

The Subtle Body

Key to a Positive Quality of Life

Over the years, we often lose our natural zest for life and our inner sense of well-being. How can we prevent ourselves from becoming disconnected? How can we stay in touch with our inner self? The “Subtle Body Balance” treatment takes a new approach. By including the subtle body in the therapy, it is possible to directly improve the psychological well-being of the patient. The positive effect is now measurable and proven.

It could be described as a deficit of our culture that we are so busy on the outside that we do not learn to keep in touch with our inner self. It has become a core problem for many people that they have become disconnected from themselves. They no longer feel themselves, experience inner darkness, emptiness or coldness or feel alienated from themselves. What is the best way to help these people if they seek therapeutic help?

It is considered a kind of unsolved mystery in our society as to how a positive inner quality of life can be achieved in the long term. We tend to attribute qualities such as a natural joyfulness or basic trust in life to childhood and often resign ourselves to the fact that they fade with age. As children, we still have intuitive access to this inner vitality and assurance. Many people can still remember a time when they felt something warm and alive in the center of their chest. But as time goes on, this flame of inner life dies down and at some point you realize that things have become darker inside of you, that life has become more tedious and has lost its color. It can be traumatic events that lead to this state, or also illness, surgery, prolonged periods of stress.

The key is in the subtle body

So what can we do to maintain or regain the inner vitality of our early years? In my experience, a key lies in the human subtle body. In three decades of therapeutic work and research, I have been able to determine this: We humans possess a largely undiscovered resource for our well-being in our subtle bodies. And we can learn to tap into this for ourselves.

Through the perception of their own subtle body and conscious attention to it, people can reconnect with themselves again and experience a lost sense of inner security and a basic trust. This is made possible with the “Subtle Body Balance” treatment based on the Goethert method. It reaches patients on a level that is difficult to reach with conversations, medication or physical therapies. It also gives patients the ability to help themselves. It does not require any special talent, extensive training or years of meditation practice. Desired changes often occur after just three treatments and performing the exercises. The positive effects have been proven by heart rate variability measurements.

Our palpable inner center

But first, let's take a step back. What does it actually mean to “feel yourself” or “feel disconnected”? How do you reconnect with yourself? Our language has many expressions that refer to being at home within ourselves, such as being “beside yourself” or “with yourself”. However, these feelings remain elusive until the subtle level of the human being is taken into account.

The subtle body is the layer that surrounds and penetrates the physical body up to a distance of about six inches. In yoga philosophy, it is known as the *pranamaya kosha* or energy sheath, because this is where our

life energy is found. This part of us is not just fleeting energy, but also reveals material properties. For this reason, I prefer address and handle it in terms of “subtle matter” rather than “subtle energy”. Our subtle (matter) body can be experienced tactilely. And this experience is exactly what Subtle Body Balance is all about.

It never ceases to amaze me what a profound effect simply becoming aware of the subtle body can have on a person. It is often as if a switch has been flipped: A heightened self-awareness, an improved sense of well-being, greater inner stability and a different perspective on life emerge.

In this sense, our sense of well-being has a tangible level. We can literally learn to touch the “inner center” that we are often so desperately searching for. For this purpose, the “Subtle Body Balance” treatment was developed, which therapists can learn in a short time and integrate into various other forms of therapy – and from which they can even benefit themselves during treatment (see article in CO.med 7/2023).

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		HF: 2.075 msec ² (30%) (+483% Tag Ø)	pNN50: 62,56 % (+600% Tag Ø)

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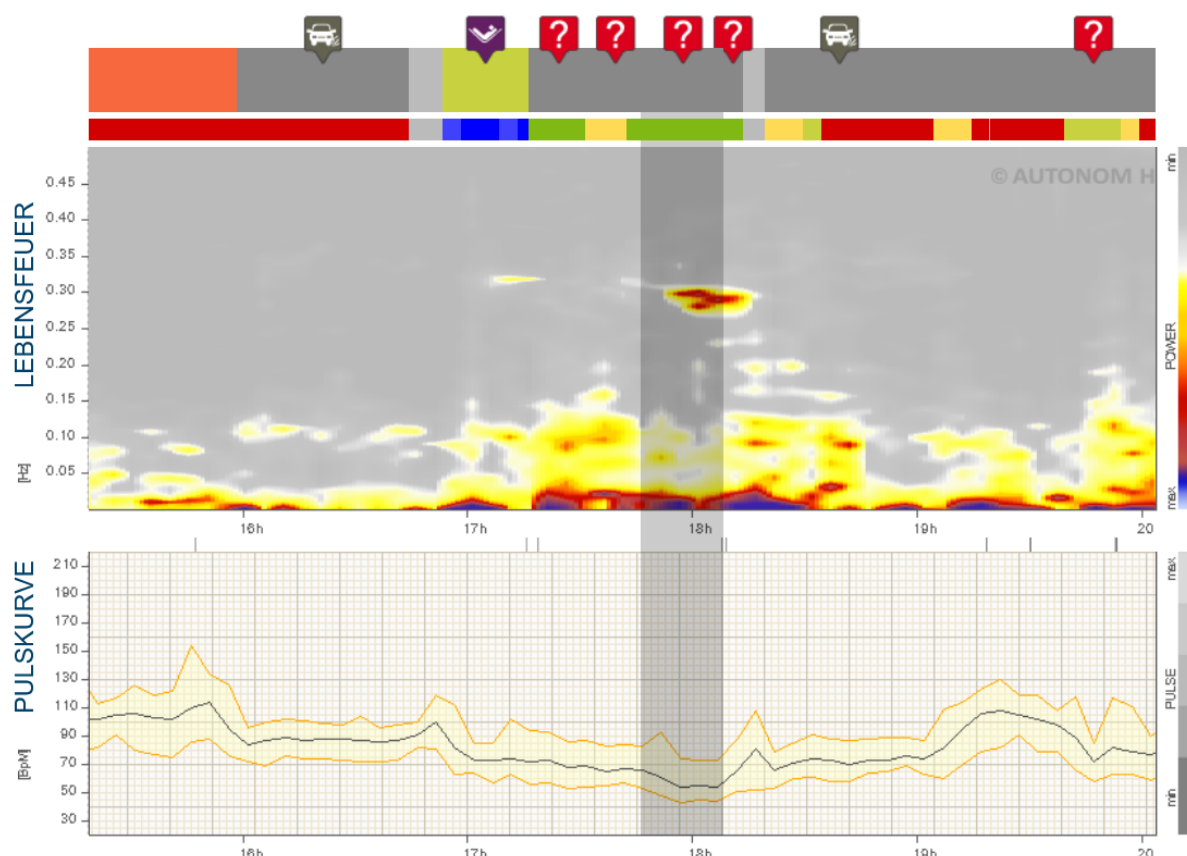


Fig. 1: Heart rate variability measurement during a Subtle Body Balance treatment. © Autonom Health Measurements, calculations and analyses carried out by Dr. Alfred Lohninger, Autonom Health GesundheitsbildungsGmbH, www.autonomhealth.com

The Subtle Body Balance procedure

A sequence of three 40-minute sessions over seven to ten days is recommended. The exercises that are taught should ideally be performed daily by the patient for about two weeks, then after a break, daily again for a while until inner stability and balance become the new norm. Later, the exercises can be applied as necessary.

First step: the theory

A bit of theory at the beginning is important in order to familiarize the patient with this usually new field on a mental level. This often leads to the first “aha” moments, because subtle sensations are something that we are all subconsciously familiar with. For example, we retreat when a person who makes us feel uncomfortable comes too close. When the subtle body is healthy, it can protect us from external influences and provide us with vital energy. When it is in a poor condition, we are thin-skinned, exhausted or constantly tense. While the therapist explains this, the patient draws on his or her own experiences with the subtle body and begins to look within.

Second step: Sensing the subtle body and exercises for inner balance

The next step is to experience the subtle body tactilely. The therapist demonstrates the procedure: Coming from the side, the right hand is carefully placed in front of the center of the chest, a hand's width away from the physical body. The patient should observe whether anything can be felt there. Some do not feel anything at this point, but shortly thereafter they experience a tingling sensation in the hand and warmth. Then, after further instruction, they perceive something like a surface or boundary.

When patients become aware of their forgotten subtle layer, it is often a special moment. They experience themselves more holistically and more present. They enter a frequency where thoughts are silent and they can be in the here and now with heightened awareness. This experience of inner stillness, peace and presence of mind is also sought with long meditation practice – here it is possible in a short time through access to your own subtle body.

Over the course of the sessions, four sequential instructions are taught. These exercises are designed to create inner balance in parallel with the refinement of the perception of one's own subtle body, both of which have a positive effect on its condition. The subtle body responds very quickly to manual attention. The result is an improvement in inner well-being. For example, if you were feeling tense at the beginning, you may notice that the subtle body feels just as tight and contracted. After each step, the subtle body expands noticeably and becomes more supple. Relaxation and inner peace set in. During this development, the patient understands that by being able to take care of their own subtle body, they are in charge of their own well-being.

Third step: On the treatment table

After the patient's first perceptual experiences, the treatment takes place on the treatment table for about 20 minutes. The therapist's hand palpates and activates the patient's entire subtle body from head to toe at a distance of approx. 6 inches from the body. Patients are often amazed that even with their eyes closed, they can feel exactly where the therapist's hand is, even though the physical body is never touched. This creates an (enhanced) awareness of the subtle body. As a therapist, you can experience how an initially weak or compressed subtle body revives and unfolds under your hand. The patient experiences this like a living cushion around the whole body.

Subtle body work is not the same as energy work

At this point I would like to point out that subtle body work according to the Goethert method differs greatly from the various forms of energy work. Participants in the training who have practiced a form of energy work are often surprised to discover this when they work with their own subtle body for the first time.

No energy exchange takes place during subtle body work – no energy is given to or taken from the patient's system and no energetic connection is created. The work does not take place on a mental level or with a conscious intention. The efficacy of the work is based solely on the activation of the subtle body. This happens when the two subtle bodies meet. You can imagine it as a signal, similar to a tuning fork that begins to vibrate with the same frequency – the subtle body resonates and receives the impulse for healthy activity.

Verifiable effect on the autonomic nervous system

In addition to numerous remarkable testimonials, we now have measurement data that proves a positive effect of subtle body work on the autonomic nervous system: A study was conducted on the effectiveness of Subtle Body Balance by means of heart rate variability (HRV) measurements. The HRV measurement is considered an objective measure of the physical and mental state and shows what is beneficial. Long-term measurements with test subjects have revealed a strengthening of the entire autonomic nervous system. The effect of the Subtle Body Balance treatment shows a strongly pronounced, repeatable pattern in the HRV – an example is shown below. The four question marks on the graph indicate the period of the Subtle Body Balance session: Theory, Exercises, Treatment and Follow-up. The values listed were measured during the treatment on the treatment table.

A positive reaction of the autonomic nervous system is already indicated during the exercises, as can be seen in the graph. The treatment itself leads to intensive recovery and regeneration, the rhythms in the body become coherent and synchronized. The heart rate often sinks lower than during sleep, breathing deepens and the respiratory sinus arrhythmia sets in again and again. Activation of the parasympathetic nervous system is shown by a sharp increase in the high frequency (HF) values, in this example by 483 percent. The pNN50 value, which is a measure of vagus activity, also rises far above the daily average during the treatment, in some cases even higher than during deep sleep. In this particular test subject, vagus activity is 600 percent higher than her daily average. What distinguishes this from sleep or known relaxation methods is that the low-frequency (LF) values, which are associated with mental activity, also increase significantly during this treatment in parallel with the strong vagus activation. The same can be seen in the Very Low Frequency (VLF) range, which represents the muscular power reserves. Thus, the total power values increase in a remarkable way.

One can speak of a strengthening of the entire system within a deep state of rest and a maximum of physical economy. This is in line with the feedback from patients that they feel deeply relaxed as well as present, alert and physically strengthened as a result of the treatment. Greater vitality and improved ability to recover are also reported in the post-treatment period, which is verified by measurements.

Activation of the vagus nerve through Subtle Body Balance

The measured high vagus activation, sometimes above deep sleep level, which is apparently made possible by the activation of the subtle body, demonstrates a significant advantage of supplementing a wide range of therapies with Subtle Body Balance. The important role of the vagus nerve in physical and mental health is now widely known – it is called the resting nerve because relaxation occurs under its influence, as well as the feel-good nerve because it is said to influence the production of neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine, and as the self-healing nerve because all autoregulation and healing processes take place solely while the vagus nerve is activated.

Case study on the effects of treating an anxiety disorder with Subtle Body Balance

The positive effects of the treatment can also be demonstrated in a specific case study. It comes from the practice of Dr. Kathrin Nieter, a specialist in internal medicine, holistic medicine and psychotherapy. She completed the “Subtle Body Balance” training course with me and uses the method in her practice.

The 55-year-old patient in question has suffered from inner tension and anxiety for as long as she can remember. The latter repeatedly manifested itself acutely in panic attacks, accompanied by a racing heart, sweating and dizziness. At times, the anxiety is so strong that she cannot leave the house for days.

No physical cause for the symptoms could be found. As she tells it, the patient has already undergone numerous therapies and tried various measures to alleviate her anxiety – with moderate success. After participating in the Subtle Body Balance training course, Dr. Nieter applies the newly learned technique to the patient. She receives a treatment sequence of three appointments within a short period of time. From the very first treatment, the patient becomes increasingly relaxed. After the treatment, she reported a feeling of security and happiness that she could hardly put into words. She felt a warm vibration and a pleasant flow around her. Something inside her had come alive again.

A few weeks later, she shared her experience using the exercises for severe headaches resulting from a professional conflict situation. After only ten minutes, she noticed a significant reduction in the pain, which she felt was about 50 percent. After a further ten minutes, the headache was virtually gone.

Two months later, after doing the exercises regularly, she now feels as if she is permanently embedded in a force that gives her the feeling that nothing can happen to her.

A year later, she reported that she had been completely free of panic attacks ever since. When the first signs became noticeable, she would turn to her subtle body, as she had learned to do, and feel herself coming back to herself, into balance and calming down.

Conclusion

By integrating the subtle body, Subtle Body Balance gives therapists a fundamentally new way to quickly and effectively improve the inner well-being of their patients. With the help of the exercises, patients can for the first time develop an awareness of their subtle body and take care of it on their own. This alone has a noticeable positive effect on the patient's well-being. The effect of Subtle Body Balance has also been proven by clear and reproducible results using the HRV measurement method recognized by conventional medicine. The measurements are thus a further indication of the existence of the subtle part of us human beings – our subtle body – which is still largely ignored by conventional science. They show how important it is that we become aware of our subtle body and grant it more attention.

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Read more:

Ronald Göthert: Entdecke deinen Feinstoffkörper – das Praxisbuch für Schutz und Stärkung der Lebensenergie, Lotos Verlag

Literature

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About the author:

Ronald Goethert has been researching the connections between subtle reality and human beings since the early 1990s. Based on his research and experience, he has developed various therapies for the subtle body to free it from injuries and stress: subtle body therapy according to the Goethert Method and the “Subtle Body Balance” treatment. His mission is to reconnect as many people as possible with their neglected subtle body. Ronald Goethert passes on his decades of practical experience in seminars, consultations and training courses.