

Qi Heals!

**NEWSLETTER OF THE SIKE HEALTH QI COMMUNITY
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HOW THE BODY ADAPTS (I)

You cannot consciously will your heart to stop beating or your stomach to stop functioning. You cannot demand your body to cease processing the elements you put in it such as polluted air, lite beer, and greasy food. The power of prayer will exert no influence on the quantity of hair you maintain or lose on your head.

On the other hand, the gradual accumulation of negative external influences—say, financial worries, unhappy personal relationships, troubles on the job—*can* cause your heart to stop beating and your stomach to malfunction. You may develop ulcers or suffer a heart attack. Prolonged worry will eventually cause your hair to fall out or lead to constipation.

Your body has reacted to certain stimuli, and has suffered for it. The suffering was not sudden and unexpected. It was steady and cumulative. During the “buildup to breakdown,” your body sought to protect you from the negative stimuli. It alerted you to your condition

by headaches, stiff shoulders, gastric pain, heartburn, sleep disorders, and other means, and in so doing, kept you functioning longer than might be expected. In the end, your body was physically overwhelmed by the constancy and intensity of the mental and physical stress to which it was subjected. Or to put it bluntly, to which you subjected it. What I wish to suggest here is the fact that your body strove to maintain and prolong your health right up until the moment it was overwhelmed.

Then there is the well-known and often-cited example of an average man or woman who, at a moment of crisis, performs a “superhuman” feat. The average person could not possibly walk over to a car and lift up its front end. However, there are authenticated stories of an average person seeing someone knocked down by, and pinned under a car, and running over and lifting the car off the victim. The physiological workings behind this scenario, as in the case of the preceding paragraph, are not as important as the phenomenon itself: the body reacted to certain stimuli in a certain way, this time in a successful, life-saving way.

What these extreme scenarios demonstrate is the body’s latent energy and strength for producing beneficial results, that is, the

prolongation of life. This Newsletter seeks to instruct the reader into the nature of this latent energy and into its use for healing and for maintaining the health of the body.

Let us look more closely at the example of the person who saves a life by lifting up the front end of a car. The body received a stimulus, and reacted to that stimulus. To put it another way, the body quickly and efficiently adapted to the sudden event it encountered. It did so naturally, without any conscious thought on the part of the individual. There was simply a reflex response, the impulse to “do good.” The nervous system sent out urgent signals, adrenaline and other chemicals were instantly secreted, the lungs took a deep breath, oxygen flowed into the blood cells, and a number of other physiological processes occurred in an instant. With only the intention to save a life, the body’s strength momentarily increased a hundred-fold, and a life was saved.

This super power was momentary, for it was needed only for a moment. Once the need has been fulfilled, in other words, once the body has done what it has to do (save a life), it re-adapts to a new situation, a situation which does not require all the adrenaline and muscle power and oxygen, etc. it now possesses. The adrenaline and

other chemicals must be flushed from the body or they will, with time, turn stale and toxic. The muscles must relax. They will probably be sore from this unexpected exertion. The nervous system must calm itself, the heart rate must slow down, etc. The organism will re-adjust itself to its pre-stimulated status.

This natural behavior to react to stimuli is what I call the body's **adaptive power**, and it is qi that maintains and regulates this power.

The example I have just given is large and dramatic. I do not wish the reader to think that the body's latent power is confined to such macroscopic stimuli. The human body encounters thousands of tiny stimuli daily, some so small we do not even think of them as stimuli. We walk out of our home into the fresh air, and we are met with a different temperature to which we must adapt. We hear loud noises, soft noises, sudden noises that our senses and mind must adapt to if we are to survive the day. We meet people we like and people we dislike, and we react in different ways. We drink too little water and too much coffee. The former must be retained while the latter must be cleansed from our system. We eat some food that we enjoy, and some food whose taste, texture and composition are so unappetizing that we prefer to think of it as fuel rather than food. The body must

overcome its own distaste with the meal to extract some nourishment from it.

Though we take it for granted, it is astonishing how our bodies continually and effectively adapt to each and every one of these internal and external stimuli. The body's obsession with micro-management makes the most compulsive supervisor look like a slouch. This is the microscopic working of our latent energy which is roused into action by our natural adaptive power.

The effectiveness of our natural adaptive power resides in our sensitivity to ceaselessly changing stimuli, and in the speed and strength (latent energy) of the body's response.

If your body is invaded by bacteria, the healthy adaptive response is quickly to run a fever in order to burn away the invaders. It is confusing cause and effect to think that bacteria produce fever. We encounter tens of thousands of bacteria daily and never bat an eyelash. However, when the body's ever-vigilant immune system senses a dangerous trespasser, it launches a brief investigation, and then takes appropriate action to repel the intruder. You cannot will your body to take different measures.

Helpful Health Hint

Are your eyes tired? Fill the sink with hot water. A few degrees above body temperature is fine. Sitting by the sink, bend your (naked) elbow, and place it in the water for 3 minutes. It will relieve eyestrain.

THE CULT BEGINS

The encomiums have been flooding in. I have not had such praise for my artistry since I fleshed out the role of a Jewish husband in my fifth grade play(I did so well that the next year they gave me a speaking part).

People have written and phoned to complain that they cannot wait until the spirit moves me to put out another Newsletter; that they have to have more of the story, and I asked me to step up the pace. Hence this February Newsletter following hard on the heels of January's.

Whew! I feel giddy with acclaim and exhaustion.

UNCLE ARNIE

Part II

I was neither the first nor the last to taunt Uncle Arnie. As the four older brothers -Paul, Ernest, Louis, Mort- grew taller and leaner daily, so Arnold remained short and squat. Just after his first birthday it was discovered that he was blind in his right eye. He had a remarkable tolerance of unpleasant physical sensations such as

heat, cold, noise, rough fabrics, and other irksome phenomena that the average person would find insupportable. Those who knew him well linked his physical tolerance to his mental deformity. He's brain damaged so he feels nothing. And from that faulty premise, it was a step in parallel logic to ascribe to him emotional insensitivity.

In looks and physique, Grandpa Eddie and Grandma Edna were unremarkable progenitors of four spectacularly handsome sons. My father was pulled out of the ranks to star in promotional films for the Army Air Corps during World War II. The only prayer I ever heard my mother utter was that I would grow up to look like my father. My Uncle Louis never married, preferring the revolving-door playboy life that his good looks provided him. My Uncle Ernest is so handsome and looks so distinguished and sincere that he flourished as a realtor, and won an easy victory in an apparently unwinnable perjury trial. Even Paul, the least handsome of the four, and the one whose character most vitiates his physical properties, managed to marry a gentile beauty at a time when even ugly gentiles were not giving poor Jews second looks.

It defies belief that a brief insufficiency of oxygen left Uncle Arnie physically repulsive. It is safer to assume that the Balsoms' beauty gene was exhausted with child number five, and Uncle Arnie was a natural counterbalance to the attractiveness of his siblings. People found it difficult to be in his presence for more than a short time. An elevator ride from the lobby to the fifth floor of the Silver Birches Home for the Elderly was the most the typical non-family person could tolerate.

Finally, there was his habit of drooling uncontrollably when startled or excited. A sudden noise, an amusing scene in the Sunday funnies, a gust of wind blowing off his cloth cap, a tense moment at a sporting event... such things triggered a silver thread of spittle from the side of his mouth which, if he were not immediately calmed down, swelled to flood-like proportions. He seemed to have an unending supply of saliva. Winter was the worst time of year for Uncle Arnie, for he was prone to colds. Coming home in a state of excitement on a wintry day, leaking from the eye, running from the nose, and drooling from the mouth, Uncle Arnie seemed to have a head filled with slime that overflowed through his facial orifices.

Grandma Edna would wash his face for him and give him a glass of warm milk to calm him. It disturbed Grandpa Eddie to come home from a discouraging day at his shop to find Uncle Arnie looking as if 'a pipe had burst in his head'. Eddie's dream had been thwarted by the grinding repetition of making ends meet. His job provided him neither diversion nor satisfaction. His home was an occasional haven where pleasure could be had, and it enraged him to have his anticipation derailed by the aspect of his youngest son: Arnie's gruesome face put Grandpa Eddie in mind of his own failure. The necessity of tidying Uncle Arnie prior to Grandpa Eddie's return had the effect of putting a curfew on Uncle Arnie's outdoor activities. At all costs he had to be home half an hour before his father's predictable 5:30 return. This meant buying Uncle Arnie a watch, teaching him how to tell time, and giving him a daily reminder to look at the watch frequently. It was the only duty or responsibility ever given to Uncle Arnie while he lived at home, and he took it very seriously. It was the rare day that he was not home by 5:00. When he did not return on time, one of the brothers, usually Mort, was sent

looking for him. Invariably, Uncle Arnie had been stopped on his way home by neighborhood youths who encircled and harassed him.

From his size, shape, looks, and smell, he was nicknamed Armpit by his first cousin, Benny Balsom, six years his senior. Benny was the only Balsom from ancient times to the present day who was an out and out thug. Unlike most bullies he was not a coward. He would pick on children twice his size; tormenting his cousin Arnie was, for him, a piece of cake, a pleasing diversion from his usual business of extorting protection money from the neighborhood children. The cleverest, most beautiful ideal to which Benny's brutal mind could attain was 'making an example' of Arnie in front of the other children. Without having to pummel, wound or injure a neighbor's child (the parents would have something to say about that), Benny could have that child paying protection money on a regular basis by giving a preview of the punishment for non-payment. Arnie was an unwilling, but effective assistant, and one or two public beatings administered by Benny was frequently enough to enlist the neighborhood children to join his payment plan.

Benny considered Arnie his chattel, and would not countenance anyone else abusing him. He was, on occasion, Arnie's rescuer, fighting as many as seven boys at once to protect him. It was at the time of the memorable one-against-seven that his fisticuff ferocity was witnessed by Bruno D'Angelo, then passing by in a car.

D'Angelo was himself a thug and, -was it deep calling to deep?- at once took Benny under his tutelage to learn a more mature version of extortion while training to become a professional middle-weight boxer.

Benny Balsom was gone, but the name Armpit remained. So, too, did the neighborhood children who, freed from the constraint of encountering Arnie's avenger, grew bolder and more hostile. Just seeing a group of glaring, pointing children walking his way was enough to send Uncle Arnie into a frenzy of drooling. "The Armpit's beginning to sweat. Make him sweat more," the children would taunt, and poke and pinch Uncle Arnie until he began to cry from his good eye.

Now ten years old, it was Mort's job to look after Uncle Arnie. Mort was his twin, and the clever baby of the family. Paul was

already working, and Ernest and Louis were at school during the day, and then doing part-time jobs in the late afternoon. But Mort was not up to the task of extricating his twin from the cluster of the older boys and girls on the block. When the local toughs would look menacingly at Mort for trying to take the pleasure of harassing Uncle Arnie away from them, he deemed it more prudent to fall in with their plans than to offer resistance. Hence, he usually found himself in the forefront of the taunters, and, occasionally, even joined the other children in stoning Uncle Arnie.

Uncle Arnie was too awkward to run and too frightened to move or dodge the stones. He would stand cow-like, facing his attackers, his head turned to the right so that he could drink them in with his good eye. He did not have the sense to cover his head with his hands or to hunch his shoulders and ball himself up into a smaller target. He stood cow-like and bellowed cow-like.

The oldest son, Paul, five years older than Mort and Arnie, would at last be sent to extricate the would-be extricator. It was he more than any other brother who rescued Uncle Arnie from the cruelty of others. Yet he, too, was cruel to Uncle Arnie, and exacted a

measured revenge upon him. Like the gods of crude theologies, he demanded unquestioning obedience in return for salvation. Even in their childhood, Paul exercised greater authority over Uncle Arnie than did Grandma and Grandpa. He became stoic and submissive before Paul. He never complained, not so much as an involuntary gasp or sigh, in his brother's presence. Fifty years later, when Paul could not have saved himself much less his younger brother, Uncle Arnie still felt a reverential fear towards the man whose decrees had been, for Uncle Arnie, the only standard of Absolute in his life. It took a startling trip to the toilet to release Uncle Arnie from his bondage to Paul.

As Paul took a greater share in the governance of Uncle Arnie, Mort loosened his ties to his twin. Mort loved to wander through the Mt. Lebanon section of Pittsburgh, the site of wealthy gentile homes with broad lawns and long drives. He saw a space and felt a spaciousness in the vistas of those homes that clarified for him the truth of his home: it was seedy and puny. Not all of Grandpa Eddie's dinnertime discourses that poverty was no sin, that it could, in fact, be morally fructifying, could dissuade my father from coveting wealth

and the status it brought in its train. To this day he feels that his father was making a pious virtue of necessity, and that that necessity was not for him. He became ambitious, stylish, sly, and what he called 'flexible', meaning having neither fast principles nor firm commitments.

Mort wanted to be a little more dapper than the ordinary kid from Heron Hill, a little more eye-catching, a little more appealing, and a lot more ingratiating. He wanted to be noticed; he would excel at charm. He made friends with children from Mt. Lebanon and other affluent neighborhoods, and never missed an opportunity to insinuate himself into their homes in order to fascinate their parents. Mort's fantastic ambition to be "adopted" by wealthy parents effectively cut him off from Uncle Arnie.

That Uncle Arnie was the greatest eyesore on the block no one would argue. That he could have been a lethal impediment to an adolescent's climb to social eminence is, to an adult, ridiculous. Mort, however, took it as axiomatic that being seen with his twin in tow was social suicide. Flexible Mort never shirked his duty to Uncle Arnie; he would accept the responsibility for Arnie's care, and then

refuse to fulfill it. He would leave the house with a devoted arm around his brother and return home with a devoted arm around his brother. Between these public displays of affection he would leave Uncle Arnie on a park bench, in a corner of a library or museum, waiting on or under a bridge, or sitting on an overturned crate in a vacant lot. Mort would tell Arnie, "Paul wants you to wait here for an hour", or "Paul says you have to sit here for a short while". And of course, Arnie would sit uncomplaining, looking at his watch every few minutes until Mort was done with his socializing and it was time to retrieve his brother.

It was Louis, the nascent playboy, who tried to educate Uncle Arnie. As he was to be patient and persistent in his seduction of women, so was he in his attitude towards Arnie. By his own estimate, Louis taught Uncle Arnie the alphabet two dozen times. The teaching never took, and Uncle Arnie remained illiterate.

Louis did succeed in teaching him to identify money. This Uncle Arnie could do with ease, though he was never able to calculate. If asked for a quarter he would hand over a quarter, a dollar demanded received a dollar bill; but to add a dime to a quarter to make thirty-

five cents was beyond his capacity. Later in life when he was working and had his own money, any sum that required calculation was met by a \$10 bill and the poignant faith that correct change would be given.

Paul sneered at Louis's attempts to educate Uncle Arnie, and appropriated Arnie's pocket money 'for his own good'. From an early age Uncle Arnie had to go to Paul and ask for his own money. Paul would demand an explanation of what Uncle Arnie wanted the money for, and then reject the request as being unnecessarily extravagant.

The four older brothers had comfortable incomes by 1940, and were generous to their parents, giving Grandpa Eddie and Grandma Edna the money to move from socially suspect Heron Hill to respectable Squirrel Hill. Eddie and Edna, therefore, bequeathed all their money to Uncle Arnie in the form of a trust fund in order to spare the brothers the necessity of supporting him. As Paul was the only brother to remain in Pittsburgh, he and his wife, Ruth, became the trustees of this fund. Paul and Ruth decided what ways were and what ways were not appropriate for Uncle Arnie to spend his money. They calculated his needs, ignored his wants, and gave him

an allowance that, to put it kindly, was frugal. Paul had Uncle Arnie place most of his wages from Silver Birches into the fund so that what little that was withdrawn every year on Uncle Arnie's behalf would more than be made up for by Uncle Arnie's work.

Louis, though the least financially successful and most opulent-living of the brothers, was the most generous to Uncle Arnie, supplying him with quality shirts, socks, shoes, electrical appliances and baskets of food. Louis's gifts to Uncle Arnie were a constant source of anger to Paul, who accused Louis of spoiling their younger brother and raising his expectations beyond his means. A strange attitude, indeed, for had Uncle Arnie had free access to his money, he would have found himself a man of not inconsiderable means. There was more than \$65,000 in his trust fund when he died. He lived as if it had been \$65.

Louis and Paul wrangled over Uncle Arnie's finances whenever they met. Paul would forcibly bring Arnie into their arguments as his chief witness for his financial discretion.

"You don't need a new pair of shoes, do you Arnie?" Paul would say.

Louis would be infuriated. "That's not a question, that's an order! Ask him if he wants a new pair of shoes."

"You don't want a new pair of shoes, do you Arnie?" Paul would ask obligingly.

Louis, in his anger and frustration, would grab the wrong man, Uncle Arnie. Seizing him by the upper arms and staring him in the good eye, he would shout, "Would you like a new pair of shoes, Arnie?"

Shaken by Louis's vehemence and frightened of the consequences of defying the man who always, always was in Pittsburgh, Uncle Arnie would drool and try to slink off to a corner. A lifetime of being overseen by Paul had killed his limited capacity to distinguish between wants and needs. Nor would he do anything to antagonize Ruth who, he once confided to my father, was to him the most frightening person in the world.

Louis sent all his gifts by post, and never at any predictable gift-giving holiday or event. This was to keep Paul and Ruth off-balance. A summer shirt by Hathaway arrived at Silver Birches less than an

hour after Uncle Arnie was removed from the toilet. It briefly became the property of Arthur Pillars.

(To be continued)

SIKE HEALTH

QI ENERGY WORKSHOP

February 20, 2010

Therese & Mallory Fromm will be giving a **beginner/intermediate workshop in the SIKE Technique** at our home on **Saturday, February 20, from 10:00-4:30**. The cost is **\$125**, and includes: learning to access and transmit your qi, fundamentals of healing and health maintenance, an individual treatment, a great lunch, and conversation with interesting people. Detailed information about the takeaway skills taught at the workshop can be found at www.sikehealth.com. Click on Workshops.

We cannot over-emphasize the benefits of taking a workshop. The knowledge and skills learned at a workshop enable the individual to understand his/her own diagnosis and treatment; how to maintain health and accelerate the healing process at home; how to treat others for aches, pains, and minor ailments. **We plan to emphasize techniques for health maintenance at home, with particular attention to kiryu as a simple, elegant, and effective means of wellness and mental clarity.** And finally, each participant also receives a treatment, which is included in the cost of the workshop.

TF adds: We pride ourselves on offering each individual client the knowledge and means to pursue his/her own healing and health maintenance. If you want to know what is going on in your mind/body and how to direct yourself toward health, then our workshops should not be missed! And perhaps best of all, a facility with qi makes you nice.

For reservations and information, phone **818-992-0713**, or email us at info@sikehealth.com.