

# SHEN Therapy Now

Emotional Health, Recovery & Empowerment:  
Living Fully Present in Body, Mind & Soul

## The Emergence of Self - Isn't It Finally Time?

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Originally written for The SHEN Touch Newsletter.

**Years ago [...read 'decades' ago] as a student planning a career in classical music,** I was always encouraged by my parents to have a second source of income, "...just in case things get a little slow." For twenty years after college, that second source took the form of Therapeutic Massage, Shiatsu, Reiki and Polarity Therapy. In early 1989, all the nagging questions I had about the theoretical assumptions underpinning Reiki and Polarity Therapy were answered when I came across Richard Pavek's original Handbook of SHEN. You see, for me and my Western mind, the physics behind those other modalities just didn't work out. But finally, in Richard I found someone who not only understood, but could also explain the realities of the human energy field.

Not only did SHEN make scientific sense, it was the most obviously effective application of hands-on energy intervention techniques I had ever experienced. After reading the Handbook of SHEN, experimenting a bit, speaking with Richard, organizing my own first training class, and writing an article for a local Los Angeles health & consciousness magazine, SHEN Therapy quickly became the therapy of choice for me and more than 90% of my clients.

**Now, after thirty-one years of questioning and learning from Richard,** and personally exploring the truly profound depths of classic SHEN theory and protocols, I am both more committed than ever to the work, as well as increasingly troubled by the very limited growth of SHEN and seeming lack of interest in SHEN's rich treasures of experiential awareness, personal growth, emotional integrity, and resulting unbridled confidence and joy.

The difficulties, I believe, lie not only in our present challenging world condition, but also within the undefined personal priorities of those in the SHEN community that have possibly lost sight of classic SHEN's inherent richness. So, let's start with the SHEN basics, and try to identify how some of us might have lost track of our original enthusiastic quest.



***In the final analysis***, why any of us do what we do can only be explained by how we feel emotionally. Whether we are speaking of individuals or the families and societies they populate, the bottom-line issue remains the same: The vast majority of people are completely unaware of the deep feelings that motivate their thoughts and actions. There is really very little hope of personal or societal growth, change or maturation without some profound, primal-level intervention capable of restructuring one's deepest emotional responses to life. And that remains true for even the most illustrious self-proclaimed luminaries among us.

Here is a great example... A few years ago I became aware of a web/blog site of a former SHEN student-turned-retreat-facilitator using the advertising phrase, "Shen and Beyond." How curious this is on two accounts: First, everyone in our therapeutic community knows that the legally registered service mark 'SHEN' is an acronym, and as such must be capitalized. Without the caps, 'shen' is a Romanized transliteration of the Chinese word for 'spirit' or 'divine,' as well as for the ancient Egyptian term 'shen' meaning "the totality of all things." While these are still great words and concepts, they are totally incorrect if referring to the therapeutic biofield practice we know as 'SHEN Therapy.' So, giving the benefit of the doubt, let's assume this well-intentioned former SHEN student actually was intending the Chinese or Egyptian version, 'Shen.'

Secondly, however, even more curious was the concept of '... and Beyond.' Given the already elevated Chinese and Egyptian concepts of spirit, divine and 'the totality of all things,' there can be little, if anything 'beyond' these culturally-specific ideations of lowercase 'shen.' No matter the original intention of the 'Shen and Beyond' blogger, my intention here is neither to demean nor denigrate the person nor their offering. It simply brings to light an ongoing issue: My conviction for a long while has been that the rich depths and outer limits of classic SHEN Therapy are, sadly, very poorly understood. Most every 'beyond' I've looked into has proven to be either (1) already a part of SHEN, (2) an avoidance of SHEN, or (3) an ignorance of or misunderstanding of the very core of SHEN Therapy itself.



***All serious students of SHEN Therapy, as well as their clients***, must, ultimately, pull their heads out of the spiritual, metaphysical, astrological, new-age and psycho-babble clouds of avoidance and denial, and explore the fearful earth-bound realities of their own original pain and assumed guilt. I've often said that what passes for one's personality is, most often, a collection of survival techniques that have long out-lived their usefulness, a learned set of childhood responses based on the perceived demands and threats of a world seemingly beyond our control. Without the means of fully releasing the held emotional charge of early physical and emotional trauma, we each continue to perceive the world and all our

relationships through the emotional eyes and ears of the wounded child we thought we had outgrown years ago.

In such a condition, the profound life-enriching truths inherent in the above mentioned disciplines are sadly unavailable to even the most sincere would-be seeker. Only after fully meeting and experiencing those inner dragons of our emotional selves can we actually open our awareness to more elevating personal paths. Prior to that, it is best to do our own overdue inner work, rather than attempting to lead others into the high clouds and 'beyonds' of our own medicative avoidance.



Through the emotional release and resolution available using classic SHEN techniques, how one perceives life and its challenges is altered. The childhood survival tools are no longer needed, replaced by a maturing sense of body-oriented observership and newly perceived available options. As our perceptions change, so does the world around us and our responses to it. What used to be traumatic for us is now, quite simply, "...no big deal." SHEN therapists have all seen this transition in their clients and, hopefully, in themselves.

For me personally, as well as for my clients, SHEN Therapy has been that needed primal-level intervention referred to above. Through SHEN's ability to release from the body self-defeating, survival-based emotional contractive reactions, SHEN clients begin to perceive an increasing portion of their lives from a place one could call 'experiential observership.' It's a calm, centered place of new options, an honest, nurturing and non-threatening place for reshaping the hows and whys of one's relationships with life, loves and self. For lack of a better term, it is 'the SHEN effect.'

Without reservation, I believe that if there is such a thing as 'the theory of everything,' then classic SHEN Therapy in its purest, deepest and most undiluted understanding is the basis of that thing.

To all of you who have chosen to take this particular road less followed, "Bravo!"