the slime mold, a primordial fluid organism. This constant and stable streaming was found to always be present as an underlying factor, not affected by the presence of conditions or conditional processes. In this research, he noted that when he introduced toxins into the fluid of the slime mold, the local protoplasm densifies in order to minimize the effects of the toxin on the wider system. It does this by confining the toxin to as limited an area as possible and "meets contingencies, heals itself and thus saves itself" (Seifriz 1954). This is a direct expression of the protective function of potency within the fluids of our mind-body system throughout life.

Likewise in biodynamics, we discover and directly perceive this protective function within the human system—where potency densifies, or coalesces within the body's fluids in order to protect the system from the presence and effects of conditional or added forces. In Becker's language, potency acts to *center* the conditional force within the system. He called this the *centering function* of potency (Becker 1997). As we shall see below, potency acts locally to protect the system from the presence of unresolved conditional forces by generating what is called *inertial fulcrums*, areas of density and relative inertia which, as in the slime mold research, confines the impinging force to a limited area, in order to reduce its impact upon the system as a whole.

In clinical practice, the practitioner may sense potency coalescing in a spiral-like fashion, centering the unresolved conditional force within as local an area as possible. This will be sensed as local areas of density and inertia, which, in turn, generate various compensatory tension patterns within the human system. It is always important to recognize that within every inertial fulcrum, and every condition found in our body-mind system, there is health at work centering the unresolved issue within the whole mind-body system as best as possible, given the nature of the conditions present. It is the role of the biodynamic practitioner to orient to the health present within each condition, and to help the client's system access and express that health. Likewise, in truly overwhelming experiences, potency may also express a system-wide protective response. As a practitioner, you may then sense density and protective inertia throughout both the physical and fluid bodies.

Healing: Under the right conditions, potency will initiate healing processes and act to resolve conditional forces and their effects upon the system. In this context, one role of the practitioner is to help a client's system settle into states of deepening equilibrium and stillness, where a systemic shift to wholeness and primary respiration is attained. (Becker 1997) This process is called the *holistic shift*. As the holistic shift deepens, potency will naturally initiate healing processes.

In our current Karuna Institute foundation training, we orient students to the presence of what is called the “three bodies” in some osteopathic practices. These are really three interactive fields: the physical body, or tissue field (cells and tissues), fluid body (field of fluids and embodied potency or life force) and tidal body (the vast tidal field of the Long Tide as it moves towards and away from a person's midline). Each field is suspended in the other, the tissue field is the densest, suspended in the fluid/potency field which is less dense, suspended, in turn, in the vast tidal field of Long Tide, which is least dense, but most powerful in its supportive role. In the *holistic shift* these three bodies enter a state of deepening equilibrium—physical body suspended in fluid body, suspended in tidal body—all suspended in stillness. As this occurs, field within field, the waveforms of the cranial rhythm (CRI) and the various expressions of history sensed, will subside and the practitioner may sense the physical body becoming more whole and fluid, like a fluid-embryo suspended in a wider tidal field.

Once the holistic shift deepens, potency may express healing intentions in many ways. One common expression is a shift in function of potency from its protective function to a healing process. As a practitioner, you may sense potency as a healing force shifting in the fluid body towards particular issues in the system. Along with this, you may sense the whole fluid-tissue field reorganizing around an inertial fulcrum, expressing a specific pattern relative to its presence (classically called a strain pattern). As the local area enters a deeper state of balance and stillness, you may then sense a shift in function as the inertial potency within the inertial fulcrum shifts from protective density, to a healing intention. As this occurs, you may sense a number of things expressing. These may include: (1) local pulsations of potency within the inertial area; (2) shifts of potency from the wider fluid field towards the inertial area; (3) a welling-up and permeation of potency in and around the inertial site that may have a soft, yet powerful quality; (4) a deepening of the state of balance and the emergence of field phenomena and healing processes mediated by the Long Tide; and a deeper settling into Dynamic Stillness from which multifaceted healing processes emerge.

As these processes occur, you may also sense local conditional forces being resolved as heat and vibration, along with related nervous system activation clearing. As the conditional force and its inertial fulcrum resolve, you may sense a quality of softening and expansion in the local area and a period of reorganization and realignment to natural fulcrums and midline then occurs. As introduced above, here potency expresses its organizational function and acts to generate a new form of cellular-tissue organization, order and compensation. Commonly, as a process completes, you may sense a surge in the fluid tide as more potency/life energy becomes available within the client's system.

The Protective Function of Potency and The Generation of Inertial Fulcrums

I would like to take a deeper look at the protective function of potency as conditional forces are met within our mind-body system. This protective function is at work from conception throughout life. Becker DO clearly described how two categories of force interact to generate local areas of inertia and protective density. These are the forces of primary respiration and its potency, and the myriad conditional forces met in life. When conditional forces are introduced into the system, the potency of the Breath of Life will attempt to resolve them in some way. If it is not possible to resolve the force—for instance, if the system is already compromised in some way, or if the experience is overwhelming, or if there is shock or strong emotional process involved—then potency condenses in and around the added force and becomes inertial in order to contain and compensate for its presence. This then generates an inertial fulcrum, a site of protective energies and related stasis that manifests both locally and throughout the whole body (Becker 1997).

Becker discussed this concept in many ways. He sometimes called the wider field of potency the *bioenergy field*. This intelligent bio-potency field extends 20 inches around the body (50 centimeters). Becker called this local field the *biosphere*. The biosphere includes the cells and tissues of the physical body, the body's fluids and the potency—or ordering forces within the fluids—that, in turn, generate the fluid body. As introduced above, this can also be sensed as a wider suspensory system—physical body suspended in fluid body—all suspended in the vastness of the tidal body of Long Tide.

Becker maintained that potency naturally manifests as places of stillness in this wider bioenergy field. These manifest as fulcrums that organize and order the activities and functions of the body. This is true for the body's natural fulcrums as well as its inertial fulcrums. As potency acts locally to contain and confine the effects of an added force, an inertial fulcrum is generated that is centered in the body physiology and tissue field as a whole. As introduced above, Becker called this the *centering function* of potency. In this protective function, potency acts to center the presence of the conditional force in the wider energy economy of the system. It concentrates or condenses in this wider field and becomes inertial in order to constrain and compensate for the presence of these added forces.

Becker called inertial potency *variant potency*. In this concept, the potency of the Breath of Life has had to *vary* from its natural expression in order to meet and center unresolved experiences, conditional forces and traumas. Potency thus has the ability to vary from its natural expression in order to center the disturbances found in the system. These variant or inertial potencies will also maintain compensatory patterns as they respond to the unresolved traumas or disease states held in the body. This is a truly dynamic process in which equilibrium is maintained in a moment-to-moment fashion throughout the system.

Imagine that potency is like the salt in the sea present throughout the whole fluid body. As a conditional force enters the system, potency condenses in this wider sea at the site of intrusion and becomes inertial in order to limit the effects of the force on the organism. Potency thus acts locally in its wider field to center the conditional force in the dynamics of the body as a whole. As this occurs a localized fulcrum is generated. As introduced above, the intention is to contain the unresolved force in the wider sea in the smallest area possible and to minimize its effects on the system as a

whole. As potency has become inertial, so do local fluids, cells, and tissues, and this then becomes a site of inertia that does not as easily shift in the phases of the fluid tide. Eccentric tension patterns are then generated around this local area of stasis, and altered motility and mobility occurs. This manifests as altered tissue quality, compression, resistance, fluid stasis and hypersensitivity in nerves, which may also be coupled with emotional process. Conditional patterns of tension and motion are likewise generated throughout the wider system. Healing occurs when there is a shift in the function of potency from this protective function, to healing expressions as outlined above. This commonly occurs in states of stillness and equilibrium. Sutherland oriented his practitioners to the Stillness at the heart of the Tide, This stillness centers all things and is the ground of all healing process. (Sutherland 1990)

Potency's Healing Function as Expressed in Common Stages

In the sections above, we outlined the three basic functions of potency, *organizational*, *protective* and *healing*, and looked at its protective function in some detail. In these next sections, we look at its healing functions in more detail. As introduced above, once a client's system can access a holistic shift, then the healing function of potency can come to the forefront. This occurs as the three bodies—physical, fluid and tidal bodies—settle into a deeper equilibrium. The practitioner may sense that the tissue field deepens into wholeness and fluidity, that historical patterns and the Cranial Rhythmic Impulse (CRI)/cranial rhythm settles or recedes, and that primary respiration as fluid tide and/or Long Tide, comes to the forefront.

As the holistic shift deepens, a state of dynamic equilibrium within the client's system is attained and potency can now shift from purely organizational and protective functions, to initiate healing processes. This may be sensed by the practitioner as a shift of potency within the fluid body towards a particular area. It may seem like a force within the fluids is shifting or orienting to a specific area, which is commonly the site of an inertial fulcrum of some sort. As this occurs, the practitioner—and indeed the client—may sense the whole fluid-tissue field reorganizing around a specific inertial area/fulcrum within the client's system. The tension or strain pattern organized around the local inertial fulcrum will also clarify. At this point the practitioner may sense a common sequence of events that occurs as potency within the inertial fulcrum shifts from protective coalescence to a healing function. As this occurs, potency initiates a local healing process within the inertial area in order to resolve the conditional forces being centered within the inertial fulcrum. Becker clearly wrote about the phases of this healing process:

When I have my hand in the area of one of the patient's complaints, I will feel these bioenergy fields go through three phases of activity: (i) It feels as if these energy fields and tissue elements are working their way, within their pattern, towards the point of balance for that pattern. (ii) A functioning still point, the potency, is reached at which time all motion apparently ceases, relatively speaking. Up to this time the physician is able to follow the changes within the energy fields and tissue elements through hand contacts and fulcrums points and thus gain diagnostic insight concerning the patient's problem. When the pattern goes through the functioning still point, a change takes place within the potency. 'Something Happens' as a result of this change in the potency. This is the corrective phase of the treatment program. (iii) Motion is again felt within the bioenergy fields and tissue elements. The patterns that unfolds

is one that indicates a more normal pattern of functioning for the disabled area. These three phases can take as short a time as one minute to complete their cycle or it may take several minutes depending upon the degree and intensity of the pathological-physiology involved. (Becker 1965, 1997)

Dr. Becker clearly outlines a three-phase healing awareness that commonly emerges as the holistic shift deepens and healing processes clarify in the fluid and physical bodies. I call these three phases: (1) *seeking*, (2) *settling and stilling*, and (3) *reorganization and realignment*. In phase two, settling and stilling, the forces in the inertial fulcrum enter dynamic equilibrium, also called the *state of balance*. Becker describes this as “a functioning still point.”

As we have seen, as a conditional force enters the system, potency—in its protective function—becomes inertial within the area of intrusion. It becomes relatively still as it densifies locally in order to center the presence of conditional forces within the dynamics of the whole. Thus it is actually *stillness* that centers and constrains these unresolved forces. Stillness is a direct manifestation of health. In this context, one of the roles of the practitioner is to orient to emergent stillness as it manifests in the state of balance. As this occurs, the potency and the conditional forces present in the inertial fulcrum access dynamic equilibrium, a state of balance where options are again available and potency, within a depth of stillness, can express its healing function. When dynamic equilibrium is accessed, “something happens” (Becker 1964, 1997). There is a change in the function of potency within the inertial fulcrum from protection to a healing process, and inertial potencies are activated beyond the containment and compensations held. The wider field of potency comes into play and permeation or shifting of potency into the inertial site commonly occurs (Becker 1964, 1997). Let’s explore this three-phase healing process in more detail.

The Three-Phase Healing Process

In order to appreciate Becker’s three-phase healing awareness, the practitioner must be able to orient to and perceive the action of potency in healing processes. Becker emphasizes this insight and uses the term *bioenergy field* to denote the manifestation of potency as a unified field of action. He stressed that there are bioenergy fields of wellness that are always present and accessible in clinical practice:

Through the years, I have learned that there are bioenergy fields of activity within body physiological functioning and that it is possible to learn to feel these bioenergy fields, to analyze them, to interpret them, and to re-evaluate them in anatomical-physiological terminology for diagnosis and treatment. (Becker 1965)

Work in this field, as we get to the depths of clinical practice, is essentially energetic in nature. As we deepen into the work, we discover that these “bioenergy fields of activity” order and maintain the human system. As we have seen, this is not a mechanistic energy, but an intelligent life force at work. Here Becker is pointing out that it is possible to sense the presence and action of bioenergy as potency in the human system, and to evaluate and treat from this perspective. This does not mean that an understanding of anatomy and physiology is not necessary. A clinical awareness of the embodiment of suffering and related tissue form and organization is essential for effective and efficient clinical work. An awareness of the bioenergy

underpinnings of structure and function, however, deepens the nature of the work and clarifies the healing processes set in motion by “intentions not framed by human hands.”

In this context we will explore: (1) a preliminary phase, where the system settles into a state of relative equilibrium and a specific issue and inertial fulcrum is chosen for healing purposes and (2) Becker’s three-phase awareness: the first phase of *seeking*—where healing decisions are made and potency seeks a state of equilibrium relative to a specific issue in the system; the second phase of *the state of balance*—where there is a shift of the function of potency from protective density to healing processes; and the final phase of *reorganization and realignment* of potency, fluids and tissues to natural organizing midlines and fulcrums.

Preliminary Phase

The holistic shift is the essential starting point. Here the fluid and physical bodies enter deeper coherency and the practitioner experiences the client’s biosphere (fluid and physical bodies) suspended in the wider tidal body of Long Tide as a unified and coherent whole. It is here that the practitioner may sense the physical body returning to a holistic fluid-tissue state—like an embryo suspended in fluid, and primary respiration, as fluid tide and Long Tide, may clarify relative to the client’s midline and system. As the holistic shift continues to deepen, it is common for the fluid tide to enter a state of equilibrium and stillness. It is within this state that potency may express healing intentions and a particular inertial fulcrum, related tissue pattern and history may clarify.

As this occurs, a number of phenomena may be perceived. For example, as introduced above, the practitioner may become aware of a shift or energetic drive of potency towards specific areas in the body as particular fulcrums are chosen for healing purposes. Alternatively, a welling-up and permeation of potency towards and within a particular area may be sensed, like seawater permeating dense sand. As this occurs, it may seem like the whole fluid-cellular-tissue field distorts around a particular fulcrum as a unified tensile field. It is here that specific strain patterns and history may be sensed. The inertial fulcrum is now suspended in all three fields—physical, fluid and tidal bodies—all suspended within stillness, and any level of healing process may be initiated.

This is a powerful clinical moment. Now all fields of action—potency, fluids, and tissues—are oriented to a particular fulcrum, issue, and healing potential. As this occurs, all other inertial fulcrums recede into the background and the fulcrum being attended to can be safely dealt with without overwhelming the system or the person involved. As this occurs, the practitioner settles into a receptive listening state and waits for primary respiration to initiate healing processes in relationship to the fulcrum being attended to. This is a key concept in craniosacral biodynamics. Although practitioners can facilitate stillness and deepening within a client’s system, and augment expressions of potency within inertial states, it is *primary respiration* that makes the decisions, not the practitioner. From this preliminary stage, let’s look at Becker’s three phases in more detail.

Three-Phase Healing Process

Phase One—Seeking: After the holistic shift has deepened, healing decisions are initiated by primary respiration and its potency, and an inertial fulcrum and related patterns and history may clarify. As this occurs, potency, fluids, and tissues begin to

organize around that dynamic as a unified field. All other issues subside as this particular pattern and fulcrum clarify. As this occurs, the forces that generate the fulcrum and pattern are now suspended in a unified field and naturally seek balance and equilibrium. This natural process of seeking equilibrium is the heart of this first phase of Becker's three-phase healing awareness. As an inertial fulcrum and its pattern clarify—potency, fluids, and tissues will commonly express eccentric motions and fluctuations within and around the inertial fulcrum. These may be sensed as energetic pulsations, fluid fluctuations and tensile tissue motions within and around the inertial area, all seeking balance. These indicate that the forces within the fulcrum are “working their way toward a state of balance” or dynamic equilibrium (Becker 1965, 1997). This will have a multidimensional quality to it with all three bodies involved (the physical body, the fluid body, and the tidal body).

Phase Two—Settling and Stilling—the State of Balance: In this second important phase, the state of balance is attained and the practitioner may sense that the entire field of potency, fluid, and tissue settles, stills, and comes to balance within and around the organizing fulcrum. All sense of tensile push-pull ceases as the inherent forces come to balance and stillness is accessed. It is a state of dynamic equilibrium between the potencies centering the disturbance and the inertial forces maintaining it and is not static, but is an alive and dynamic state of interchange. The state of balance is not just a local phenomenon. Classically, it is described as a *systemic neutral*, a settling and stilling in all three fields of potency, fluid, and tissues. Becker wrote:

A still, pause-rest period, the potency, is reached, at which time all motion apparently ceases... When the pattern goes *through* the stillness, a change takes place within the potency. “Something happens” as a result of this change in potency. This is the corrective phase of the treatment program. (Becker 1965, 1997)

Becker, as did Sutherland, continually oriented the practitioner to the role of stillness. He stressed that, at the heart of all inertial fulcrums, there is a stillness that centers both the inertial potency and the unresolved conditional forces present. When this stillness is accessed, a dynamic equilibrium of forces is attained and there is a change in function of potency—from protective density, to a healing activity—in both the inertial fulcrum and its pattern of disturbance. As this occurs, the healing function of potency comes to the forefront and conditional forces are processed and dissipated back into the environment. Ideally, the conditional forces that were present are fully resolved and all that remain are the biodynamic potencies of the Breath of Life. Sutherland also emphasized the importance of stillness as he oriented practitioners to the inherent stillness in the Tide. In accessing the stillness, the potency of the Tide naturally manifests (Sutherland 1990).

Further, in the state of balance, the action of primary respiration in general is now oriented to this particular inertial fulcrum and pattern, now uncoupled from all other inertial issues. This generates, in essence, a new fulcrum around which the whole system is poised. As the state of balance is accessed, potency can then shift from its inertial protective function, to a more dynamic expression of healing and resolution. As this occurs, changes take place in the inertial potencies present in the fulcrum *and* in the bioenergy field as a whole. It may seem as though the inertial fulcrum is now freely suspended in all fields.

As this occurs, *something happens* and potency is freed to act beyond the containment of the conditional forces in the inertial fulcrum, and other levels of healing process

can then be initiated. The practitioner may perceive many kinds of phenomena during this phase. As introduced earlier, these may include:

- (1) a drive of potency in the fluids toward and through the inertial area, classically called “fluid drive”;
- (2) a welling-up and permeation of potency in and around the inertial site that may have a soft, yet powerful quality, with a sense of filling and expansion;
- (3) vector-like movements of potency toward and through the inertial site;
- (4) systemic expressions of potency such as surges and shifts of potency in the fluid and physical bodies;
- (5) surges of potency rising through the fluid midline of the neural tube;
- (6) local expressions of potency within the inertial area, sensed as heat, pulsation and expansion;
- (7) conditional forces being resolved, leaving the body as heat, vibration and vector-like clearings;
- (8) processing of nervous system history and activation as heat, vibration and tingling in the client’s system;
- (9) a deepening of the state of balance and the emergence of field phenomena and healing processes mediated by the Long Tide; and
- (10) a deeper settling into Dynamic Stillness from which multifaceted healing processes emerge.

In this process, both Sutherland and Becker encouraged practitioners to orient their attention to the *potency* in the system. It is the potency that has the power to maintain balance and to compensate for unresolved traumatic forces. It is also the potency that has the power to resolve and heal these issues. Becker wrote:

My attention, as a physician using diagnostic touch, is on the potency within this patient because I know that within the potency is power and many other attributes around which the disease state or the traumatic condition within the patient is manifesting itself. I know that if a change takes place within this potency a whole new pattern will manifest itself, usually towards health for the patient. (Becker 1965, 1997)

An awareness of these kinds of biodynamic changes of potency gives the practitioner a wealth of information and is humbling. It is not we who do the healing; it is the unerring forces from within. If practitioners are able to sense the changes in the bioenergy and tidal fields, they will also sense how the system has been able to reorganize its fluid and tissue relationships after the resolution of conditional forces. This is an extremely important clinical awareness to cultivate.

When the conditional forces in the inertial fulcrum are resolved by the action of potency, and phase two is complete, the practitioner will commonly sense another settling. It may also seem as though the entire tissue field settles and expands, as it no longer has to orient to the conditional forces that have been resolved. This heralds the start of phase three.

Phase Three—Reorganization and Realignment: Phase three is one of re-orientation, reorganization, and realignment. After the end of phase two, motion is again initiated. Potency now shifts to its organizational function and the potency-fluid-tissue fields, freed from the forces generating the inertial fulcrum, will begin to reorganize and realign to natural automatic shifting fulcrums and the primal,

notochord midline. The practitioner may sense many kinds of motions at this phase and it may even seem chaotic as the whole field begins to re-orient. These may be misinterpreted as new inertial patterns emerging, but it is essential that the arising motions are not engaged with and the reorganization-realignment process is allowed to complete.

As potency expresses this third phase of Becker's three-phase awareness, the body's cells and tissues will reorganize and realign to natural fulcrums and midline, and tissue motility will be expressed with greater harmony and balance. For instance, at the end of phase three the practitioner may sense that the motility of bone and membrane is in a more harmonious relationship to the SBJ, Sutherland's fulcrum and the primal (notochord) midline. As the reorganization process is expressed, the practitioner may sense a surge within the primal midline as cells and tissues are folded embryo-like into a new compensated form. An awareness of this reorganization process, and the new relationship of tissues to natural fulcrums and the primal midline, gives the practitioner important clinical information as to how the tissue field has changed and reorganized.

At the end of the reorganization phase, a further settling may be experienced along with a surge of potency and clarification of the fluid tide. An awareness of the quality of this surge, and changes in the strength and qualities of the fluid tide, again give the practitioner further important clinical information as to how the system has resourced itself and can now manifest its potency.

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