

Inner Smile and Mental Space Psychology

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Recently, I attended a mental space psychology conference and I was reminded again of how MSP is such a powerful and intuitive tool. By coincidence, I was looking for an interesting exercise to use with my Qi Gong group that evening. I had previously combined some of Stephen Gilligan's work with Qi Gong and it occurred to me that mental space psychology might also be a good fit.

For those who have not heard of it, Qi Gong refers to Chinese exercises designed to promote health, energy, and emotional balance. It has been used for thousands of years. Much of it is performed while standing and slowly moving the body. There are also some meditative practices such as the Inner Smile.

I first learned the Inner Smile about 20 years ago from Richard Bolstad, a New Zealand NLP trainer, and I still try to do the practice every day, either a sitting or a moving meditation. In the Inner Smile, we imagine that we are smiling at each of our major internal organs in turn and that the organ is smiling back at us. We also visualize the organ filling up with a colour associated with that organ. For example, the heart is red, and the liver is green. Each organ also has an associated sound. In Chinese medicine, each organ is considered to be useful for recycling a negative emotion into a more positive one. A simple summary is shown in the table below.

Organ	Negative Emotion	Positive Emotion	Colour	Sound
Heart	Overwhelm	Abundance Joy	Red	"Haw"
Lungs	Sadness doubt	Courage	White	"Sss"
Liver	Anger	Respect for self as well as others	Green	"Shoe"
Spleen	Worry Stuckness	Openness	Yellow	"Who"
Kidneys	Fear	Kindness	Blue	"You"

In Chinese medicine, visualization is believed to guide the shen, or the spirit. It is said that the qi (energy) follows the shen (spirit), and the blood and body fluids, in turn, then follow the qi.

Recently, I was feeling anger towards a colleague and I recognized that it wasn't useful for either myself or for dealing with the colleague. I started doing the Inner Smile to help deal with the anger and it dawned on me that this could easily be combined with mental space psychology.

Mental space psychology suggests that we organize our cognition by putting everything into a location around or within us. One possibility for dealing with anger is to simply find the mental

location of the “anger” incident or the person and to move it. But wouldn’t it be nicer to recycle that negative emotion using something like the Inner Smile, and perhaps that could simultaneously and unconsciously change the mental location of that incident or person who was connected to the negative emotion. Perhaps our body or one specific internal organ knows better than our conscious mind the most appropriate mental location to move it to.

When I tried it, I found this process very useful for myself and when I led my Qi Gong group through it, the feedback was also very good. Some members went through quite profound changes very quickly finding that both the location in mental space changed easily and that the negative emotion was either gone or greatly reduced.

Here is a sample patter for the heart organ. You can replace the underlined words for the other organs. Of course, using appropriate NLP or hypnotic language to guide the person (or yourself) can make the process more effective.

Sample Patter for the Heart Organ (Overwhelm)

“Smile at your heart. Notice how your heart smiles back at you. Allow your heart to fill with a beautiful red light. And make the heart sound: “Haw.”

As you continue to do that, think of a situation in your life where you feel a bit overwhelmed. Notice where that is in your mental space.

Invite that to join you in your heart and use your hands to guide it to your heart where that overwhelm can be recycled/transformed into abundance or joy. Keep smiling and let that light grow stronger.

As you feel it transforming, you can release that situation out into your mental space again. Allow the wisdom of your own body to guide it out to the most appropriate place in your mental space. You can allow your hands to slowly move out with the transformed situation in a graceful Qi Gong movement.

If it is helpful, you can repeat the movement from the old location into your heart and on to the new location, transforming it into a slow and gentle repeating Qi Gong movement.”

Option: If it doesn’t feel right to bring the situation into the organ, you could also try sending out the light from the organ to transform the situation. You can even allow this light to guide the situation into the appropriate mental location.

Let me know!

If you do try this out, either with yourself or someone else, please let me know how you get on and any suggestions you have! Keep smiling!

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