

PSYCHOSOMATICS MANUAL

Energy, Consciousness & Healthy Charge

ENERGY, CONSCIOUSNESS & HEALTHY CHARGE

ENERGY & CONSCIOUSNES: BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Core Energetics subscribes to the assumption...

- that the body consists not only on a macroscopic (anatomy, physiology) and microscopic (histology, biochemistry) level, but...
- that there also is an intrinsic, all-pervading energetic aspect to it that communicates with a larger energy field.

We will see below how this energetic aspect actually overrides and guides all other life functions!

ENERGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE HEALTHY ORGANISM:

PULSATION: THE FLOW OF LIFE

Pulsation: Is an intrinsic aspect of life. It reflects the dynamic cycle of expansion and contraction in all life processes.

Examples for "Pulsation":

- Intestinal movement
- Muscular activity
- Heart beat
- Breathing
- Wake and sleep rhythm
- Cranio-sacral rhythm
- Sexual orgasm

The Physiology of Pulsation:
On a PHYSIOLOGICAL level the following cyclical sequence is activated as a sign of healthy biological functioning:

..... ⇒ **M**echanical charge ⇒ **e**lectrical charge ⇒ electrical discharge ⇒
mechanical release ⇒ **M**echanical charge

THE PHASES OF THE PULSATORY SEQUENCE:

1. Muscular activity (Kicking, hitting, etc.) creates electrical charge in the body.
2. Electrical charge (The nervous system is activated. Perception is heightened. Awareness is expanded) builds up to a peak
3. At the breaking point electrical discharge is initiated first as an electric discharge (Feelings start to flow),
4. The release process is completed in form of a mechanical release (Emotions are expressed in form of sobbing, shaking, anger, etc.).

NOTE:

- Both muscular activation (& release) and electric charge (& discharge) in the pulsatory cycle are bio-electrical phenomena.
- The organism is governed by various bio-electrical processes of “charge” and “discharge”.
- The body consists to a very high percentage of water. Electrolytes are minerals dissolved in a fluid. They have the property to conduct electrical charge. Electrolytes are separated by a variety of impermeable or semi-permeable cellular membranes.
- Depending on purpose and location, cell membranes function variously either as insulators, or as conductors of bio-electrical charge. The biochemical constituents (mainly fat and protein) of the various tissues, cell membranes, osmotic systems and a special pump mechanism (“ion pump”) located in the cell walls separate ions that are suspended in the body fluids on either side of the barrier.
- The level of charge in a biological system (= our body) is defined by the relative amount of negative and positive ions accumulated on either side of a cell wall, blood vessel, nerve cell or osmotic membrane. This is called “potential difference”. These relative negative and positive charges (= ions) create a differential in the level of charge on either side of a given cell barrier (“electrical potential”). This is represented by the distribution of minerals such as Sodium (Na -), Potassium (K +), Chloride (Cl-) etc. on either side of a cell membrane

Any nervous activity, the heart beat, and all muscular action in our body are a function of the pulsatory cycle of electrical charge and discharge.

SELF-REGULATION:

Self-regulation describes the assumption that our bodily expressions are naturally self-regulating based on the intensity of our feelings. That means, our feelings act as a biofeedback mechanism for us to let us know, what – and how much – is right, too much or too little. This is an automatic process. This is a biological and organismic event. It has much to do with our ability to reach out and make contact. It also has to do with our ability to withdraw and create boundaries for protection. Self-regulation is guided by our instinctual, autonomic programming to go for pleasure and to avoid pain. (“Pain principle”, “pleasure principle”).

The example for self-regulation would be the thermostat. Certain pre-set sensors and valves regulate the temperature in a given system.

The body aspect of Core Energetics therapy deals a lot with the support of self-regulation even though we don't always call it that way! This happens by understanding, expressing and dissolving defensive mechanisms. A neurotic person invokes defensive mechanisms (= contraction) in order to limit or interrupt the natural expression and the genuine flow of energy. The body-centered methods of Core Energetics therapy help the person to regain these latter qualities of free expression and flow. They are a person's birth right and represent the characteristic attributes of a self-regulating organism in a healthy person.

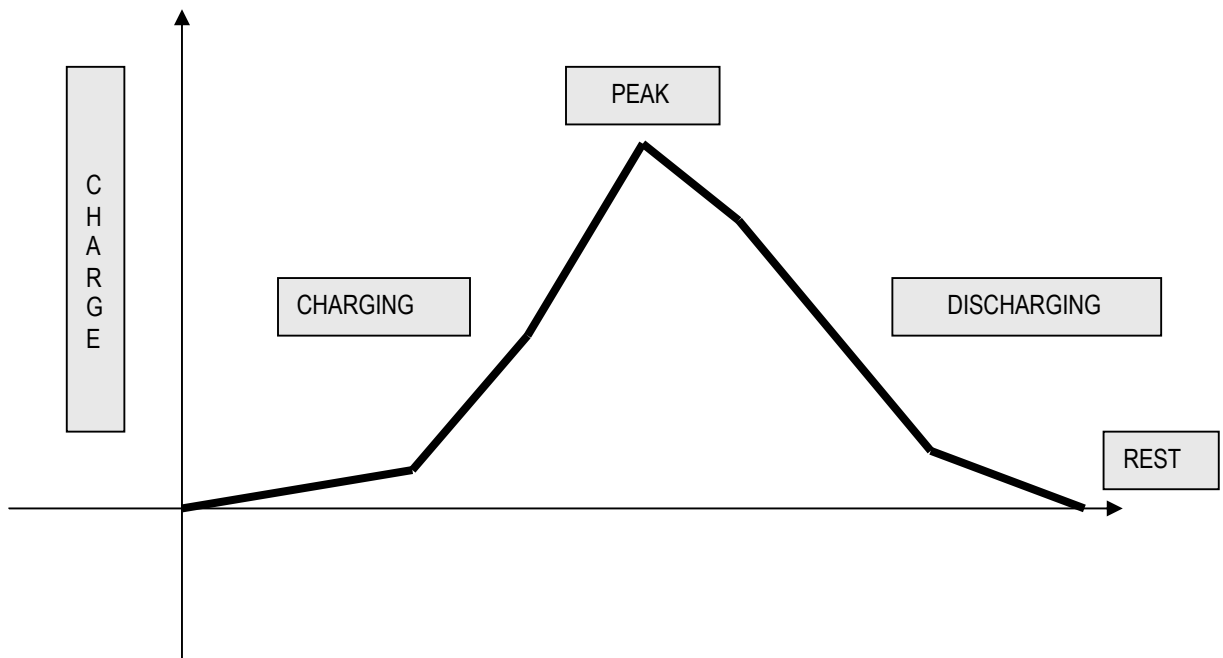
THE CYCLE OF CHARGE & DISCHARGE:

The charge/discharge cycle consists of four beats:

..... REST ⇒ CHARGE ⇒ TENSION ⇒ DISCHARGE ⇒ HARMONIZATION ⇒ AND SO ON

- Each beat is necessary for the next step. The rest phases are essential for restitution and integration. These are the phases when the body metabolizes the incoming energy.
- Charge and discharge are inseparable, like two sides of the same coin.
- All life is an inter-play of movement and resistance. If we are in total flow (only) we would disappear (= dissolve).

DIAGRAM:



..... REST ⇒ CHARGE ⇒ TENSION ⇒ DISCHARGE ⇒ HARMONIZATION ⇒

DEFINING “HEALTHY CHARGE”:

“In a totally healthy organism, energy flowing into and out of the person could move freely as circumstances permit, in something of the way that a rose gives off perfume and takes in sunlight through its petals” describes John Pierrakos, MD (p.23)

“Charge” describes the full energetic load of the healthy organism. Energy comes into the organism and leaves in a strong and harmonious way.

Charging happens by activating muscular contraction, like certain forms of hitting, kicking, jumping, shaking, forced breathing. Charging techniques deepen the breathing and facilitate the intake of energy.

“Discharge” is the successful release of charge and the integration of energy into the body. It must be equal to the amount of charge.

“Containment” is defined as the ability to hold energy in relationship to the holding capacity of the organism. It is related to muscular flexibility and one’s ability to sustain charge. Strong energy can run through one’s system without inhibition.

With proper containment, a person can:

- ✓ enjoy a strong sense of oneself,
- ✓ has healthy, flexible boundaries,
- ✓ does not need to project strong feelings away from him/herself,
- ✓ does not need muscular armoring, and
- ✓ has the physical ability to fully contract and expand.

A baby has a small capacity for containment and therefore has strong reactions (= it cries) in response to overwhelming inner and outer experiences. A very ungrounded and traumatized person (see: “Character structures”) will exhibit a lack of containment.

“Grounding” is understood as the ability to be present to reality and experience one’s full spectrum of feelings (pain and pleasure) in the given moment.

“Boundaries” are energetic limits between a person’s Core self and the environment. Healthy boundaries allow us to be energetically separate from the world yet be in harmonious interaction with it. Ideally, boundaries are strong and flexible. They allow us to come close when we can and stay distant when the energy is too much.

However, unhealthy boundaries, in a misplaced attempt of emotional self-defense, can be rigid or brittle. In the defended person rigid boundaries constitute the energetic aspect of “armoring” (see: “muscular armoring”) and severely limit a person’s potential for self-expression.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY CHARGE?

- When the phases of charge and discharge are strong and well balanced, with equal periods of rest and integration between the phases.
- A person with healthy charge experiences a sense of pulsation, radiance and aliveness.
- The person is in a flow, is able to process and contain the surge of excitement coming towards him/her , and is grounded in reality.
- A person with healthy charge moves into the world with joy, enthusiasm and openness.

The state of Healthy Charge is experienced as: “PLEASURE”

WHAT DOES A PERSON WITH HEALTHY CHARGE LOOK LIKE?

- Lightly tingling skin (= Increased circulation)
- Change in skin coloration (= Capillaries open – skin is red or mottled)
- Skin temperature rises, feels warm
- Breathing deeper and into the belly
- Subtle vibration (a “hum”)

MARKERS OF A HEALTHY ORGANISM:

- Movement
- Flow
- Harmony
- Ease
- Joy
- Pulsation
- Uninhibited
- Physical health
- Equilibrium
- Aliveness
- Flexibility
- Strength
- Freedom
- Spontaneity
- Containment
- Grounding
- Grace
- Feeling Love

Note: This list matches
with some items
on the list of
“Core Qualities”!

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPTS OF ENERGY & CONSCIOUSNESS

The Energy Economy Model:

In Core Energetics we frequently use the metaphors of “charge” and “discharge”

The term “**Energy Economy**” connotes the balance between energetic charge and discharge in an organism. It is based on a mechanical model of energy and on an economic model of supply and demand. As in market economy, it is important for the organism that there is a balance in how much energy comes into the body and how much energy is lost. (What comes in – must go out.)

How to imagine it....

One can imagine the aspects of **charge** thinking of a lake that is created by a hydro-electric dam. We may assume a constant flow of water from a contributing river. The inflow and the drainage of the water would be about balanced. A welcome by-product of the process is electric energy created by the water flowing through the turbines.

As the lake is hooked up to the power plant, not enough incoming flow (like in a draught) means that the water level will not rise to the ideal mark. Not enough electricity will be produced. This would represent **undercharge**.

If the river delivers too much water, the turbines may work in over time and the sluices would have to be opened to drain the excess amount of incoming water. This would represent **over-charge**.

When there is more demand for electric power, the dam keeper may elect to open certain sluices and water can flood through the turbines. Or it is by-passed and discharged safely through a channel. In body-psychology **discharge** means a grounded and conscious release of formerly held-in feelings. This is a healthy, natural and necessary process.

The size of the lake and capacity of the dam to hold water back represents the container. The more water it can hold the bigger is the container. The term **container** refers to the capacity of the body/mind to sustain energetic charge in the organism.

People who have some background in electronics may prefer to relate the term “container” to the function of the capacitor. This is an element in the electric circuit used to temporarily store electric charges. It consists of two metal plates separated by a space or by a non-conducting element. Depending on size and distance of the plates “capacitance” (charge) builds up and is held for a time.

The human **container** is depending on the person’s character foundation, which decides conscious, how grounded and how integrated a person is, and thus how much energy may run through the person without creating a disturbance.

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Coming back to our example of the dam: In a more extreme development, maybe after a rainstorm, the turbines would work overtime, the sluices of the dam would not drain fast enough. Soon the dam would actually flow over, the water would flood, erode and eventually destroy the surrounding area.

In somatic therapy we relate to a similar body-mind event as **flooding**. It occurs in a less-than-fully grounded and less-than-fully conscious person as a result of the process of charging (i.e. Core Energetics exercises). The person is not able to process overwhelming emotions and the challenge to chronic holding patterns, that often are related to the person's past, in a healthy, grounded and self-regulating fashion.

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