



JIN SHIN JYUTSU® - AN ANCIENT ART OF LIVING¹.

"The truth is that within each one of us lies the power to cast all misery aside and to KNOW complete Peace and Oneness - to BE that beautiful creation of perfect harmony - to truly know (help) Myself."

Mary Burmeister

Introduction

Have you ever felt your body as 'fluid' rather than as a solid block? Have you felt it tingle inside - when you know every cell to be alive and vibrant? Have you ever wondered at the supposed mystery of how 'healers' or body workers can listen to your body and reflect back to you that core essential thought you are currently preoccupied with? Much to my surprise, when I first came across Jin Shin Jyutsu I discovered that these seeming mysteries which I was sure only special, gifted people could make happen, are available to each one of us. All we need is our awareness, our willingness to listen and our hands. Yes, it is this simple - and yet so profound at the same time.

An underlying premise of Jin Shin Jyutsu (JSJ) is that at the heart of every being exists a silent pulse of perfect rhythm. Jin Shin Jyutsu therefore considers harmony an original state and the journey to be one of getting (our egos, attitudes, fears, worries and so on) out of the way. It helps us to remember 'the harmony that is already inside me'. As one of the teachers, says: "*JSJ is not the art of combat against headaches, - rather than 'treating' HIV or anything else, Jin Shin Jyutsu re-establishes balance to the total being which in turn will dissolve the causes of symptoms*"². It is this sense of balance and well being to the whole body-mind-spirit that JSJ emphasises and that we experience as 'healing' i.e. as feeling whole - as remembering wholeness. (Heal comes from the Greek word - Holos - to make whole/entire/complete). I was thus amazed to learn that instead of focusing on 'the problem', I could rather focus on the harmoniser (i.e. what will reconnect us with a state of harmony). For me, this perspective turned the traditional western model of 'fixing problems/symptoms' on its head. JSJ teaches the wisdom of

¹ This article has been based on Mary Burmeister's Jin Shin Jyutsu texts, Dr Haruki Kato's Text 1 Jin Shin Jyutsu, lecture notes and personal experience.

² Matthias Roth, 5 day seminar, Halifax, 2001.

life, to know myself, to be in harmony. If we stay in the moment, with the breath of life, we have all the energy we need.

Where does it come from?

Jin Shin Jyutsu, one of the ancient mystery traditions, was for many centuries passed on orally from generation to generation. In the early 1900's, the Japanese Master, Jiro Murai rediscovered the art. At the age of 26 Murai developed a critical condition and was told by doctors that his illness was terminal. He decided that if he were to die, he would rather starve to death in the deep mountains without anyone knowing about it. He meditated, fasted and held finger positions (or hand mudras) that he had learned from the Zen Buddhists. On the 7th day his body became fiery hot, and something like a hot stream flowed throughout his body. Before he knew it, his critical condition was gone as if it had never existed³. He then dedicated his life to finding out what had happened to him and thus began his research into the art of Jin Shin Jyutsu. In the 1940's an American Japanese woman, Mary Burmeister, first came across Jin Shin Jyutsu when Jiro Murai asked her if she wanted to take a present back to the USA. Mary then spent many years studying with Murai before transcribing her understanding into the six texts that are today used by many JSJ students and practitioners all over the western world.

What does it mean?

The Japanese symbols used to depict Jin Shin Jyutsu can have many meanings including "The Art of Happiness", "the Art of Longevity" and the "Art of Benevolence".

Jin - means (Hu)MAN (compassionate, aware, understanding, Knowing)';

Shin - means 'force of nature beyond human comprehension' (creator);

Jyutsu means Art. So Jin Shin Jyutsu has come to mean "The Art of the Creator through compassionate (Hu)MAN". It is the art of who we are and helps us to reawaken our awareness and understanding of NOW KNOW MYSELF.

What happens? How do you practise the Art?

Our bodies contain several energy pathways that feed life into all of our cells. When one or more of these paths become blocked, this damming effect may lead to discomfort or even pain. This blockage or stagnation

³ Cf. Dr Haruki Kato. Text 1, Jin Shin Jyutsu. Master Jiro Murai - the originator and his work. The method of enhancing Tai-Eki circulation through the utilisation of Ki-Eki.

will not only disrupt the local area but will also continue and eventually disharmonise the complete path or paths of the energy flow. We experience these disharmonies as symptoms. Jin Shin Jyutsu is the art of releasing tensions, of unblocking the dams, which are the causes for the various symptoms in the body.

There are 26 safety energy locks on the left and right sides of the body. They are like energy vortices which all have specific meanings. When energy gets stuck, these energy locks give you a friendly warning to stop, listen within and change. They act a bit like the fuse in an electricity box. When there is an overload the fuse switch flips off. Very often we instinctively place our hands on some of these energy locks but without awareness. Jin Shin Jyutsu helps us bring awareness to instinctive behaviour. It is an innate part of human wisdom waiting to become reawakened.

Whether working on oneself or on someone else, you simply and gently place the tips of your fingers on various combinations of these energy locks in order to re-harmonise particular energy pathways. Each hand is placed on a specific energy lock forming a kind of circuit - not unlike a jumper cable on a car battery. When the pulsations in both energy locks are synchronised, you have reconnected with the universal rhythm and the energy can flow harmoniously once again. Thoughts and emotions are carried through the body by the blood and with time, through listening to the pulses, you learn to listen to what the body is telling you about itself. Jin Shin Jyutsu works on all levels of body-mind-spirit simultaneously. Physio-Philosophy - is the awareness of MYSELF; Physio-Psychology is the understanding of MYSELF and Physio-Physiology is the technique for MYSELF. We might start by focusing on the 'technique', but the more we practise the Art, the more our thoughts change, our molecules change and we grow in awareness and understanding.

Appropriateness in SA

Ever since the first self help 2-day workshop I attended in 1991 I have been hooked. I was delighted to discover such a simple and easy means that could simultaneously help me help myself, help me know myself and help me understand my connection to the universe. I have found Jin Shin Jyutsu's profound simplicity, its' emphasis on self help/knowning ourselves and its' understanding of the unmanifest or causal level incredibly empowering. I have not only learned to manage my own energy and clear

many of my previous symptoms, but the shift in my consciousness and awareness has been profound. It is a simple art, for you to use everyday of your life. You can do it anywhere - but you need to have some conscious practice of it. Anyone who is interested can benefit in the same way that I have.

At present, JSJ has reached a limited audience in South Africa. Most of the practitioners and participants on the 5-day seminar here represent a tiny percentage of the South African population. I believe that this is primarily due to reasons of knowledge and access and not because of its intrinsic value. Given the conditions in South Africa, a powerful and easy to learn Art such as Jin Shin Jyutsu can easily benefit a much broader population.

It seems that no matter what your background, Jin Shin Jyutsu appeals to people, who are willing to challenge 'victim consciousness' and are looking for helpful ways to do this. Jin Shin Jyutsu, like many other spiritual traditions, teaches us that in order to get back into a healthy energy flow and to reconnect with 'creator energy' we need to learn to 'love thine enemy' - both within ourselves (those parts of us we hate or wish we could deny) as well as 'out there' - those people we 'hate' or despise. Whether we come from a background in which we have suffered untold humility and degradation (as a result of Apartheid-supported systematic discrimination)⁴, or from a background in which our particular wounds have arisen more from our immediate family or other context⁵, to transform our 'hate' and our 'hurt' is an enormous challenge. While we cannot deny objective harm that has been 'done to us', or objective conditions of extreme inequality and consequent needs for redistribution and justice, we also can't move forward in our lives or take advantage of new opportunities, until we can let go of our identifications with these wounds. Jin Shin Jyutsu offers one of the most profound tools I have yet come across, that in time can assist us on all levels - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual - with precisely this kind of transformation. In offering a self-help tool of such simple yet profound power, it is a wonderful contribution to any project of 'empowerment'. More than a style of bodywork it is a philosophy of life - it doesn't DO anything, yet it encompasses everything.

⁴ in the form of torture, relatives being murdered, dispossession of ancestral land, job and residential segregation etc

⁵ For instance, incessant child sexual abuse, particular mindsets.

One of the marvellous truths' about Jin Shin Jyutsu is that it can benefit anyone and everyone and you can do it anywhere - at home, at work, sitting in a taxi, bus or train, at the movies or in front of the TV. You can experience its' value whether you have a serious physical project you are working on, whether you are working with or caring for people who are ill, whether you are stressed out at your place of work or whether you are relatively healthy and want to know yourself better and/or maintain your body's energy in harmony and balance. As Mary Burmeister says: "We need never know FATIGUE".

How can you learn more?

There is one text that has been written about Jin Shin Jyutsu - entitled The Touch of Healing (American edition) or Practical Jin Shin Jyutsu (UK edition) - which is available in certain bookstores. Many new students to Jin Shin Jyutsu have been introduced through this book. The only other available texts are not about Jin Shin Jyutsu, they ARE Jin Shin Jyutsu. Mary Burmeister has written 4 texts which focus on NOW KNOW MYSELF (or self help) and two texts, which focus on working with others. Haruki Kato, based in Japan, has written two texts that focus on working with others. Regular self-help workshops are held in South Africa throughout the year, and once a year an overseas teacher comes out to offer the 5-day seminar in which the two texts for working on others are taught.

References:

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 Fun with Happy Hands
 TEXT I
 TEXT II

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