

Alchemy of Bodywork

Embodiment - Being in touch

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Dirk Oellibrandt

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Foreword

By Saul Goodman (Author and founder of the International School of Shiatsu and Shin Tai International [https:// https://www.shin-taiinternational.com](https://www.shin-taiinternational.com))

Dirk Oellibrandt is one of the most talented teachers and practitioners of the healing arts that I know. He has dedicated his life to developing his understanding and skill, and mentoring others along the path of well-being and spiritual transformation. Dirk is a leader and friend to many that are seeking to elevate planetary consciousness and heal the global social environment.

When I first met Dirk at the International School of Shiatsu (ISS) in the mountains of Kiental Switzerland, he was already an accomplished practitioner of martial arts and bodywork. I can still remember my first impression when I noticed him sitting in the back of the classroom. He seemed very upright and focused. He was concentrating more than most others in the class, clearly paying attention to everything that was happening around him in the room. I thought: “this is a serious guy, no nonsense, no playing around, no distraction”. As the class sessions continued, over a period of nine weeks, Dirk was always engaged in the process and interested to find out how and why things worked. He asked challenging questions and offered interesting insights from his own thinking and studies. He had the unique ability to follow and participate and at the same time you could see that he was fiercely seeking to unfold his own path.

After a short time we became friends and I found out that there was also a humorous and playful side to this person who initially appeared so stoic on the surface. On class breaks we often walked or sat in the mountains talking about everything from

bodywork techniques to how energy works. At night we met in the bar and joked, laughed and enjoyed ourselves with the other teachers and students.

Life is simply a play of convergence and divergence, and after some very productive years of working together within the structure of the ISS it was time for divergence. Dirk had integrated and synthesized the work and methodology of what had become the shiatsu/shin-tai school and now ventured out on his own to manifest his way of teaching.

Afterwards I rarely saw Dirk in person. From time to time I would meet one of the teachers or students from his school and hear about the various programs offered at the school. I could sense the quality of the education and development they had received at Dirk's DU MAI shiatsu school and I recognized the potency of his influence on their perception and understanding.

Some years later Dirk came to visit me at a seminar I was giving in Croatia. We picked up right where we left off: talking, exchanging stories and a bit of joking around too, as we walked in the hills surrounded by ancient olive trees and stone formations. Early one morning during this visit, I looked out my window and there I saw Dirk flowing through a series of movements. I was impressed by the flexibility of his motion and force of the energy coursing through and around his body. And even though he had become quite respected and well known as a teacher over the years, Dirk was still working on his own inner development just as diligently as when I had met him 25 years earlier.

If you are reading this foreword then you are about to experience a book written by a teacher, innovator and visionary. If you listen and practice what is presented here, you will go on a journey

facilitated by a spiritual craftsman, learning how to tap into your inner power, creativity and self healing abilities.

I wish Dirk great success with this book as I am sure it will transfer much valuable insight to all those willing to take the challenge of the material contained within. As for myself I am grateful to know this man as a friend and as a collaborator of awakening human consciousness.

Creation is the dynamic process of life
It makes something out of,
what is to us, ... nothingness
How source
Expresses her unlimited potential

The original chaos comes to rest for a moment
in the perfect shape
Before the emptiness absorbs everything again
The only thing I can do
is consciously contribute to this

Acknowledgments

With this book I share my 'life-long' experience, research and practice with what we know as 'the body'. The longer and deeper I sink in its innate wisdom, the more I am convinced of the importance of the body in relation to our individual well-being and also on that of all other life forms around us.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 is about the purely individual state of 'embodiment'. Giving you a fresh view and some personal experiences that will hopefully have a positive influence on how you will live the rest of your life 'in' this great mysterious source. Part 1 is also about how you can live your life from that 'embodied' state. It forms the base for part 2 where I will share how you can extend this embodied state to 'being in touch' with other beings. Especially if you are a therapist or bodyworker, the tendency may be to skip straight to part 2, assuming you know what 'embodiment' is by now. I have no doubt that you 'know', but that does not mean you can 'enter' this state at will. The feedback I have received from many therapists and bodyworkers after being submerged in this work is: "I used to think I knew about embodiment. Now, I do not longer know, but I have truly experienced it."

Together, the two parts will help you to truly 'incarnate' into your full embodied potential and connect with other beings from that state. It will not only deepen the quality of your own life, but also the quality of your relationships. Finally, it offers a completely different way to help others enter this state of 'embodiment'. This can make a huge contribution to the practice of bodyworkers, healers, therapists, and coaches. But just as well for anyone who naturally feels called to share what you have discovered in a pure, 'non-therapeutic' way.

At various places in the text, I have integrated parts of 'Alchemy of Bodywork – The Deep Dive', as well as parts of many other courses I teach. This book finally brings all this material together so that it can be used for further study and development of this very ancient art.

When I used material from other authors and teachers, I have noted it directly in the text.

If you are a beginner in this work,
it is time to remember what you already know.

If you are advanced in this work,
it is wise to forget what you know.

Simply be present while reading
and all what is meant for you
will awaken.

Gratitude

I don't see myself as the inventor or creator of this work. I am the embodied source where the information has gathered in, leading to this book. My deepest gratitude goes to the spirits of many traditions who have supported and guided me in this process. Also, to my main bodywork teacher 'Saul Goodman' for awakening the passion for bodywork in me, as well as other teachers who all contributed valuable pieces of the puzzle. To my wife Katrien, my children and their partners for their loving support. To my parents and family for being part of me and my body, always. To my 'Life Projects' partners and friends for their dedicated work and sharing their passion and experiences with me. To Joeri Gantois, Elke Wilssens, Brechtje Schoofs and Kathleen Zwakhoven for their help with the form, language and layout. To all my bodywork clients and students for allowing me to use their bodies as an alchemy laboratory. And most of all thank you Life and thank you God.

My body...
I don't know what it is.

But for some reason,
I know how to be in it.



Introduction

Writing a book on bodywork is very contradictory, I agree. I have struggled with this feeling over the two decades that I have been distilling this work from what I was doing daily in my practice and teachings. But because the information in this book has been alchemically processed over and over again, I trust that it will resonate in the right place inside of you. If the topic interests you, you will surely learn new things from this book. But what I truly wish for you is that by reading this book, your innate wisdom will come alive in an ‘embodied soul’ state.

‘Being in touch’ is essential for us humans. It gives us that lovely feeling of aliveness, belonging and purpose that serves as food for our soul. Even today, when ‘being in touch’ usually means something more superficial or even virtual, making it more a toy for the mind than what it was originally meant to be. In just one century, the Western world has made a quantum technological and industrial leap, giving many of us a comfortable or even a luxurious life. Explaining how all this was achieved is not for this book, but it is clear that for most of humanity, for nature and our climate it was certainly not a ‘win/win deal’. At the end of the last millennium, we have entered a new chapter in the worldly development, called the digitalization of our society. This, combined with the drive of two-thirds of the Earth’s population to either survive or to achieve the ‘modern Western lifestyle’, has thrown us into an explosive cocktail of economic, political, and military conflict. Where humanitarian dramas seem to be more and more accepted and global, life-threatening challenges remain at the edge of the political table, as if they were next week’s menu.

Not in the least do I claim to know the solution to these challenges. My intention is merely to point out a direction that is so obviously unnoticed, or perhaps even forgotten. Just as your

eyes cannot see themselves, this kind of blindness to the obvious is very human. Especially the modern version of humanity, which lives by complicating things and has difficulty with the simplicity of life as we see it all around us in nature. One of these laws of nature that many sages have spoken about through the ages is: “if a situation looks very complicated, it is either an illusion or you are not seeing it clearly.”

*Solutions of even complex-looking problems
are essentially always simple.
The consequences are often unacceptable.*

Or, as the famous quote of the Taoist sage ‘Lao Tzu’ tells us: “The Tao is very close. But everybody is looking for it far away. That’s why nobody can find it.”

What few seem to have noticed is that during the realization of our modern way of life, we literally started living in another place. Instead of living in our body, we were busy taking care of our physical needs and we began to live more and more in our minds and heads. Nowadays, even partly out of our physical bodies, in our virtual selves. I want to assure you that I love technology, including all the digital possibilities that have been created, but I refuse to use technology as a ‘no-body’, as most do. I know this sounds rude, so let me explain what I mean by this. I have been traveling around the world, researching, developing and teaching this material for over 30 years now. One of my most important discoveries on this journey is the tragic shift of modern human beings from ‘embodied’ to ‘disembodied’, from ‘home’ to ‘homeless’. Most people living modern lives today are ‘no-bodies’, simply because they have lost the connection with their physical body. So, for me the term ‘no-body’ fits. Most people are not aware of this state of being a ‘no-body’. They simply take it as

being a part of modern life. Well, it's not. It has major consequences. Living in your head, and certainly in your virtual self, makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to feel at home and at peace by yourself. It also has a dramatic effect on our health, our relationships, and our ability to contribute something truly valuable to the world. Something we all long for deep inside.

What are my claims based on? The first part of this book 'embodiment' discusses this in detail. But to give you a glimpse, I will give you some examples that are commonly known and scientifically accepted. It is not a happy message, but it is part of the reality we live in and which we must face in order to achieve a sustainable change in the quality of life for ourselves and all life forms around us.

- The rapid decline of human fertility.
- The tsunami of cancers and immune diseases. Even more so since the Corona crisis.
- The many burnouts that we see appearing all around us. People simply don't have the energy to cope with what modern daily life demands.
- The feeling of loneliness, or the sense of meaninglessness that many have.
- The need for psychological support, even among teenagers and children, that has exploded since the Corona lockdowns.

All these themes were already on the rise for decades, but not as steeply as in recent years. I know that there are many healthcare professionals who work with a saint-like dedication to help those in need, but even there you see that many are on the edge of collapsing, or even beyond it. Recently, one of my students who works in healthcare, shared that she is the only one of the staff who is not on medication. Everyone else has to take pills to be able to do their job.

Cleaning the wet floor is sometimes necessary, but it is better to turn off the tap first. The leaky tap is the loss of connection with the source of vitality and aliveness called 'our body'. The unnecessary choice between a natural/healthy life and a modern/worldly life. I am not a medical doctor. Although I studied natural medicine intensively, my work is not about treating diseases. As an alchemist I focus on cultivating life, health and vitality. Over the years, many doctors have attended my trainings and testified to the positive effect of 'reinhabiting their bodies'. In my experience, more than 80 percent of all physical, emotional, and psychological disorders simply disappear as a result.

I hope you have a strong body and mind and don't have any of the complaints I listed above. If so, I am happy for you. It is wise to be grateful for that every day. But look around you and see if you can recognize the symptoms I described. Regardless of your condition, I can assure you that restoring or maintaining a strong and vital earthly body, will become increasingly important in the coming decades. In addition to the priceless treasure called 'health', it will also allow you to tap into a source of creative potential that is most likely new to you. Yes, even for the dedicated athlete and the yogi. Even if you are into meditation, it is unlikely that you know the 'true body' as I will call it repeatedly in this book. It is not a form of 'mindfulness' but a state of 'bodyfulness'.

Enlightenment is our original state of being.

Endarkment embodies this state in existence.

Where they meet, is where 'I' come from.

The trinity of soul, body and mind

dissolving in the oneness of God.