WATER is Life
By Amabelle Aguiluz

Water is everything, it creates form, it is life. There is a direct link to how one can feel and how one can heal their bodies with water. Meditation, hydrotherapy, herbal medicine, floating chambers, movement and other modes of alternative holistic healing modalities can use water to heal the body, mind and spirit in a very powerful way.

When you trace back your roots of personal history and lineage, the realization and truth is clear that we are all interconnected to water. Water is the first element we encounter while we are in the womb. We are made up of water, "[o]ur personal and collective histories are immersed in water. We are born within a sea of amniotic fluid, the primordial soup of creation, and the sea flows through our veins and bathes every cell and cellular component in nutritious juice. Water makes up 60 percent of our bodies, and 74.35% of this terrestrial sphere is covered with water. Water cleanses us, renews us, baptizes us, and lubricates us. It supplies cohesion to our bodies and viscosity to our mind."[i] Water is all around us and is an important component of healing in our lives. Water plays a major role in life events such as birth, illness, unions, celebrations and death.

Water is medicine. In herbal medicine, the teachings about reciprocity with nature are important. We are in constant exchange with nature. When I think about how much water provides and gives life, I think about how important it is to protect this great gift of water by doing what I can to take care of my environment and protect our natural resources. "We share water with all life in continuous exchange, called the hydrologic cycle. Water is evaporated from its large bodies such as oceans, lakes, seas and then is condensed and rained down upon the earth."[ii] Water is the greatest gift and we must protect it.

Water is a universal form of healing and since ancient times, teas, steams, and baths have been used by humans for healing, ceremony and self-care. One form of healing is hydrotherapy which is a form of water as medicine. In hydrotherapy, a method of using water, both internally and externally at varying temperatures for health purposes, we can quiet our bodies, and find a way to relax. Using water to make herbal teas and steams can also provide healing remedies to the body. An example of this would be making an infusion or decoction of water with herbs to get the full medicinal effects.

Another form of healing and therapy is meditation in a floatation tank. Depending on the person, the first few times of being in a float tank might not be as relaxing for others. In my experience, I found that I could relax and be at peace in the float tank and it helped to reduce physical pain. "There is proof that floating has been shown to reduce physical pain. Studies have shown that REST (floating) reduces stiffness, muscle spasms, and joint pain in rheumatoid arthritis sufferers."[iii]

Another connection with water I find fascinating is the way in which streams, rivers, and oceans connect to structures of the body and in some way resemble or emulate our human structures. “The forms of transport of this liquid medium are the same forms in our bodies; veins, steams, rivulets, lakes, and oceans, because form follows function. We have a requirement, a need to utilize the precious resource so the structures in our bodies, in the trees, in the valleys, and the mountains are designed – if not divinely then practically – to transport and store with optimum efficacy this elixir of life.”[iv] Our bodies are amazing miracles and our link to natural process of life is sacred.

In my personal life, water has been the greatest teacher of patience, acceptance, and learning. My connection to water has brought healing in my journey and has taught me to be present and open to each and every experience. “Water is our element. Even the air we breathe, which is the driest element, has water suspended within it. We breathe in water and breath out water.”[v] Water is an element that keeps us alive.

Water is movement and a meditation in motion. In our bodies, movement forms such as tai chi, can bring calming effects to the entire body. Tai chi is a series of subtle movements that are gentle on the body that keep your body in constant motion. The energy flows through endless pathways in your body to remove blockages and stimulate flow throughout the entire body. The focus on breathing and rhythmic movements connects you to your body and can help prevent illness. The movements mimic the ebbs and flows of life.

Water is not only a physical healing medicine; it is also a metaphor for life. In many religions or traditions, water is used in sacred ways. Water is a theme or inspiration for artistic expression through writing, poetry, visual art, music and healing arts.

Water is a symbol in times of joy, new beginnings, grief, loss and moments for transformation. “The waters before, and the waters after, now and forever flowing, follow each other.”[vi] Thinking about all the ways in which water keeps us alive, supports us, and heals our bodies gives me gratitude for being alive and for the life that surrounds me. The flow of life and connecting to water using multiple modes of healing has supported my healing journey in a special way and has become a life changing experience. Water in infinite. Water is a connection to the source. Water is memory and what brings me to wholeness, love and peace.

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[i] Parabola, Water, Summer 2019, Volume 32 Number 2
[ii] Parabola, Water, Summer 2019, Volume 32 Number 2
[iii] Float Turner Jr, John, et al. “ Effects of Floatation REST on Range of Motion, Grip Strength and Pain in Rheumatoid Arthritics.” Clinical and Experimental Restricted Environmental Stimulation. Springer New York, 1993. 297-306.
[iv] Parabola, Water, Summer 2019, Volume 32 Number 2
[v] Parabola, Water, Summer 2019, Volume 32 Number 2
[vi] Alan Watts Cloud – Hidden Wherabouts Unknown A mountain Journal