

A Key to Deep Regeneration

Strengthening the Autonomic Nervous System Through Subtle Body Balance by the Goethert Method

If granted one wish, many people would likely choose eternal youth. Feeling capable and vital for a long time is a desirable goal. Yet in uncertain times—when stress-related illnesses are rapidly increasing—this goal is not easy to achieve. The need for methods that support regeneration and self-regulation is great.

Surprisingly, a part of us that most people do not even know exists may now prove to be a key. The subtle body proves able to positively influence and regulate the autonomic nervous system to a remarkable degree—and thus strengthen a person's regeneration and overall vitality. Evidence for this effect was demonstrated in 2023 through a study using heart rate variability (HRV) measurements conducted by an experienced scientist and physician.

More Regeneration than in Deep Sleep

Dr. Alfred Lohninger, an expert in HRV analytics and director of the Autonom Health Institute in Vienna, did not expect much from the measurements at first. With over 100,000 long-term HRV measurements in his database, he assumed there was nothing significantly new left to discover. But the effects of the Goethert Method "Subtle Body Balance" treatments on the autonomic nervous system surprised even him:

"When we received the first results," Dr. Lohninger later said in an interview, "we were quite astonished, because they showed patterns we had never seen before. Such rapid increases in HRV and significant decreases in heart rate had not been observed until now—especially not in a non-sleep state."

At first glance, the patterns resembled those of healthy deep sleep, only in a far more pronounced form. Not only was the vagus nerve—responsible for healing processes in the body—more active than during sleep; the sympathetic nervous system was also activated, producing unusually high total power values. It was as if a switch had been flipped that brought the entire system into maximum efficiency.

When analyzing the measurements more closely, Dr. Lohninger found coherence between heartbeat and breathing at a 4:1 ratio. This coherence, he explained, brings all bodily rhythms back into alignment: "The interplay of rhythms in the body is health, wellbeing, and flow. In this state we need the least energy and can perform the most. We feel centered—a state we continually strive for and that defines us."

Even more astonishing: An effect that is sometimes seen only in people after decades of meditation or yoga appeared to be instantaneously accessible in a completely inexperienced test subject. Perhaps a coincidence? To verify this, further measurements were conducted. The pattern repeated in men and women of different ages and health conditions. It became clear that this is a phenomenon which has been previously overlooked by science. The effect occurs when the subtle body of a human being is activated as a whole.

The Measurement Shows: The Subtle Body Exists

But what is this subtle body that unexpectedly proves to be a key to our autonomic nervous system? It is a finer layer surrounding the physical body at a distance of about 15 centimeters—one that permeates the body and can also be sensed with the hand. For the past three decades, Ronald Goethert has been studying this subtle layer and developing methods for subtle-body health.

The treatment, whose effect on the body Dr. Lohninger had examined is called “Subtle Body Balance” (SBB). Ronald Goethert has been teaching this method to health professionals for about four years, after having put over 25 years of experience, research and practice into its development. “After all these years of subtle-body work”, Ronald Goethert explains, “I know for certain that a healthy subtle body strongly influences our wellbeing and vitality. The measurements now not only prove that this finer layer around us exists—though many may still doubt it. These results also show we can regulate the autonomic nervous system—which until now has been considered barely influenceable—astonishingly quickly and effectively via the subtle body.”

When the subtle body returns to healthy activity, which SBB makes rapidly possible, something emerges in us for which there is no universally accepted term. One might call it “the miracle of life.” We reconnect with our inner selves, accompanied by a feeling of deep confidence and primal trust; the original “spark of life” shines again in the eyes. The subtle body—referred to in other terminologies as the “etheric body” or “vital body”—is likely to be that, which animates the otherwise lifeless matter of our physical body. It also serves as a link to what Ronald Goethert calls “individuality,” the inner essence or soul of a person. When this reconnection occurs, it is not surprising that regenerative order also returns on the physical level, as reflected in the autonomic nervous system activity in the measurements.

HRV: A Reliable Reflection of Health

Heart rate variability (HRV) measurements, which reflect the activity of the autonomic nervous system, are becoming increasingly popular among physicians, alternative practitioners, and health advisors, as HRV is considered the most reliable health parameter available today. Many people know HRV measurement from childbirth, where it is used to monitor the baby's heartbeat. Dr. Alfred Lohninger, himself a gynecologist, has advocated HRV for decades for people of all ages because it provides a holistic view of both physical and psychological condition.

Devices for everyday use are also becoming more common; while less precise, they still offer helpful insights into daily health. Heart rate variability means that the heart does not beat evenly and rigidly, as many believe, but varies slightly from one beat to the next—a sign of health and adaptability. A heart with good variability can regulate our life optimally.

Our bodies depend on a harmonious interplay between the sympathetic nervous system, which drives performance, and the parasympathetic system, which enables regeneration. The vagus nerve, which makes up most of the parasympathetic system, plays a particularly important role. It is referred to as the “health nerve,” because all self-regulation and healing processes can occur only when the vagus nerve is active. Chronic stress has particularly negative effects: it first restricts our ability to recover via the vagus nerve. The body can then no longer regenerate properly. As a result, our ability to perform via the sympathetic system also decreases, leading at some point to a state of burnout.

Effective Improvement of HRV Through the Subtle Body

Previous measures to improve HRV were mostly limited to lifestyle adjustments or recommendations such as meditation or yoga. These methods tend to be time-consuming, impractical for many, and often effective only after long-term training. By contrast, activation of the subtle body stimulates the entire autonomic nervous system almost instantaneously, without implementing breathing exercises or any sort of technical device.

A method like Subtle Body Balance, which can immediately and sustainably improve HRV, is unprecedented. Long-term measurements show that after only a few treatments, a person's biological age can decrease significantly. Even simply performing the exercises—for example placing the hand in front of the center of the chest and touching the surface of one's subtle body—immediately activates the vagus nerve. During the treatment itself, in which the subtle body is palpated from head to toe by the practitioner, HRV values increase across all frequency ranges. This triggers deeper regeneration than the body can achieve even in deep sleep. Even in test subjects whose vagus nerve activity was almost absent, healthy values could be reached through about three to six treatments.

Subtle-body contact occurs without physical touch. The practitioner's subtle body gives a gentle impulse to the client's subtle body, stimulating healthy self-activity. This interaction differs fundamentally from energy work, as no energy is transferred.

SBB appears to create an ideal state that lasts for a certain period and can be reactivated through home exercises. The heart beats slowly, the body functions efficiently and without energy waste. Thus, Subtle Body Balance can be considered effective training for the autonomic nervous system as well as a method of regeneration and rejuvenation.

Case Study: Intensive Regeneration

In the example measurement shown, the typical effect pattern of a Subtle Body Balance treatment is visible, presented in the Autonom Health analysis software developed by Dr. Lohninger.

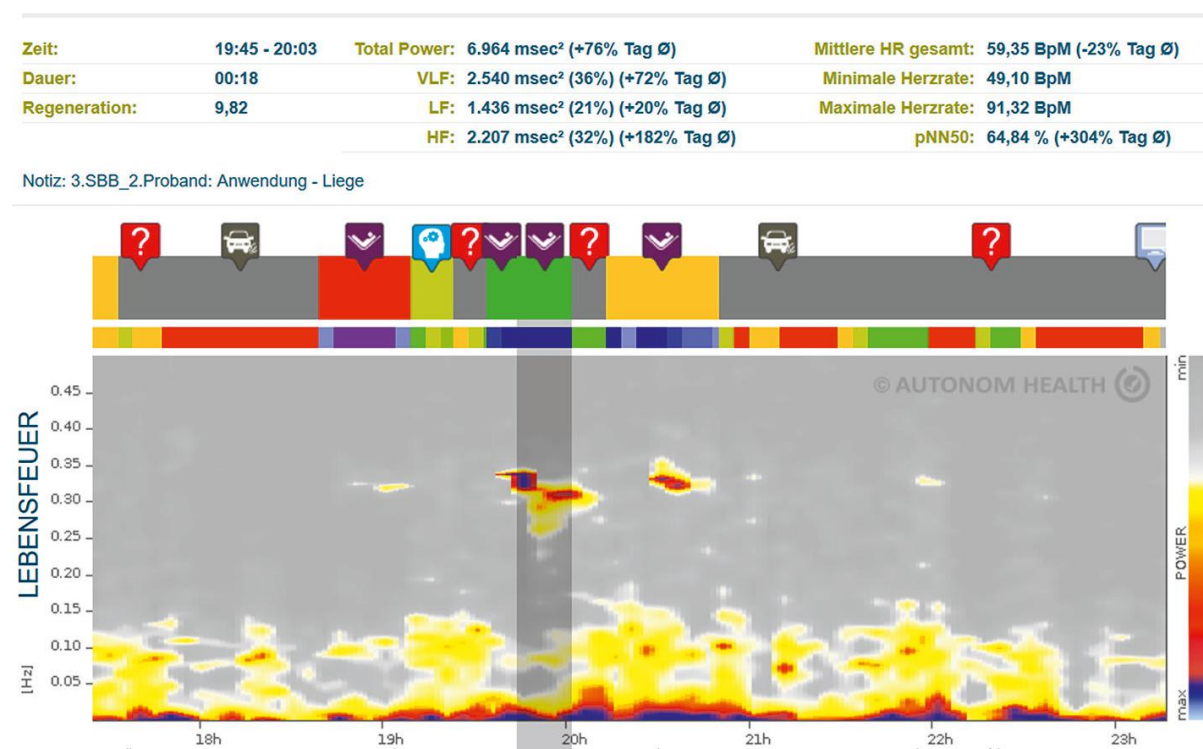


Fig. 1: Heart rate variability measurement during a Subtle Body Balance treatment © Autonom Health

The 30-year-old participant and grocery store owner reports suffering from severe asthma since early childhood. Cortisone use had damaged her bones to the extent that major hip surgery was required just weeks before.

The strong color patches in the upper spectrum of the “Life Fire” graph show intense parasympathetic activity and respiratory sinus arrhythmia (RSA)—the process in which heart and breathing enter coherence. The rising pNN50 value indicates that her vagus nerve is responding strongly and that self-healing processes are being activated. Alongside regeneration (HF value), the values associated with mental performance (LF) and muscular reserves (VLF) also increase, showing strengthening on all levels.

The effect pattern is visible both during and after the treatment—the autonomic nervous system has received an impulse toward healthy activity. After three sessions, she reported remarkably rapid healing of her hip. She also stated that she was able to discontinue cortisone for an extended period, as her asthma symptoms improved significantly even during pollen season.

Case Study: Exercises for Self-Regulation

The effectiveness of the exercises becomes particularly clear in the following case. The participant was initially taught only the Subtle Body Balance exercises in three coaching sessions, without the sessions on the treatment table, and learned to connect with his subtle body independently. The 36-year-old man had been in psychotherapy for trauma, had experienced burnout, and had also suffered a stroke. He had taken extended leave from his job as an IT specialist.

Through learning to perceive and palpate his subtle body, his condition improved significantly. He reports feeling well and safe in his body again. This pleasant sensation often accompanies him throughout the day—a state he had unsuccessfully tried to achieve through meditation. He feels grounded and connected to himself.

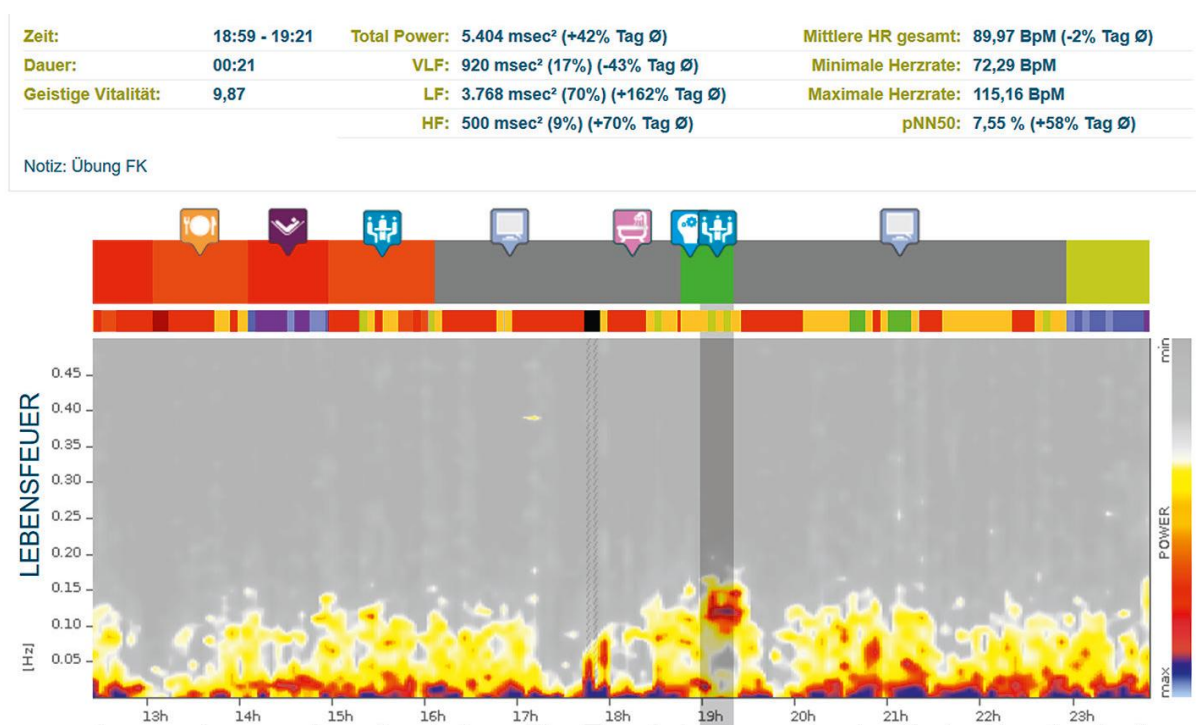


Fig. 2: HRV measurement during the exercise “Perceiving the Subtle Body” © Autonom Health

In most of the approximately 20 measurements recorded during his exercises, a strong color marker of elevated HRV appears, indicating emerging coherence and order in his body. Notable are the increases in his mental presence and performance (LF value) as well as regeneration (HF value). The vagus nerve is clearly stimulated, activating self-healing forces. The discovery of his subtle body has not only given him a new state of wellbeing, but also an effective tool for self-regulation.

Conclusion

The subtle body proves to be a key to positively influencing the autonomic nervous system. As the study showed, the Subtle Body Balance treatment enables a level of regeneration not previously known. Rejuvenating processes are also initiated in the body. If we learn to access the forgotten resource of our subtle body, we can maintain inner balance, activate self-healing forces, and remain vital and capable for a long time.

Ronald Goethert

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Ronald Goethert, author and developer of the Goethert Method, is a recognized expert in the field of subtle-body health. His groundbreaking research, extensive knowledge, and 25 years of practical experience form the foundation for seminars, subtle-body therapies, and the training programs for Subtle Body Balance Coaches and Subtle Body Balance Practitioners.