



Understanding The Healing Crisis

After a bodywork session, whether it's aromatherapy, massage, polarity or harmonic energy work, there is the possibility you may experience what is known as a "healing crisis." Although the primary focus of Oasis Holistic Bodywork is stress reduction, it is important to remember we are whole bodies and our bodies respond to healing sessions as a whole and not in pieces or parts. What came first, the pain or the stress? Did stress cause your pain, your low vitality, your depression, etc., or was your stress caused by your physical and mental ailments? Or is it a little of all of the above? The point is, while we address your stress, other issues may respond as well and you may find yourself dealing with a healing crisis.

The body has an inherent desire for perfect health. We have the ability to earn our way back to that state, no matter how "normal" or bad our health is now. But in the meantime, the body must go through an elimination process—often called a "healing crisis"—to achieve good health. Once the healing crisis starts, reactions may be mild or severe. Ups and downs are to be expected as it takes awhile to regain good health.

In a healing crisis, every body system works together to eliminate waste products and set the stage for regeneration. Old tissues are replaced with new.

Symptoms of the healing crisis may at first be identical to the disease it is meant to heal. But there is an important difference: elimination. A cleansing, purifying process is underway and stored wastes are in a free-flowing state. The body, mind, and spirit are no longer "locked." Sometimes pain and symptoms during the healing crisis are more intense than that of the chronic disease, but it is temporary and necessary. Most people take this as a sign that the products they are taking or the life style change they are now following is actually causing more harm to themselves, and they then quit this new path they have chosen.

Physical reactions could include skin eruptions, nausea, headache, sleepiness, unusual fatigue, constipation, diarrhea, head or chest cold, ear infections, boils, or any other way the body uses to loosen and eliminate toxins. An initial healing crisis usually lasts around three days but if the energy of the patient is low, it may last a week or more. Your body needs juices, and especially water to help carry off the toxins. This is a time for rest. A healing crisis can be a very trying time for you and requires patience and trust in the process. Be kind to yourself—mentally, emotionally, and of course physically.

One crisis is not always enough for a complete cure. The person in a chronic "locked" disease state will often have to go through cycles of healing crises, with each one improving the condition some. It has taken time to develop a chronically diseased state, and time is required to let go of the "locked" energy, piece by piece. It's like peeling the layers off an onion.

Often the crisis will come after one feels their very best and most energized, setting the stage for the elimination. The whole body gets into action. Most people feel an energy boost at the beginning until the toxins start dumping into the blood stream for elimination. Go as slowly as your body needs so your elimination is gradual and comfortable.

With a more serious condition, there may be many small crisis to go through before the system can become healthily balanced. Everything must be considered and given its proper place in the build-up to a healing crisis. One should expect it and work with the body, not resentfully against it.

A healing crisis—also known as the Herxheimer Reaction—occurs when the body is detoxifying too rapidly and toxins are being released faster than the body can eliminate them. When this occurs, one will suffer from headaches, nausea, vomiting, and malaise. Even though this is but a short period of the health program, it can be severe and deter one from reaching their intended goals. Also, the person may not know what they are experiencing and become convinced they are regressing.

To minimize the Herxheimer Reaction:

- Drink lots of water, preferably filtered and/or reverse osmosis.
- Get minimal exercise daily.
- Get lots of sunshine.
- Take detoxification slowly... one step at a time.
- Don't increase the dose of herbals.
- Keep the organs of elimination (bowels, lungs, skin, kidneys) open.
- Take detox baths.
- Use aromatherapy oils for aches—like peppermint, birch and wintergreen.
- Sweat by using exercise, saunas, baths and herbs.
- Avoid foreign chemical and refined processed foods.

If the Herxheimer reaction occurs, cut back on your health detoxification program. Reduce the dose of herbs and follow the above outline to reduce the symptoms of toxin elimination. The more toxins there are to eliminate, the sicker one is when they come out. Generally, one will feel better when all is over and health is restored again. Just remember, don't give up.

A healing crisis can result from any holistic/natural therapy such as homeopathy, naturopathy, improved diet, etc.

Hering's Law of Cure

Constantine Hering, M.D. (1800-1880) observed that healing occurs in a consistent pattern. He described this pattern in the form of three basic laws which homeopaths can use to recognize that healing is occurring. This pattern has been recognized by acupuncturists for hundreds of years and is also used by practitioners of herbalism and other healing disciplines.

According to the first of Hering's laws, healing progresses from the deepest part of the organism—the mental and emotional levels and the vital organs—to the external parts, such as skin and extremities.

Hering's second law states that, as healing progresses, symptoms appear and disappear in the reverse of their original chronological order of appearance. Homeopaths have consistently observed that their patients re-experience symptoms from past conditions.

According to Hering's third law, healing progresses from the upper to the lower parts of the body. For instance, a person is considered to be on the mend if the arthritic pain in his neck has decreased although he now has pain in his finger joints.

As the symptoms change in accordance with Hering's Law, it is common for individual symptoms to become worse than they had been before treatment. If healing is truly in progress, the patient feels stronger and generally better in spite of the aggravation. Before long, the symptoms of the aggravation pass, and leave the person healthier on all levels.