



## A T o t a l l y N e w E x p e r i e n c e

Recently, I went out to California to help my father who was having surgery on his retina. It's amazing that they can cut into a living eyeball in order to help it. It makes me a little squeamish, but WOW! As I waited at various points in a long day, I contemplated what this must have been like for the eyeball.

Eyeballs have been around for a long time. Over the millennia they have had to deal with a wide range of situations and wounds. The eye has evolved to be able to handle scratches, bruises, various irritants like dust or smoke, foreign bodies, etc. *All of our body parts are very connected to their evolutionary history through the continual refinement in their functional design.* Our parts have adapted over the ages to be very good at self-correcting and self-healing. When challenged, they can draw upon a long history of what has worked in the past for themselves and for their ancestors.

During the surgery, the doctor made little incisions in the eye and used tiny, precise instruments to work with the retina inside the eyeball. However, the human eye has never had an experience of having something moving around inside itself. In my imagination I could hear my father's eye saying, "Whoa, what the heck is going on?" Then I imagined the eye running through a checklist of wounds that it knew how to deal with, "Bruise, No. Scratch, No. Smoke, No" and so on.

What happens next? My sense is that the eye would go into shock, terror, and/or overwhelm. "I know it hurts and it's not normal. I don't know what is happening and I don't know how to respond. Aaaahhhhhh!" *In many cases, this overload/overwhelm state can transfer directly to the Central Nervous System. When this happens, it is not uncommon for the whole system to experience shock or go into a shutdown state.*

Here is the crux of the issue: What does one do when faced with a totally new experience of being wounded? How do our bodies figure out what to do? How do they get out of overwhelm or shutdown? How do they go about the business of healing?

This is where a good practitioner can really help. By coming directly into relationship with the eye or with the Central Nervous System, it is possible to help the body part or the whole system down-regulate from this state of arousal and confusion. If you've ever

comforted a young child who was upset or frightened, you know that you can help someone settle and find peace without language or explanation. We do this through presence and the sharing of our own knowing, our own experiential wisdom. *The communication is non-verbal and non-cognitive, but still powerful and effective. With the proper skills and training, it is possible to assist a disoriented eye or nervous system in finding their way back to a calmer, stronger state.* From there, the person has a much better chance to actually heal, to find their way through the challenges of this new situation.

In a later article, I'll explore how this concept effects people who have had general anesthesia or who are undergoing chemotherapy. Like eye surgery, there are no historical, evolutionary precedents for these two situations. Lately, I've been interested in working to help people who've been struggling to recover from anesthesia and chemotherapy. However, this feels like enough for now.

Wishing you health and peace,

Doug

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