



Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

A path to healing

Maureen Fienberg

As part of my personal journey of self-healing, I have for a long time been intrigued by unexplainable illnesses for which traditional medicine has not been able to provide answers. Thousands of people's lives have been severely curtailed by what is today known as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS). What is this mysterious illness that presents itself with a whole battery of symptoms that vary for each individual? Only by seeing things within the Anthroposophical framework was I at last able to make sense of this mysterious 'disease'.

CFS is not a disease of the physical body alone, but a collapse of the energy body or life force. Psychophonetics provides tools necessary to assist the client in his/her journey of reclaiming their full energy and life force.

What is CFS?

According to the U.S. Centre for Disease Control, CFS is defined as a persistent or relapsing chronic fatigue which is not a consequence of exertion, not resolved by bed rest and severe enough to significantly reduce previous daily activity, and four or more of the following symptoms must persist for at least six months or more:

- Post exertion fatigue lasting longer than 24 hours
- Unexplained or new headaches
- Short-term memory or concentration impairment
- Muscle pain
- Pain in multiple joints unaccompanied by redness or swelling

- Un-refreshed sleep
- Sore throat
- Tender lymph nodes in the neck or armpits

To this list I would add hypoglycaemia, digestive problems, light sensitivity and alcohol intolerance as additional physical symptoms. To list only the 'physical' symptoms, would be to create an incomplete picture of CFS, as there are several 'experiential' symptoms that are very common amongst CFS sufferers. Of course these symptoms in isolation do not necessarily constitute CFS. Some of them are: Anxiety, concentration difficulties, depression, panic attacks, tense neck and shoulders. To try and treat CFS purely by looking at the physical symptoms is to only view one small facet of a person's condition.

An Anthroposophic perspective

Each person suffering from CFS experiences a different set of symptoms to the next person. Information collected on CFS is connected to physical, energetic, emotional, mental and relationship components, which form a single body of symptoms. All these symptoms are expressions of the same reality. Because Psychophonetics counselling enters through sensing in the body, we can enter from any one of the client's presenting symptoms, and make a difference to the whole.

There is a natural tendency in living beings towards healing. With CFS clients we need to find what is blocking these healing dynamics in order to unlock the pockets of energy and warmth so that they can be released back into the natural flow of the life force.

What underlies such a diverse range of symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, aching muscles, sore throats, concentration difficulties and un-refreshed sleep? In order to explore this in Psychophonetics counselling we enter from what the client knows and experiences as the symptoms.

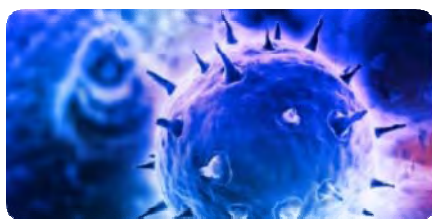
Major causes of CFS:

1. **Physical:** This can be caused by toxicity in the food chain; mechanical or repetitive use of the body as in running, swimming or jumping; poor nutrition; lack of movement/expression.

Post-viral: The most common case is the Epstein-Barr virus. The cytomegalovirus and Coxsackie's virus and others are also implicated.

2. **Etheric/vital body:** The **life force** becomes depleted due to environmental deprivation and/or parental neglect.
3. **Emotional/astral body:** People send themselves negative messages over a long period of time. Or there is a fear that is not addressed and is suppressed. This leads to a retreat of the soul life. There can also be repressed emotional/ sexual abuse.
4. **Mental:** Hyper stimulation of the intellect in the first seven years of life can result in CFS in the mid-thirties. Also excessive amounts of time spent on the computer which is a purely mental activity that is disconnected from anything else, can result in CFS.

A typical symptom of CFS is that you *wake up in the morning exhausted*. When a person with a healthy life force sleeps, cosmic forces nurture the astral body and the etheric body follows the astral body as it leaves the physical body. During sleep the astrality heals what it destroys during the day.



Retrovirus XMRV and ME/CFS. Scientists have identified the retrovirus XMRV in the blood of 68 of 101 people with ME/CFS

With a person suffering from CFS, the etheric body does not follow the astral body at night. It collapses, does not rise and is closed up. Therefore the etheric body does not benefit from sleep and cannot be nurtured. This leads to a depletion of the life force, which accelerates the chronic fatigue. Patients can usually tell you the exact date when their condition started.

People with CFS are unable to let the world into their lives. There may be underlying issues, which result in the astral

(soul) body lifting out of their physical body. In other words, their soul life cannot find a relationship to the body. This may lead to food allergies and digestive problems, as if it is too much to digest life properly. As the astral body tries unsuccessfully to cope, the person develops aches, pains, lethargy and often sleeplessness. This leads to excarnation (not being fully present), which leads to fatigue and often a total collapse. A person suffering from severe CFS must necessarily limit their participation in the fullness of life around them.

Some points for counselling

Before each session, the client is asked to list their most pressing symptoms and to rate them on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the worst and 0 being the symptom has cleared up. The usual conversation phase then proceeds.

If the client focuses specifically on a particular symptom, they enter the action phase through that symptom. However, if a wish is expressed about something other than a specific symptom, then the action phase proceeds according to that wish. There is often an overlap between the wish and one of the presenting physical symptoms.

To re-awaken the life force, warm ups and enlivening helps the client to move their body and to activate their bodily symptoms. Sounds are used as much as possible as they are the language of the life body, for re-connection, and for life.

All symptoms are rated post-session so as to compare with pre-process and improvements are noted.

Summary of a client's experience

I am a 46years old male diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. The symptoms typical of this condition started presenting eighteen months to two years prior to diagnosis. Not all symptoms had been present all of the time but waxed and waned in cycles and clusters throughout this two-year period. By the time I started counselling some of the symptoms had abated but I still could not work or even take any light exercise. Relapses of crippling pain and fatigue continued to be a component consequence of the slightest degree of emotional stress or physical exertion. A sore and constricted throat was an ever-present aggravation and I still experienced nausea

and abdominal discomfort. The shooting and throbbing fibromyalgic pains in my legs and lower back necessitated a constant regimen of analgesic medication. The 'brain fog' symptoms continued to dull my cognitive abilities and bouts of depression were often punctuated with explosions of irascibility.

I had five counselling sessions over four months and the specific health improvements from these sessions were:

- My energy levels have improved to such a degree that: I have resumed my work as a facilitator, presenting seminars, and have returned to gym three times per week, swimming many kilometers a session, with no fatigue relapses.
- The fibromyalgia symptoms have lessened so much that I seldom take any form of pain medication
- My word-finding ability, comprehension and reasoning powers are definitely improving
- I do not struggle with the mood swings of the recent past. This new stability-of-mood has resulted in improved relationship dynamics between my wife and me and my daughter and me
- The nausea and abdominal pains subsided entirely
- The pharyngeal discomfort is only evident when I over-exert myself. It is a great relief to be able to swallow normally again.

I can say with confidence that Maureen's techniques have been significantly instrumental in promoting a state of recovery that I had almost resigned myself to accept was beyond my reach.

Aspects for effective practice

For working with people who have CFS

1. Clients need to participate in their own healing.
2. Creativity plays a powerful role in restoring their health.
3. Accepting one's condition and growing and learning from it changes everything.

4. Underlying emotional issues need to be addressed.
5. The following processes of Psychophonetics were found to be especially useful for clients with CFS:
 - *Compassion triangle* - clients learn to accept their fatigue without self-criticism.
 - *Excarnation* - clients who found life is too much are often not fully present, this process supports becoming more present in life.
 - *Depth of the well* - enables clients to be in touch with what they are feeling, rather than suppressing those feelings.
 - *Imploded reactions* - especially with blocked speaking and anger – using processes for freeing up these reactions are particularly useful
 - Any of the other Psychophonetics sequences may also be useful.

These processes are just the main ones found to be particularly effective with my clients who had CFS.

Psychophonetics counselling, with its background of Anthroposophy, embraces body awareness, gesture/movement, visualisation and sound work as a crucial part of its methodology, with tools for addressing the client's somatic symptoms. This enables the client to access and process deep-seated emotional issues, allowing for emotional, mental, spiritual and physical shifts to take place.

I look forward to continuing my work in the field of chronic fatigue and other illnesses, especially in the areas where traditional medicine cannot yet provide answers.

Useful References

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person's physical health. I am also interested in grief counselling and would like to do further study in that field.

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The art of living creatively 2011

Kate Casey

The art of living creatively ran for the first time in 2010. Our 1 year program consisted of four 7-week short courses and four 1-day workshops. All of these were run by practicing Psychophonetics practitioners. It was an amazing year and it all came together easily and smoothly with the support of all the facilitators.

We are now ramping up to run the program again in 2011. We have a different line-up of facilitators and programs for next year.

Term 1: **Restoring Inner Peace** - Judy Greenberg

Term 2: **Watercolour Painting: Living with colour** - Catherine van Wilgenburg

Term 3: **Exploring Biography** - Jill Fowler & Francoise Foster

Term 4: **Becoming the Rainbow Bridge: A healing quest** - Francoise Foster

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Maureen Fienberg



My background includes working as a High School Mathematics teacher; in Software Installation; in Personnel Management and then in raising a family. I have three children: two sons, 24 and 22 years and a daughter, 19 years.

Training in Psychophonetics has been an important personal journey that initiated me into the world of Anthroposophy. For the first time I can say that I have found my calling in life and what I truly love doing - being a Psychophonetics practitioner.

I am specifically interested in the mind body connection and how Psychophonetics can make a huge difference to a