



CHAPTER

4

The Reality of Prana and Thai Massage

*“Life is very tricky and we must deal with it as it is.
If we do not first master it ourselves
we cannot help anyone else.”¹*

—Paramahansa Yogananda

Chapter 4

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The Elements of Life to Man

*T*he human body is composed of life elements. Ancient Vedic scriptures mentioned five elements while Buddhist scriptures mentioned four elements with the exclusion of the ether.

Vedic teachings stated that the five fingers on the hand also represent the five vibratory elements of the “Cosmic Intelligent Vibration” that maintain the structure of creation. In detail, the thumb represents the *earth* element—the grossest vibratory element. It is the thickest of all. The index finger represents the *water* element. The middle finger represents the *fire* element, which is why it is the longest. The ring finger represents the *air* element and the little finger represents the *ether* element, which is very fine.²⁵



Fingers representation of the five elements

The Live Force Within

Energy comes from two sources; one directly from the cosmic ether while the other is derived in directly from food and oxygen. Both are concentrated in the center of the brain and flow into the entire body through the six subtle centers in the spine (Chakras). Thus the centers in the brain and the spine send energy through the nerves to all the vital and sensory and motor parts of the body. So, each part of the body such as the heart, eyes, nose, mouth, navel, hands, and feet can emanate current.



Chakras along the spine

The nerves from the eyes, hands and feet can radiate an energy current stronger than that from other parts of the body. The body is polarized with the right side of the body being a positive pole and stronger than the left side which is a negative pole.²⁶

The practitioner may go within and transmit the power of the life force outwardly for healing while giving massage when performing the noble task with full concentration and the power of the will to heal. As mentioned earlier the fingers represent the power according to the life elements enabling one to transmit healing energy through the hands.²⁶

Pulling the Life Force From the Cosmic

According to Paramahansa Yogananda one can increase the life force with a simple exercise.

“Throw out the breath with a strong double exhalation (one short and one long breath). Then, inhale in strong double inhalation (one short and one long breath), filling the lungs as full as is comfortable. Hold the air in the lungs for a few seconds, allowing the oxygen to be fully absorbed and converted into *Prana*. Then repeat the double exhalation, follow by the double inhalation. Practice this method in the fresh air 30 times in the morning and 30 times at night.”²⁷

This healing method taught by Paramahansa Yogananda is being practiced worldwide in the Self-Realization Fellowship Worldwide Prayer Circle. It will generate the life force from cosmic energy and can be practiced by massage practitioners in the same way.

First method is to join the hands with palms facing each other to the front at chest level and rub them together for ten to twenty seconds. While rubbing the hands, concentrate deeply

on the cosmic energy flowing into the body through the medulla oblongata and going into the arms and hands. One will feel a warm, tingling sensation in the arms and hands as the healing energy gathers there. While doing this, keep the body relaxed for the entire period.

The second method is to rotate the hands rapidly in a forward motion around each other at the navel level for ten to twenty seconds. The hands will soon become filled with cosmic energy.

These methods are an effective way to gather and feel energy in the hands and to send the healing energy to someone or to perform massage for someone.²⁸ (Obtain detailed information on the Worldwide Prayer Circle at www.yogananda-SRF.org).

Massage Brings *Prana* to the Recipient

With an understanding of man and the elements of life, and the relationship to *Prana*—the Life Force, then, the practitioner will be able to increase the effectiveness of massage in healing by enhancing and increasing the flow of the life force for the recipient.

Questions often rise at the Thai massage schools that the giver’s *Prana* will be depleted by distributing it to others. The ancient teachers’ answer “The more you give, the more it will flow to you from the cosmic source. It is the law of nature,”²⁹ still stands until today.

The simple way to send *Prana* is from the practitioner’s consciousness. While moving the hands and fingers to massage, connect yourself with the cosmic source and imagine that the cosmic energy is flowing through your hands toward the recipient.