

"And let me wring your heart" :

Hamlet, and the Somatic Metaphor

by Roz Carroll

This extract is actually from the middle of the talk I gave at the AGM on October 4th. I felt that the first part - where I talked about 'listening with the eyes, ears and impulses' would go better with the last section on the organisation of living systems, which I will write up for the next issue. I am very grateful to Chris Reedyk, Lisa Schmidt and Dianne Chipperfield who took on the Herculean task of transcribing two hours of talk. Thank you.

Now I'm going to tack in a different direction for a while, because I want to talk about language. The limitation of medical language is that the client's body experiencing their symptoms become very objectified and very isolated as things in themselves, as things without meaning. 'Cirrhosis of the liver' : there you are - labelled; biological events happening to you¹.

There are also problems with the language of psychotherapy. I've had an ongoing struggle with this and I think a lot of you have as well. Whether or not you're trained as a psychotherapist or working principally with massage, the language that's associated with counselling and psychotherapy often doesn't fit in the biodynamic massage world. Sometimes it's just too complicated, sometimes it's too conceptual; psychotherapy language tries to embrace a complex dynamic between people. And I think for the biodynamic massage client there is not always what I would call the willingness to be psychological. This isn't true necessarily for psychotherapy clients either.... [laughter].

It's a good start when somebody is interested in thinking about then and now; you and me - that sort of interweaving process whereby we look at dynamic connections.

But very often unravelling connections about the past or the intricacies of present dilemmas can feel though as if it's taking away from the immediate feeling the client comes with which is 'my knees hurt', 'my shoulders are stiff - do something:' The pain and the tension are in the foreground otherwise they wouldn't be there.

So I'm going to leap from that point to talk about what I'm calling the somatic metaphor.² The somatic metaphor carries the energy of what might be quite a complex conflict to do with the person and their past. It is an energetic pattern in the body, which may in the course of time (especially if the conflict remains unconscious) become symptoms, whether they be a constellation of symptoms like an immune disorder, e.g.. Lupus or a particular symptom like a frozen shoulder. It can be acute - a metaphor of the moment; or chronic - an expression of a long term conflict.

So some basic examples. Somebody comes and they have angina. There is heartache in their life so it is manifesting in some kind of heart problem. Or they have cystitis, which might be about being pissed off. Or somebody comes in and says 'my neck is hurting' and complains about difficulties with their boss, and you think 'oh yes, there's the pain in the neck' [laughter]. At this point I'd like to collect some of these. Has anybody got any recent examples from their own experience - you know anecdotally - these kind of embodied phrases that carry the conflict but connect it to the body?

*Aud.*³ Can you say more about lupus?

R. Lupus is an auto-immune disease which means that the immune function is overactive. Other examples of auto-immune illnesses are: rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, certain thyroid diseases and AIDS. What's interesting about this whole set of auto-immune diseases which are really on the increase in our society is that the body is attacking itself. It is unable to discriminate between something that is harmful to it and something that is part of it. Commentators have noticed that there is a high prevalence of auto-immune in people who feel excluded because they are gay or they are black or isolated in some way.⁴ Such people who have often carried a high level of negative projection which then becomes internalised.⁵ But then of course you always come down to people's own individual life story. What is it that is being attacked?

Aud. Lupus is the Latin name for wolf. I had a client with lupus and she literally needed more wolf in her life - she needed to own her own internal wolf.

R. Yes, that makes a lot of sense.

Aud. I thought of not an actual illness, but a fear of illness. Fear of cancer.

R. A fear of destructiveness in the self... What's significant is the area you fear it will attack.... Now what about some phrases? You may not even have an anecdote or experience but common phrases that involve a part of the body, like 'That's close to the bone'.

Aud. 'I nearly put my foot in it' [laughter]... 'Makes me sick'... 'Browbeating'.... 'I blew my top'... 'Tightass' [laughter]... 'Carrying a whole load on your shoulders'... 'Nose out of joint'..... 'Off-balance'..... 'Stinking situation'

Aud. What strikes me is that a lot of these expressions have a negative connotation. That's quite important in itself.

Aud. 'Bite your head off....' 'Cold feet'... 'Warm heart'.... 'Heartache'.... '..Gut feeling' 'weighted down'....

Aud. I'm trying to remember one about getting very excited [laughs]; but I can't get any'.. 'getting out of my head...'

Aud. 'Getting on top of things'.... 'Tickled pink'... 'Cloud nine'.... 'Hitting the spot'.... 'Out of the body...'

Aud. Sick as a parrot [laughter]

R. Well, actually, I think in terms of somatic metaphors - expressions that refer to animals are also very relevant, like your lupus one; sick as a parrot... sick as a dog.. Aud. 'Dog tired'... 'Cat that got the cream'... 'Sharpening your claws'... 'Eagle eyes'... 'Waiting to pounce'.... 'Goose pimples'..... 'Head in the sand (ostrich)'.... 'Monkey business'.... 'A web of deceit'... 'Catty'.... 'Like a bitch on heat'... 'Busy as a bee'..... 'Stung by that remark'.

R. I think also metaphors that relate to the body in space are interesting. Having to do with going up or coming down, going forward and so on. What's the metaphor for going forward? Must be lots...

Aud. 'Pushing the boat out..?' 'Banging your head against the wall'..... 'Shoulders to the grindstone'....

R. Backed up against the wall...Cornered. These metaphors are so fundamental. They are to do with primitive senses, such as the need to orient to danger, food, shelter (bad/good objects) etc. They are embedded in a deep experience of the natural world. And part of what's happening now is our culture is changing, in particular becoming more urban and more alienated from nature.⁶ So the kind of metaphors we use may be more technological - from computers, or planes or machines. I mean, I've had a few clients come in and say "I went ballistic". [laughter] It's quite different isn't it? I went ballistic to..

Aud. 'I went berserk'⁷..... 'Ape shit'. [laughter].

R. This is very much a historical phenomena of today. We are simply in a different world - more urbanized, more alienated from the body. Which is part of the reason we have so much hunger for work which is about connecting to the body as a ground, as a rich source of knowing and feeling. But if we go back 400 years to 1598 - the year Shakespeare is believed to have written Hamlet - we find that the language was very different. It was very richly embodied. The Renaissance was an extraordinary era culturally - all the mythology and superstition of the Middle Ages still around, but with powerful new ideas about what it was to be human emerging too - a very expansive and creative time.

I want to spend a little time quoting a few lines from Hamlet, just to give you an idea of the colourfulness of the language, of how much blood and guts and sinews and muscle and organs were part of the language, part of everyday expression. It's so visceral; perhaps that's why it lasted. So, for example, there are lots of references in Hamlet to the heart, not just to his heart metaphorically but directly to the heart. He addresses his own heart as a living organ, a living thing.

Let me just very briefly remind you of the story of Hamlet. The play opens after the king of Denmark has died and his brother has ascended the throne and married the former queen, i.e. his brother's wife, rather hastily -especially in Hamlet's view. Hamlet is the son of the former king and his wife Gertrude, who has just married his uncle. In the first scene, at the court, the king is basically saying well, it's sad my brother has died but we'll get on with life now. And Hamlet just mutters sarcastic remarks in the background. But as soon as the king and queen go off stage, he says, more poignantly:

But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue (155,ii,l)⁸

This refers to an ancient belief that not being able to talk about and express grief is what breaks the heart (and this is a premise of modern psychotherapy, 'the talking cure'). Later, Hamlet meets the ghost of his father who tells him that he didn't die by accident; he was in fact murdered by his brother, the now king. This is pretty shocking, naturally, and Hamlet says:

Hold, hold, my heart, And you, my sinews, bear me stiffly up (95,v,l)

He's telling his heart to get a grip, and he's telling his tendons (sinews) to tighten up so he can remain standing, rather than collapsing with shock and grief at this news. In Act three there is a scene with his mother where he tries to make her feel guilty. He accuses her of being in league with the king and murdering his father. And he says to her:

*And let me wring your heart; for so I shall
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.* (35, iv, 3)

Well, the first bit '*and let me wring your heart...*', a nice physical metaphor here - he wants to put her through the wringer. '*If it be made of penetrable stuff*' - what he's really saying to her is: does your heart have any feeling in it? Does it have any blood in it? Is it alive? Can I squeeze some feeling out of it? '*If damned custom have not braz'd it so.*' 'Braz'd' means to be covered in brass, so again if habit or familiarity has not covered your heart in brass. Brass was a cheap metal so there is an indication of cheapness and hardness. '*That it be proof* (i.e. that it can resist)... *sense*'. And here he doesn't mean sense as in common sense; he means it as feeling. Do you have any feelings at all in you mother? It's powerful stuff, isn't it? [sounds of agreement] Imagine if your clients came in and said that. [laughter]

Aud. . Brassed off..

R. Yes. Well, he is. And Gertrude says
O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain (158,iv,3)
so she's got the message...

It's a play about - among other things - failures in communication, deceitfulness, intrigue, and impotence. The information from the ghost about the murder of his father stirs up an awful lot of feeling in him, but he can't quite do anything about it. He's actually very depressed. He keeps coming up against self doubt - is the ghost real, or can I do this to my mother, or everything's so corrupt including me. The tragedy of Hamlet is that although theoretically the line of action is clear - he needs to avenge his father - in practice, he is paralysed by conflicted feelings. He says near the end of the play

*In my heart there is a kind of fighting
That will not let me sleep* (5, ii, 5)
Finally, after lots of people get killed and Hamlet is dying of his wounds, he begs his friend Horatio
*If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
to tell my story.* (351, ii, 5)

And Horatio says a few lines later as Hamlet dies, "*now cracks a noble heart*" (364, ii, 5).

So that just gives you a taster, it's just some of the references to the heart in the play. It's a play about loyalty, a broken heart, an Oedipal crisis. And then there's the whole thing about Hamlet and Ophelia, can he love her because she's a woman, and women have been contaminated by his mother's behaviour.

There's a lot of anger in the play too. Shakespeare's language is full of very embodied expressions for anger. For example, he says when he meets Laertes, Ophelia's brother, and one of the other prime male figures in the play,

*Though I am not splenetic and rash
Yet I have in me something dangerous.* (255, I, 5)

Splenetic refers to the spleen, and the spleen was associated in Shakespearian language with wild, aggressive impulses. This is interesting because the spleen is a central part of the immune system, and when its activated, it is designed to attack. At another point, the famous bit where he finds Yorick's skull ("alas poor Yorick!") he says "*My gorge rises at it*".

Aud. Is that to do with bile, 'gorge'?

Aud. I think it's a swelling of the throat.

R: That's it, a swelling, engorgement. It's the movement of the blood upwards. Up the id canal, as Gerda would say.

He also says of himself, quite contemptuously, '*for I am pigeon-livered and lack gall*'. There's another aspect of anger, the liver was associated with powerful feelings, such as rage, and the production and movement of gall (bile), is the embodied chemistry for action.

The association of the organs with psychological functions in Shakespeare's times derived from the medieval theories about humours, which in turn derived from the ancient Greeks. The point is these associations were living and real. It isn't just fancy language, it isn't just metaphor. I think they actually lived in that reality, which we've very much lost touch with. Today in Britain we retain traces of this understanding in phrases like, 'to vent your spleen' or 'to feel galled' - although I'm not sure I've ever heard anyone say these things - they're in our literature. In Traditional Chinese Medicine there are very clear theories of the psychological function of the organs, which I find intriguing, and which I think are just beginning to permeate our culture.⁹

Another of Hamlet's famous phrases is *'the time is out of joint'*, and I relate that to being dislocated, his proprioceptors aren't effectively orienting him in space. He can't get it together, that's basically the story of Hamlet. Who knows what would have happened if he'd had a biodynamic massage therapist! [laughter]

Do you want some more of this stuff? Are you enjoying it? I've got two slightly longer speeches. There's a speech to Horatio, who is Hamlet's best mate, and he's a sort of stalwart figure really. I'll read it and then go into it a bit more. Hamlet says to Horatio:

*Let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
Sh' th seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one in suff'ring all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well commeddled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she pleases. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart
As I do thee (60, ii, 3)*

There's so much physicality in this language. It's also very complicated and psychologically intricate. So *'the candied tongue licking absurd pomp'* - people are so obsequious, boot-licking, arse-licking. *'And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee'* ... that means... what does that mean? [laughter] In Shakespeare the word pregnant is used for something that's easily stirred, a pregnant pause, something that's full with life force, portent or meaning. So in this case the pregnant hinges of the knee means the knee that's quickly bent, i.e. someone who's quick to get down on their knees. "Oh yes, your Majesty! Oh yes, sir!", you know, 'fawning'. And he's really complaining about the hypocrisy of power... Tony Blair and the Labour party, nothing changes really does it? And then he contrasts this with Horatio's behaviour, He is blessed with *'blood and judgement so well commeddled'*. In Shakespeare blood means passion, impulse, the kind of force which makes things happen, which prompts us to do things. Basically, the life force is very strong if your blood is rich and flowing, and therefore you embody your life, you live your beliefs or whatever. Too much blood means a mindless acting out of impulses. But Horatio, being a cool kind of guy, has got blood and judgement 'commeddled' - i.e.. blended, balanced.

Aud. There's quite a lot about blood, you know hot-blooded, cold-blooded...

Roz: Absolutely. Lots of blood metaphors. And lots of blood is spilled in the plays. It's very literal. There's that lovely image from Macbeth about him wading through a stream of blood, then getting halfway and thinking, "this isn't such a good idea":

*I am in blood
Stepp'd so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go'er...* (Macbeth, 135, v, 3)

It's interesting, in Chinese Traditional Medicine, illness is a disorder of the blood. And Gerda Boyesen writes in one article "the blood circulation itself can be seen as the link between consciousness and unconsciousness".¹⁰

So back to Hamlet complaining about these very servile people.... *"a pipe for Fortune's finger"*. Even something as abstract as the concept of Fate is embodied in a very physical metaphor of a pipe being played and a finger having control. He's saying that people who's feelings overrun them are not only not in control of

themselves, they're not in control of their fate. Hamlet's concluding tribute to Horatio reflects his distrust of feelings "give me that man that is not passion's slave and I will wear him in my heart's core", the deepest part of my heart. And there's a kind of paradox in the fact that Horatio, the man who is not passion's slave, is trustworthy enough to take into Hamlet's heart of hearts.

A last example of blood, and anger, and internal conflict. The last speech I'm going to quote. This comes at the end of Act III, scene 3, where Hamlet has known for two whole acts that his father was murdered and he still hasn't really got round to doing anything about it. He's preparing himself to go and confront his mother. He's got himself all worked up after his encounter with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and he says:

*Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft, now to my mother.
Oh heart, lose not thy nature. Let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom.
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words some ever she be shent,
To give them seals never my soul consent.* (381, iii, 3).

I love this phrase, 'now could I drink hot blood'! This is an angry man. 'And do such bitter business' - bitter refers again to the liver, the liver being stirred up and therefore a bitter taste in the mouth. 'The day would quake to look on' - here it is again this marvellous way that Shakespeare takes an abstract-ish concept like daytime and fleshes it out with a metaphor: the day itself is shaking with fear at the horror of what he might do. 'Soft now to my mother' - he's going to confront his mother, so he addresses his own heart: 'Oh heart lose not thy nature, let not ever the soul of Nero enter this firm bosom' - Nero actually did kill his mother. What Hamlet is saying to himself is: don't actually kill her, lose not thy nature, i.e. it's unnatural to kill your mother. 'Let me be cruel, not unnatural. I will speak daggers to her'. He will kill her with words only. We still use 'to look daggers', don't we? 'I will speak daggers to her but use none. My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites'.

What is fascinating about Hamlet is that Hamlet is already in the dilemma that we could now call something like a body-mind split. Tragedy has always explored the hero's character, and the tensions between reason and passion, natural justice and man-made law. But Hamlet is peculiarly contemporary - he's neurotic, not heroic. He has an impulse to act, and all these things that hold him back. We would say today that he is depressed. He has fantasies about doing something but instead he criticises himself, he's full of self-hatred. He's constantly frustrated because he's inhibiting his impulses, and in the end it doesn't work out. I mean in the end, you know, everyone gets killed. The king gets killed, but so what? Because Hamlet is killed too and so are half a dozen other people. It's a bloody mess.

But I want to hear from you now. What kind of body do you think Hamlet has? Imagine Hamlet is coming as your client.

Aud: 'Engorged' 'Masochistic'

Aud: I don't think he's masochistic. I think it sounds like a lot of the pulse is showing, the charge is pushing right up against the surface, and that's not masochistic in my understanding. they'd look much more pallid and thickened.

R: Let's have a bit more fantasy about his body. If he's not thick-set and masochistic, what is he?

Aud : I'm trying to combine it in my head with the fact that he's also described as depressed because I'm not sure about that.

R: Well that's just my interpretation.

Aud : Does he cry?

R: Well he might do. But in the text there is no specific indication that he cries.

Aud: I'm thinking about sinew, about rigid, or holding in.

Aud: I imagine him as thin, I don't know why, and I imagine him as having trouble with the knees [laughter]. Really.

Aud : All this mind-body stuff, and not being able to act, that's quite schizoid, so you would expect a lot of problems with the knees.

R: Yes, and he's suicidal, you know "to be or not to be". I think he's quite schizoid too.

Aud: And he's using his mind to control his body.

Aud: I agree with Judy that he probably had a lot of ripeness and a lot of charge that was visible but he was holding it back at the same time. So maybe a little bit of emptying or something would just do the trick.... [laughter] He'd probably kill Claudius straight away.

R: So, this is the next question: what kind of massage would you give him? [laughter]

Aud: Well first of all I'd contract with him that he wouldn't go and kill anybody. I'm not doing a massage that results in murder.

Aud: Slow....

R: Slow would be...?

Aud: Opening ...I don't know.

Aud: It depends on which part of the play you're talking about. Where is he in his process?

Aud: I think you should do deep draining on his knees. ... Or just have him on the floor kicking cushions.

Aud: I think he needs to talk.

R: He does a lot of talking though.

Aud: He discharges a lot through talking. He needs to discharge through the body.

R: And he needs containment.

Aud: I don't know I'm searching. Don't think it's about containment. He needs something else to bring the discharge into the body and then through.... Sounding.

R: So what kind of massage?

Aud: I'm also thinking of his breathing. I'd want very much to focus on his breathing.

R: How do you imagine him breathing?

Aud: On two levels in the sense that the superficial breathing is quite full, but there's another underlying level, and I think that would be very important, that would be a key, before I almost worked on anything else.

Aud: I agree with that. I think he's so pushed to the edge and I would affirm in him his need to reflect, and I think working with the breath would bring that containment and space, without it being....without denying the conflict, the charge.

R: OK, so....how would you work with the breath?

Aud: I'd do a lot of listening to the breath, and stretching

R: What type of thing? Hypotonus?

Aud: Lifting, thinking of those stiff tendons.

R: Anybody else? You can choose any point in the play.

Aud: Also pushing with the hands and feet. Not encouraging pushing against but something like being with the feet and being there with a very slight hint of provocation so there's some meeting there.....

Aud: I think he's kind of borderline ...So I'm not sure.... He's suicidal and not sure what his reality is. He's not sure what's him and what's outside him. Am I trembling or is the world trembling? Need to be cautious

Aud: Well I was thinking of the shock he must have undergone. Its too early for melting..... a later stage.

Aud: Does he wear a suit of armour? You could tell him he's too armoured! [laughter]

Aud: It's a difficult one because I always associate Hamlet with the aspect of him that can't act. I see him as someone who thinks, thinks, thinks, but doesn't get anything done. On one hand I would like to liberate his life force, but on the other hand I'd have more of an impulse to hold or contain him.

R: You're mirroring his conflict. How would you contain him?

Aud: I don't know...I suppose by holding. It could bring a lot out.

Aud: There's a lot of fear of what would happen if he lets go, that's my sense. Fear of explosion.

Aud: Yes. Holding can bring all that to quite a point ofsomething dynamic ... explosion, if its in there.

Aud: That's where I think he's a masochist. He's holding it all inside. He isn't acting, he isn't crying, he's just building up a charge.

Aud: I'd want to work with boundaries and physical embodiment. Close tracking of his moment to moment experience of himself. Its about finding that edge where he feels contained and then where he's in danger of going over the edge.

Aud: Also his fear of the unnatural, not retaining any goodness.

R: Have we got Hamlet sorted then? [laughter] It would take quite a lot, we're talking about a couple years here. So who's going to take him on then?

Aud: No reduced rates! He's a prince!

R: I want to link this back to somatic metaphors. They're not just expressions. We actually live out these metaphors. And for the metaphor to be comprehended I think, it's not just a matter of verbally unpicking the symptom, the person also has to have some type of bodily experience of it.

I had a good example of this the other week. A client came in and actually said to me "I've got cystitis. I guess I must be pissed off. I suppose it must have something to do with my new lover". Quite a sophisticated client who's been round the therapy track a few times, she can work that much out for herself. But they'd just got together and things are pretty good at the moment and she said "it doesn't make sense to me". So we explored things in various ways particularly by using her awareness of her body and the first image that came up was of having to sheath her claws, of having to hold something back. Later on in the process she came up with another image of snakes and constriction, she actually used the word constrictor, "there's a constrictor here". And then she went into a sort of state of sleep, daydreams in which she had many images, and when she unravelled them she suddenly remembered something that had happened the day before with her lover that had made her very angry. But that anger had been repressed. And it really did take her following her body impulses and going into them, quite a labyrinthine journey, to get down to this place. As she was telling me this her hand was like this [gestures a fist]. She was completely unconscious of it. So even then, getting to the experience, the connection of how angry she was, how absolutely furious she was, she didn't connect feeling and its embodiment.

So, how does this work in practice with clients? In the initial interview, which includes taking a medical history, you're scanning for symptoms. What I find is people tend to forget symptoms so I actually take people from their head down to their toes. Do you have any problems with your eyes? Mouth? Nose? I mean, I play it by ear [laughter] sometimes I wouldn't go top to toe, but if you suspect something, some niggling symptoms that the person's not telling you about, it's one way to dig them out. In the first interview you can ask lots of questions in the spirit of general enquiry, and not give them particular weight. At this point you don't want to go into the meaning, you're just picking up information. So I always ask people about their sleep, appetite, energy, and it's just very much a fact at that point.

When you get into the massage the experience of the symptom can be brought into reality as an experience, an experience of pain that they can have that pain with you and see how they are with that pain and what that pain means and where it is and what happens when you do this and do that. And then at some point it may be possible to give the client back their own metaphor. Sometimes it will be there in their language.

I can remember one of the first massage clients I had. She had frequent headaches, and one day she was talking about a problem in her life and she said "it doesn't bear thinking about". At that moment I just thought, "ah, she can't bear thinking about it so she's got a headache" and I suggested that to her, and it really went in. So in giving back the metaphor to your client, it has to be very personal and real, and something they can relate to, otherwise it sounds like you've just swallowed Louise Hay, which is not a good idea. [laughter] It must be appropriate to the client, in a language that is meaningful to them.

My favourite example of this is not from therapy it's from a contemporary play by the Liverpoolian poet Tony Harrison.

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The opening line is "What's a crie de coeur, cunt?" The reason I like that line is you immediately have a picture of two characters with completely different backgrounds and perspectives on life. So there's no point in talking to your client about their crie de coeur if it doesn't mean anything to them. And likewise it's no good referring to your client's "cunt" if that language is going to be offensive to them. But if it means something to them, they might feel really met.

Aud: So important ... your universe and their universe.

R: Are they going to meet or collide, or miss each other entirely? So the metaphor has to be capable of helping the client recover something which has been lost or ignored. Some conflict or situation that they don't want to know about, or just can't see because they're in it so much. It must be appropriate, it must be congruent with their experience of their body. If someone has a pain in the neck ...they have to know they feel pain in the neck, it's no good you knowing that it's there. The advantage of biodynamic massage is that in that moment when they're actually feeling that symptom or pain, you can just drop in your somatic metaphor and sometimes there's a profound kind of click and sometimes there isn't. Sometimes you drop it in skilfully and brilliantly and they completely fail to pick it up. They're not there yet. And also we can give clients positive metaphors, as well

as looking for metaphors that are part of their conflict or symptom, we can give them back something like “it’s good to feel your legs and stand your ground”.

That’s the end of part two, are there any questions or comments about that bit? [pause] How are you doing in terms of saturation?

[There is a call for a tea break.]

References

1. For a discussion of the medical model and the practitioner-client relationship, see Michael Soth’s article ‘Integrated Health Care’ in the latest issue of the AChP Newsletter, No. 13, Winter 1998.
2. This term is taken from Brian Broom’s *Somatic Illness: the Patient’s Other Story* (Free Association, 1996). Broom is a GP and psychotherapist who has developed a way of working with psychosomatic illness, which means looking for the metaphor which makes sense of the symptoms in the context of his patient’s lives.
3. I have decided to use the term ‘audience’ rather than individual names - sometimes its not clear from the tape who is speaking.
4. See *Psychoimmunity and the Healing Process* Ed. Jason Serinus (Celestial Arts, 1986).
5. See my article ‘Supporting the Immune System: Psycho-neuroimmunology and the Role of Massage’ in *Continuum: Changing the Way that we think about AIDS*, Vol.3, no. 3, Sept/Oct 1995.
6. See David Abram *The Spell of the Sensuous* (New York, 1996), which draws on sources as diverse as Balinese shamanism, Apache storytelling, modern philosophy, and his own experience as a magician to reveal the subtle dependence of human cognition on its environment. He explores our ancient reciprocity with the natural world and the sensual foundations of language.
7. I looked up berserk to find its exact meaning and origin. Its from old Norse meaning to wear a ‘bear shirt’, a name given to warriors who fought with peculiar fierceness and fury.
8. Quotations are from the Arden edition of *Hamlet* (Methuen, 1982).
9. see for example Iona Marsaa Teegarden *The Joy of Feeling* (New York, 1984) which is a synthesis of Western psychology and Taoist philosophy.
10. Quoted by Mona-Lisa Boyesen in ‘Psycho-peristalsis, part iv: Dynamics of the Vasomotor Cycle’,