Mentorship Report

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Client: Alexander

1. Patient Summary

A. HPI: 35 year old man presents with signs and symptoms of pranic movement and/or Kundalini Release and Rising.

B. Other complaints: pain in the left IT band, sacroiliac joint, and sub clavicular region.

C. History of drug and alcohol abuse (6 years sober). Persistent confusion and anxiety regarding sense of life's purpose.

2. Objective Observation

Onset: unknown. Possibly karmic inheritance from a previous lifetime.

Location: Energy body or more subtle emotional and mental layers.

Duration: Bad episodes can last minutes or hours, sustained pervasive attacks last months.

Characterization: paralyzing, immobilizing, blinding, but not literally. Crushing or closing off sensation of the chest and pelvis that leads to disorders of the spine, respiration and digestion if unaddressed. During a bad episode it can feel or "look like" large black bugs crawling around in between the sphenoid bone and the pituitary gland. Today Alexander feels good but he says there is and "electric squiggle" going up the left side of his spine from the coccygeal plexus to about the level of the kidney. This is only slightly uncomfortable.

Alleviated by: correct practice of Asana, pranayama, mudra, mantra and bandha. Feeling connected with nature and socially. Routine. Play. Meaningful work. Dancing. Spanda and tapas. Systematic relaxation.

Aggravated by: stress, strain, environmental and noise pollution, bad diet, stimulants and depressants, irregularities, conditions of high pitta and vata, Anger, isolation, insufficient exercise and rest. Confinement to narrow physical and emotional spaces.

Radiation: whole physical body and unknown layers of koshic depth.

Temporal Pattern: Worst a few hours before dawn.

Severity: very mild or nonexistent on a good day, almost unbearable when self-care has been neglected or during an acute attack.

3. Assessment

IV. Energetics

A. Dynamics of Energy Flow in Terms of Continuousness or stuck-ness

1. Observation of client in terms of areas of sensed energetic vitality. The right side seems darker overall. When laying supine, the left foot primates and ligaments look taught and twisted in back of the lower and upper leg. A strap around the shins and a bolster under the knees corrects the alignment.

2. Palpation of client's body

3. Observation of client practicing specific Asanas to see where impediments to pliability exist: the left side body appears more open and pliable especially during hip and shoulder mobility practices. But the left side seems thinner, less stable, and more prone to overuse injuries. The right leg is much stronger and more stable in standing balancing poses. Alexander reports that his right side has sustained multiple small traumatic injuries, that he is left handed, and he thinks that when he perceived danger coming he subconsciously turned his right side forward to defend his left.

The "wind in the sand" idea and what this tells us about Alexander's mind: his lunar, contractile, cool, reflective mind is more dynamic, but overused and afraid of being hurt. The solar, expansive, heated mind is more often injured, less used, prone to stagnation and yet exuding a noble stability.

B. Overall and particular density and thinness or diaphanousness

1. Observation of client's physical body: the right side seems denser. The left side is a little too diaphanous. Density is even enough for daily living especially around a central column, but client wants to "get in to super yogi stuff"

C. Five prana vayus, perceived directionality? Need for tonification or sedation?

1. Observation or palpation of client in terms of directionality of flow in vayus

Prana Vayu: appears to be stuck on the left side between the clavicle and the 10th rib. May be gently tonified by experiencing beauty, rest, comforting touch, soft music and other pleasant sensory experiences but only if this can be done without aggravating the water element and sense of taste.

Samana Vayu: well developed

Vyana vayu: pain in the chest and low back could also be stuck vyana vayu. In general blood, lymph and digestive juices seem to move correctly, but Alexander expresses difficulty acting outwardly and living in the world. Nervous impulses do seem to suffer from conditions of high vata, indicating that vyana vayu could be in need of both tonification and sedation depending on time of day and both internal and external circumstances.

Udana vayu: well developed. Sometimes he doesn't say what he wants but it is hard to tell if that is a bad thing when living and working with others.

Apana vayu: Alexander has difficulty drawing the exhalation out to twice the length of the inhalation in a seated position, but laying down it comes easily.  Pain in the low back likely involves obstructed Apana vayu. Waste elimination is sound. Strength and balance issues also likely involve Apana and Vyana vayus in the legs, feet, and tail. Alexander reports Hatha yoga and Tai Chi have helped immeasurably.

2. Observation of client in terms of need for gentle stimulation or sedation of energy in vayus:

Prana, Apana and Vyana vayus all need to be tonified and sedated with discernment. Samana and udana vayus are well developed because Alexander reports practicing a lot of chanting and upward facing boat pose, but this could perhaps to strengthened with appropriate verbal expressions of the will in relationships with neighbors and loved ones.

D. Nadi flow

1. Observation of client's nostril flow: the right nostril is generally more clogged. In between his first session and the completion of this report Alexander had reported using Asana and pranayama to force both nostrils open and he has seen a dramatic increase in energy and ability to accomplish activities of daily living.

2. Other subtle signals: Alexander reports sensation of an "electric squiggle" going up the left side of his low back. Combined with predominantly open left nostril this could indicate a need to sedate the lunar nadi. Sensation is lessened by laying on the left side and increased by laying on the right side. Client reports that Swadhistana chakra is also sedated when laying on the left side and this provides some relief.

E. Lines of flow and energetic connectivity throughout the pranic body and taking out the slack.

1. Observation and palpation of client's body in terms of sense of energy conductivity throughout; perception in terms of light and dark, density and diaphanousness: I didn't perceive much here.

2. Observation and palpation in terms of connectivity along a linear path without gaps or congestion: In the left leg when laying supine, Iinear connectivity is interrupted by excessive external rotation of the thigh bone, manifesting more obviously as pronation of the foot.

F. Signs of Kundalini ridings and types of rising

1. Observation of signs of potential risings: Alexander reports almost every sign of rising listed in the Spanda instructor's manual.

-Feeling different, not fitting in

-A deep dissatisfaction or a yearning for inner development

-inner sensations of light, current, sound or heat: Alexander reports feeling an "electric squiggle" up the left side of his low back, which could indicate Kundalini Release in a nadi other than susumna, possibly during a previous lifetime. The effect is residual. At present Kundalini Rising appears stable in susumna.

-Increased sensitivity

-Spontaneous body movements or breathing patterns

-Emotional fluctuations and psychological issues coming forward

-Atypical sensations or sensitivities

-An interest in spiritual growth and the esoteric

-Desire to help

-A sense that something holy is happening within

-personal development and transformation

-Talents and unusual abilities: Alexander is not sure what these might have been, but he is confident they were squandered by many years of not spiritual living and not enough Hatha yoga when he was young.

4. Short term plan

A. Practices:

Agni Sara Kriya

(1) At least a few repetitions every day with the root lock and a few without. More when there is time or he feels he needs it.

(2) Assessment Domains: A1, A3, B1, C1, C2.

(3) He has been practicing Agni Sara Kriya already for multiple years and this is where he attributes his noteworthy power, vitality and evenness of flow on multiple levels.

Systematic Relaxation:

(1) Several minutes. At least 30 long deep slow breaths laying down.

(2) Assessment Domains: B1, E1, E2

(3) Awareness of quality, characterization and directionality of flow and connectedness could be better.

Nadi Shodhanam:

(1) As much as is needed to choose Asanas and prepare for meditation. Changing sides at the top of the inhale as a classical practice. Breathing only through the clogged nostril or in whatever way seems appropriate to remove obstructions.

(2) Assessment domains: D1

(3) He gains immense satisfaction from achieving equilibrium in this way, and would sometimes prefer not to attempt to meditate if the breath is restricted.

Bhuta Shudhi

(1) Two breaths per each of 7 chakras, 16 repetitions of bij mantra per chakra, 4/4 count inhale/exhale ratio breath, from Muladhara to Sahasrara and back. One repetition. 28 breaths. About 6 breaths per minute. Takes about 5 minutes.

(2) Assessment domain: F1

(3) Cleanses and strengthens susumna nadi and concentration for Kundalini Shakti to have a secure experience if she intends to rise further.

So Ham mantra meditation

(1) Inhale internally chant Soo, exhale internally chant hamm with awareness to the brow point or Ajna chakra.

(2) Assessment domains: F1, D1, potentially all domains.

(3) Useful establishing the objective witness stance. Develops discernment. Comes intuitively after practicing Bhuta Shudhi. Concentration.

A balanced Asana program

(1) Once or twice a week, one and a half to two hours classical Asana sequence.

(2) Assessment domains: all domains

(3) This is good way for a yogi to maintain energetic fitness without overdoing it.

Some concluding thoughts on the short term plan: He has not yet mastered Agni Sara and many mornings he has time for only a few repetitions. Also, he has an hour most mornings, but it could take him that long to get his nostrils open and I wonder if it is better to get it open first and run out of time before completing all the exercises or move on to mantras without the ideal breath. He is really struggling to find the right pose for seated meditation. I wonder if he should give up trying to sit and just go after the state of yoga nidra. More time spent laying on the left side body might open things up.

5. Long term plan

Developing discernment around Brahmana and Langana.

(1) Knowing when to pursue more esoteric yogic disciplines and when to focus more on grounding, vitality, Ojas and relaxation.

(2) All domains.

(3) This may improve Alexander's reaction to emotional disturbance and depletion.

Developing discernment around Tapas and Spanda

(1) Knowing when to act out according to original impulses versus when to turn concentration and energy inward to power transformation.

(2) All domains. Especially F1.

(3) May assist the client in actualizing his true potential.