the Emergence Explorer

Questions for the Week of September 11, 2006

"Repetitive Motion Injuries"

- How can I find the wounds in my hands and arms?
- Do most treatments amount to mere damage control?
- Will learning to picturing the pain in my arms help me to heal my arms?

Do you know?

[These questions were posed by Austin S.]
Questions asked from The Layers of Aloneness - Introduction

[Question 1]1. For the last six months or so, I have been having problems with my forearms and hands. I know this is in part related to my spending eight to ten hours a day at a computer. Mostly I feel pain in the muscles of my upper and lower forearms, and sometimes in my fingers as well. Also, my arms feel really tired all the time. Operating on the emergence principal that the "wound" is "what I can not see," how can I find the wound which is causing this pain in my hands and forearms?
[Answer] Before I answer, know that while the solution you seek is simple to grasp, following through with this solution can be time consuming. And may take great personal effort to follow through with.

Healing is, after all, always painful.

So what is the solution? Start with this. Start with the idea that you mentioned; that the "wound" is what you "cannot see." How does this "not seeing" apply then to healing repetitive motion injuries? Simply. You explore how moving your forearms and hands changes your ability to picture on the screen of your mind.

Before you do, you need to know this. There are nerve endings in the muscles surrounding bones called, "proprioceptors." Their job is to "perceive" the positions of the bones and then relay this information to the brain. What makes this important to know is, all injuries, regardless of how we label them, involve proprioceptors. How? Part of what gets wounded during all wounding events is the particular body position we are in when the wound occurs. We literally associate body positions with sudden pain.

How does knowing this help you then? You use this idea; that an element in all wounds is that we get the proprioceptive expectation of pain, to help you to locate and heal these injuries.

How do you do this? You do this by isolating, say, an arm movement arc. Then you try to keep picturing while you slowly move your arm through this arc.

If you do this, what you will find is, whenever you move through a proprioceptive BLock, you will be unable to keep picturing. You will literally lose your ability to picture.

Then, if you gently, but deliberately, rock your arm back and forth through this part of the arc, you will gradually isolate the exact point at which this happens. How? By locating the point at which you anticipate pain.

Focus on finding where this anticipation of pain begins and ends then. This anticipation is your guide to healing. How? First, because it will help you to define the exact point of injury. Second, because it will lead you to healing. How? Well, if you continue to rock your arm back and forth through this arc, and if you focus on breathing through the pain itself, you will eventually feel surprised by it not hurting you.

This surprise signals healing. We literally have changed the anticipation of pain into the anticipation of good.

Does this always happen though? In theory, it can always happen. In real life though?

Pretty much so, yes. Of course, the more recent the injury, the more you will anticipate pain. Even so, finding, and healing, this anticipation of pain is the key to healing repetitive motion injuries.

Finally, how can you be sure that you have healed a particular BLock? Easy. When you repeatedly feel delighted by the very movement which previously caused you to feel tense, then you have healed this particular injury. In other words, you are looking to feel the repeated experience of delight when making this movement. When you do, you will have healed this block.

So is this all there is to it? Yes. However, remember what I said at the start. All injuries, great and small, involve proprioceptive memory. Which is just another way to say, all injuries involve physically painful expectations. This means, even injuries which we see as mainly psychological in nature, such as blocking

an intended punch with your forearm, involve these kinds of blocks. Which simply means, there are in all likelihood, quite a few blocks to heal. Not just one.

Here then is what makes healing take great personal effort to do. Healing always involves facing pain. And healing always involves threads of pain to related injures.

My point? As they say in NA, don't give up before the miracle happens. Healing is possible, given you follow through and keep exploring your anticipations of pain.

[Question 2] I have tried many things to help my arms; professional acupuncture, bodywork, and chiropractic as well as Tai Chi and relaxation meditations. In each case, I have experienced different levels of relief. So far, though, I have found no lasting solution. Nor has any clear picture of the wound emerged. Do these treatments amount to mere damage control, or can I actually find healing through them?
[Answer] The answer depends entirely on if anything emerges during the treatments. No emergences. No healing. Emergences. Healing.

The trick is for you to use what we've just discussed; consciously exploring your anticipation of pain, to help you to locate and heal these blocks. The beauty in these treatments then is to contrast the wonderful feelings they provoke in you with your feelings that some of it will hurt. Thus, anticipating pain during what are in essence pleasurable experiences raises your ability to sense and find blocks.

[Question 3] I have recently realized that I cannot picture pain. I also am aware that since I have yet to be amazed by pain, I have yet to learn what it is. Will learning to picturing the pain in my arms help me to heal my arms?
[Answer] In theory? Yes. In practice? Maybe. Why do I say, maybe? Because it's pretty difficult to define exactly what it is you need to picture. You see, "pain" is a meta idea. Which makes it something akin to us seeing the essence of a square. Or anything else which exists only in theory. In other words, seeing these things are, in essence, like seeing "holes."

Thus, while we can picture imperfect examples of most theoretical things, picturing them precisely is the difficult thing. And while knowing mentally what these things are is something most of us can do, no human being can see a hole. We con only see what is around the hole.

So should you try to find a picture for what pain looks like? My answer? Yes. What will makes this easier for you though will be to know you are not looking for a definite picture for pain. No human can have this. You are only looking for a representative picture of pain.

Healing your repetitive motion injuries may give you several of these very pictures then.

[Question 4] My chiropractor told me the problem with my arms is caused by repetitive motion. Is this blame?
[Answer] Yes. Saying your pain comes from repetitive motions is blame. Why? "Consciously" repeating any motion is impossible. Which makes conscious repetitive motion an oxymoron.

In other words, there is no such thing as a conscious repetitive motion. Therefore, all repetitive motion occurs while the person is unconscious. Moreover, because making unconscious choices is, by definition,

impossible, we cannot be blamed for injuries related to repetitive motion.

The question remains, though, is repetitive motion the cause of these injuries? Again, no it is not. Why not? Simply because doing something unconsciously does not necessarily cause us to be injured. In fact, getting injured requires we first become hyperaware.

Translation. We must be in a hyperconscious state before we can be injured. Why? Because the sequence of injury is, in essence, only three experiences. Hyperawareness; being startled, and going into shock. This sequence of three events is what creates our wounds. Thus, the only thing which repeats in injury is this sequence. In every other way, injury infinitely varies.

So what exactly wounded you? I'm not sure. To be honest, it seems you may have a pretty extensive set of proprioceptive BLocks. What I am sure of though is that these proprioceptive BLocks came from experiences in which you simply got startled while you were hyperaware, and that repeating the motion you did in these wounding scenes is the only thing which is really repeating.

[Question 5] I work with other computer artists who do not seem to suffer from the same problems with their arms as I do. In Emergence, we learn that ten people can have the same life experience and only one of them may be wounded by it. Is it possible that I have been wounded; hyper aware, startled, and shocked, in some way that I am not yet aware of? Would this explain why other people who I work with do not suffer the same way?
[Answer] Not only is this possible. It is definite. You have experienced things in and around your hands and arms which most of the other folks at your jobs have not.

What kinds of activities might this involve?

Your wresting in school for, one thing. Wrestling certainly involves a lot of hand and arm movement. It also very much creates feelings of being hyperaware in people, even in those just watching.

It can also lead to people being startled, and shocked. Thus, it in all likelihood is one of the stages on which some of these injuries occurred. You did, after all, wrestle for years in school.

What other kinds of activities might be involved. Any activity in which hands and arms play an important part. Your learning box, for one. Your learning to draw, for another. Even your learning how to scale cliffs is a possible wounding stage.

Be patient. And explore as many possible wounding stages as your mind can logically discern. They all hold the potential for great amounts of healing. And great amounts of delight, given you hand in there and do the necessary work.

God luck, Austin. And remember. You deserve more than damage control. You deserve healing.

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