

Consciousness, Made by Hand

By Peter Troy

Summary: The expressive potential of our hands is truly awesome, equaled perhaps only by our voice. For the voice has great consequence in subtle energy fields; and yet our hands manifest thoughts into a reality that builds and persists through time. We know their ability to make our modern world, but much less of their esoteric power to shift consciousness. They are also a fascinating window into our character, abilities, health, desires, relationships, even the past and potential future. Exploration of **body mapping**, **mudras**, and **chirology** (hand analysis) allow us to begin to pry open the mystery of our hands.

For many of us, our entire surroundings at this moment are part of the built environment; every object is human designed. But immersion is deceptive – we forget what miraculous potential these four fingers and one thumb possess! Gifted the divine power of creation, directing energy from imagination into form, we are altering reality to unfathomable levels of complexity. Behold the world humans have created, using only our hands, and the tools we built to augment their function: submarines, satellites, microscopes, bridges, skyscrapers, refrigerators, windows, shoes, paper, lamps, air conditioning – engines to contain and direct fire, lasers, particle accelerators, supercomputers, a spaceship now exploring beyond the boundaries of our solar system!

The incredible power of the hand, our only tool to manipulate matter and force, is unique in all of nature. DNA has designed many kinds of hands - others are larger, stronger, sharper, faster, stickier, or more flexible than ours. Yet no other creature can focus energy with precision through its hands as humans can. But can we direct that energy inward? Can we harness it to “sculpt” consciousness - transform our inner emotional, and spiritual worlds with our physical hands?

To begin, we must first realize that our hands are the culmination of the entire structures of our arms, and the energy we send to them can originate all the way to the pelvis. **Body mapping** is a process of refining the images in our mind of our own skeleton, joints, and muscles we use in voluntary movement. To conceive of the arm as beginning at the ball and socket joint (a common occurrence) is to be in error, and if we base our movement based on this inaccurate map of our arm, we impose false restrictions on its range of motion – this can result in strained ligaments, pulled muscles, even dislocation, due to our attempt to conform our movement in ways that do not match our natural capability. Body mapping is extremely valuable for all our moving systems, but for the following example we will focus on the arm, with implications for the hand that will become apparent.

Take your index and middle finger of your right or left hand, and place them on your opposite collar bone – then trace down until you feel a bony knob, near your throat. Hold them there gently, then begin moving your other arm. You will feel that your arm extends all the way to this spot, which can be a surprise. Knowledge of this has saved trombone players from injury, as additional extension of the arm is made possible with a refined body map. Now, without straining, try and reach your hand over your opposite shoulder to touch your shoulder blades, or wing blades. If this causes any difficulty, do not attempt further, but ask if a friend might be willing to let you hold their shoulder blades as they move their arms. You will feel significant movement here from the arm as well. An important part of this next step will be the ability to *relax the arm all the way to these two points*. This can take some practice if this is newly discovered motion.

We now introduce the **mudra**, essentially a deliberate forming of the hand or hands into a shape. Our brain receives feedback from the hands based on these subtle shapes, thereby directly affecting consciousness. With hundreds of different possible mudras, we see that our hands can indeed “sculpt” within – simply by holding these shapes, we can observe changes to our mental and emotional states, while the slightest variation can alter the effect. Exploration of these mudras is a wonderful, personal scientific journey of experimentation and observation. Just as you would form clay with your hands, using different motions and pressure, try forming your hands themselves into different mudras and shapes, and see how you feel.

There is one simple hand formation that causes an immediate and profound impact, from the tradition of Yang style Tai Chi, where it is not called a mudra, but the Tai Chi Palm. This is a great starting point to feeling the internal power of your hands.

Begin by stretching your fingers and thumbs outward as if trying to “palm” a large balloon or basketball – feel the stretch but don’t fully extend, unless you do it for just a short moment. Now release all tension in the hand and allow the fingers and thumb to fully relax. Keeping your wrists straight, stretch the hands again, but this time relax just until you feel the tension leave, while your hands are still in the full “palm” shape. The trick is for the hands to be fully activated while relaxed as possible, using the least amount of energy. Now, *begin to relax your elbows, the tops of your shoulders, then relax your shoulder blades and collar bones, keeping just enough energy in the hands to maintain the shape.* (Breathe slowly and deeply to help you relax). You should be able to feel warmth and tingling throughout your hands, all the way to each fingertip. Essentially you are allowing circulation all the way through your fingers by not blocking blood flow at any point in the entire structure of the arm. Once you can maintain the relaxed Tai Chi Palm, try moving your arm in different directions while holding the shape. With practice, you will be able to almost instantly form this mudra and fully relax the arms anytime; the energy and feedback of this shape is very powerful.

For musicians, this leads to a profound realization that allows one to rapidly advance skills and improve all aspects of musical expression. Ever wonder how a concert pianist could possibly make it look so easy? The answer: *it is* easy for them. The paradox is they had to work hard to make it easy - the secret is in the relaxation of the entire arm, while still forming the hand shapes necessary to play the instrument. To play music is essentially to form the specific hand shapes and motions in sequences that allow an instrument to sing. When first starting to play, these shapes will require focus and patience, but as one builds muscle memory, there’s no need to focus on the shape anymore – the hand remembers, and then you can begin letting your focus move to musical ideas, which can now be expressed without having to think through the process.

The goal while practicing music then, is to be able to relax; let the breath guide the relaxation, and allow the energy to flow through the arm all the way to the fingertips. With each practice session, if you can relax more while playing what you already know, and also begin to form new shapes (for new chords, melodies, etc.) and then relax into them, you will see real and rapid improvement. To actually feel this happening in your own hands makes it way more fun to practice! The last step is to imagine this energy of movement originating in the pelvic area, coursing up through the spine and out the fingertips, with no inhibition from any tense muscles along the way. The best musicians have all the technical movement on autopilot, so that when they perform it is pure, emotional expression.

Finally, there is the fascinating subject of **chirology** (studying the hands to reveal insights into all aspects of our character). This field can be very complex, which speaks to the amount of detail on our hands, so this is only a quick overview, to demonstrate how our hands reflect, and express the conscious and subconscious aspects of who we are. It encompasses the overall size and shape of the hand, flexibility, fingers, mounts on the palm (thenar elevations), lines on the palm (flexion creases), and the ridges on the palm and fingertips (dermatoglyphs).

One way of interpreting or understanding the deities in the pantheon of world mythologies, is that they are representations of forces or desires in each of us – universal human attributes. But where are they to reside, and how would they relate to each other as these facets of our personality?

In the western tradition, we have:

Jupiter (index finger) – action, willpower, confidence

Saturn (middle finger) – stability, responsibility, introspection

Apollo (ring finger) - creativity, expression

Mercury (little finger) - communication

Mars mounts – survival, determination

Venus mount – passion, life force

Luna mount – intuition, receptivity, emotion

To the degree that the fingers bend toward or away from each other, their relative lengths, the fingerprint patterns on each, the shape of the fingertips, the knuckles, and nails, all reveal the strengths and weaknesses of each of the above aspects of ourselves. Special print patterns such as arches, double loops, or whorls on a mount or fingertip can mean special abilities in that area – for example a loop on the Luna mount (the corner diagonal from the index finger) likely means strong intuitive abilities, while a loop on the Venus mount (thumb ball) could indicate love of or talent in music. A whorl on the Jupiter finger can be found on leader-types who like to take action.

While our fingerprints and ridges are fixed, the lines on the hand can change depending on how we live our life – the main lines are the life, head, and heart lines, which give information on cognitive and emotional orientations, and life events. All the other lines give subtle indications of the changing nature of our lives as we evolve through time and make decisions. They can reflect what we've been, where we are now and where we might be headed. To study one's own hand using chirolgy is gain many insights into ourselves that might otherwise have remained hidden.

With body mapping, mudras, and chirolgy, we have exciting tools to delve into the mystery of ourselves – it's really all in the hand!

Resources:

Association for Body Mapping Education - <https://www.bodymap.org/>

Mudras – experiment!

Chirolgy – The Book of Palmistry, Nathaniel Altman; Sterling Publishing Co. 1999