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A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications

*...and you think maybe you'll trust him
because he touched your perfect body
with his mind.*

Leonard Cohen, Selected Poems, 1956-1968 "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego."

From the earliest days of psychoanalysis, when Sigmund Freud sought for a neurobiological foundation for the complexities of mind, mind and body have been inseparable.

In studying Soaring Crane Qi Gong, a 4,000 years old exercise sequence for restoration and maintenance of physical health, developed by Master Zhao, Jin Xiang, I found parallels between Chinese concepts of mind and energy and psychoanalytic thought.

Qi is vital energy. We interchange qi with universal qi, like interchanging oxygen and carbon dioxide when we breathe.

Unprocessed countertransference disrupts our energy systems, interfering with free-floating attention and analytic stance. When an analysand metabolizes projective identifications s/he effectively utilizes her/his own energy. We notice surges and collapses in energy. When an introject pulled someone into internal collapse, I said, "Your mother is pulling you into yourself, collapsing you like a marionette." Hearing a transference projection, I said, "You are occupying me with your mother, as if she were a hand inside me."

I would like to hear from others their own sense of energy and clinical experiences. I will close the presentation by leading those interested in experiencing Soaring Crane Qi Gong with a two-minute exercise, Double Return of Qi.

Thanks to Art Robbins, psychoanalyst and mentor, and Rob Jokel, energy healer, for all they have taught me about energy and centering the mindbody connection.

Merle Molofsky, psychoanalyst and poet, serves on the boards of IFPE and NAAP and the editorial board of The Psychoanalytic Review. Articles in The Psychoanalytic Review, Journal of Religion of Health.