



## Cellular Memory and Bodywork

by Rebecca Mauldin

There's a lot of talk about cellular memory these days. I remember the first time I was aware of my body's capacity to house information. Before I went to massage school or understood the body in any way other than what I'd learned growing up in Southern Appalachia, I was in a car wreck. As part of my rehabilitation, someone suggested I try out Trager Therapy. I hadn't even gotten a massage at this point in my life.

During one of my sessions, when the Trager therapist was working on my right ankle and I felt a rush of heat in my body and, though my eyes were closed, I saw a field of red. Afterward, I told my therapist about this and she said, "Oh, you must be storing some anger there." I immediately dismissed this notion. First of all, it seemed impossible that I could store an emotion anywhere in my body and second, *I never felt angry*, so this just couldn't be! (I had a lot to learn about anger!!)

A week later, the incident buried in my consciousness, I returned for another session. This time, as she began moving my ankle, I was filled with a feeling of rage. It lasted only a few moments before I experienced an incredibly vivid memory. The memory was very real--as if I was reliving the moment. In the memory, I was 5 years old and my parents were hosting a 4th of July party. Something (I didn't recall what) happened and that made me very angry. I took off running and ran down a steep portion of our yard. At the bottom, I landed wrong on my ankle and sprained it badly. I had not thought of this event in many years and was astounded at what had transpired as my ankle went through the gentle movements of the Trager session.

After that, I began to relate to my body in a new way. I was a believer in the concept of cellular memory.

In the first ever massage therapy class at Rocky Mountain Institute of Healing Arts, one of our students did not have a sense of smell. She hadn't been able to sense smell for many years although she did not know why. One day, I was teaching neuromuscular therapy for the abdominals. This is such a sacred region of the body that I had prepped the students for being especially sensitive. During the practice, the student who couldn't smell was receiving the treatment. She began to feel emotional and started crying. Her partner in the trade was a good friend and high school classmate, and he did a wonderful job just softly maintaining his touch without pushing any agenda. She couldn't understand why she was feeling such grief, but was willing to stay open to the experience.

All of a sudden, she smelled a strong smell of cigarette smoke. (At the time, she thought someone was smoking outside the window). Then came a memory of her grandmother when she was dying of lung cancer. Her grandmother had been a lifelong smoker and even at the end of her life, as she was using an oxygen machine, she continued to smoke. The student felt a lot of sadness with this memory. She had loved and missed her grandmother tremendously. She continued to let the feelings and tears flow. After a while, the emotions subsided and her trade partner finished of the session with some soothing and soft strokes. After that massage session, her sense of smell returned and has remained since.

Our bodies are amazing. They are excellent guides to healing, not only physically, but also emotionally.

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