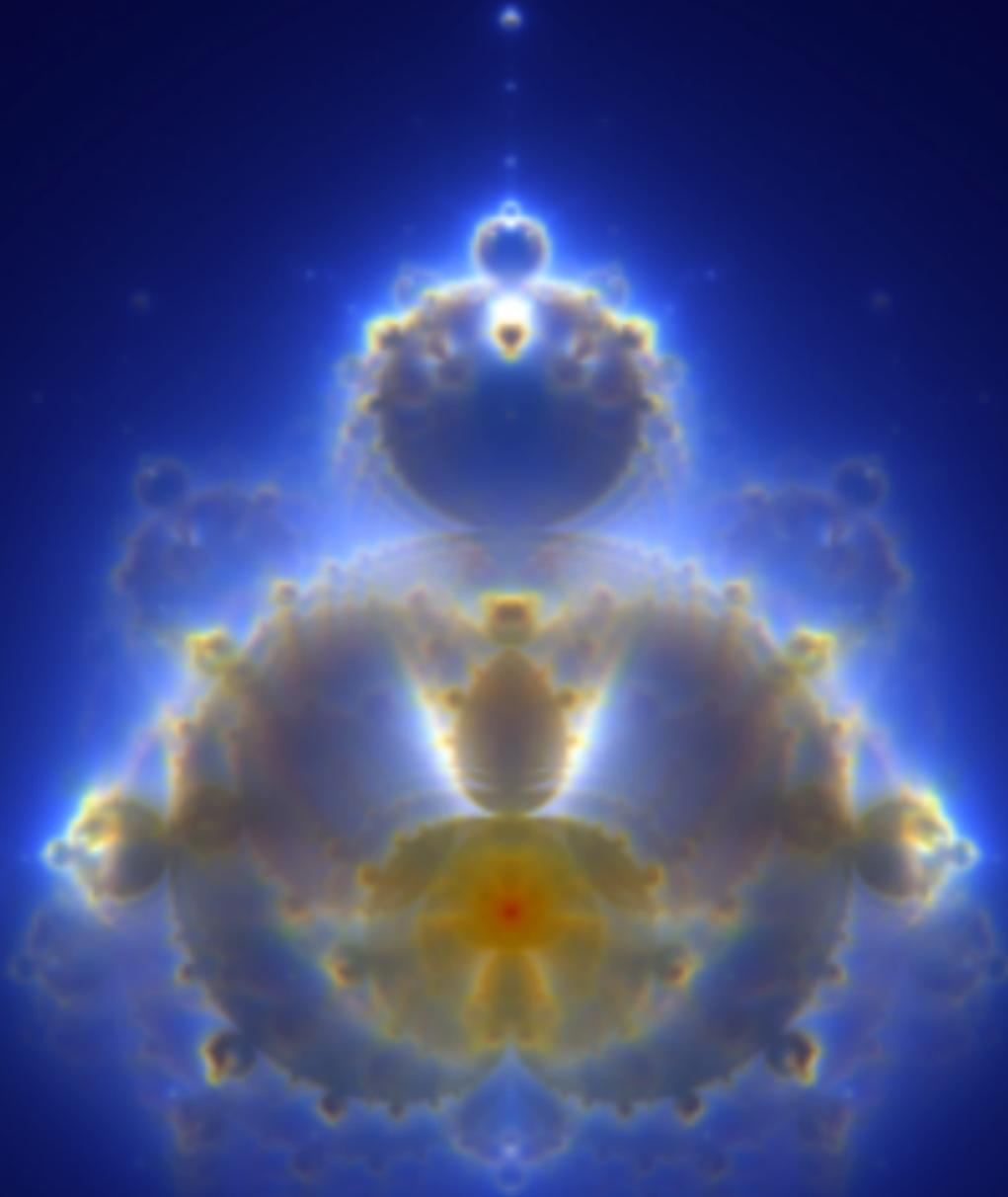


# Purifying the 5 Elements

Techniques for observing and changing negative patterns



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## **The five elements**

Do you have thoughts and feelings... or do they have you? It is assumed that we choose what we think and feel, and that our behaviors are reasonable responses to our observable environment. But what if this is not the case? What if the vast majority of our thoughts and feelings are habitual responses we have to five forces we are completely unaware of.

This book poses that there are five 'elemental' forces that we are continuously subject to and that our thoughts and emotions are dependent on how well we have evolved and mastered our interactions with these 'elements'.

Only when you understand and can work with these forces can you chart your own cognitive and emotional destiny.

What are these five forces that I am referring to? In ancient philosophies, they were known as the Five Elements; Air, Earth, Fire, Water and Space.

Each Element can be excess, deficient or in balance. The first goal of this work is to help you

identify which elements are out of balance in our lives and give you the tools to bring them back into balance.

## **Air**

Air is movement. An excess of the Air element, can create fear, anxiety or rushing. A deficiency of the Air element can create inertia or boredom. A healthy Air element gives you energy, curiosity, humor and lightheartedness. It gives you energy, and inspiration, but does not compel you to action.

## **Fire**

Fire is light, heat and transformation. An excess of the Fire element can create anger, a judgmental attitude, violence, impatience, and criticism. A deficiency of the Fire element can create poor boundaries, cowardice and low self esteem. A healthy Fire element is experienced as a sense of confident power and logical reasoning.

## **Water**

Water is flow and spin. An excess of the Water element can create sadness, grief, loss or depression. A deficiency of the Water element can

create disillusionment and an inability to enjoy life. When healthy, the Water element is experienced as a sense of pleasant flow, intuition, relaxation and sensuality.

## **Earth**

An excess of the Earth element can create a sense of attachment, greed, envy, jealousy or possessiveness. A deficiency of the Earth element can create a lack of strength or reliability. When healthy, the Earth element can be experienced as a sense of purposeful work, strength and groundedness.

## **Space**

An excess of the Space element can create numbness and apathy. A deficiency of the Space element can create a sense of being overwhelmed and make one over reactive via a lack of proportion. If someone says that all the Elements bother them, then they may have a Space deficiency. When healthy, the Space element can be experienced as a sense of proportion and wisdom.

Let us begin with discovering which elements are in excess. We start with excesses as they are the easiest to observe. Ask yourself which of the following five negative emotions are the most troublesome in your life.

Fear	(Air)
Attachment	(Earth)
Anger	(Fire)
Sadness	(Water)
Detachment	(Space)

These five negative states represent the emotions we may experience when we have excesses of the five elements.

Now let us determine which elements are deficient. Ask yourself which of the following would you like more of in your life.

Playfulness	(Air)
Groundedness	(Earth)
Confidence	(Fire)
Enjoyment	(Water)
Wisdom	(Space)

A preference for any of these states represents an element that you are deficient in.

## **Imbalances between the elements**

It is our unique combination of elemental imbalances that creates our personalities. Let's take a look at a few examples:

Excessive Air and deficient Earth creates a person with lots of ideas that are never followed through on.

Excessive Earth and deficient Air creates a workaholic who doesn't take the time to play.

Excessive Earth and deficient Fire creates a person that follows orders but does not know how to lead.

Excessive Fire and deficient Water makes a person logical but out of touch with their intuitive side.

Excessive Water and deficient Air creates a person that is successful at seduction but less not with friendship.

Excessive Water and deficient Earth creates a dreamer that rarely gets things accomplished.

Excessive Water and deficient Fire creates a person that is very creative and intuitive, but lacks the logic to know the difference between valuable intuition and fantasy.

Excessive Space and deficient Fire creates a person with great wisdom but who does not have the courage to act upon that wisdom.

and so on...

## **Narratives**

When an element is affecting us, our minds give us reasons as to why we feel the way we do. If Air is excessive, we can experience it as anxiety. To make sense of this anxiety, our brains will look for something to justify the experience. If there is nothing in the environment that it can work into an anxious narrative, it may worry about something in the future.

If Fire is excessive, we can experience anger. To make sense of this anger, again, our brains will look something (or someone) to get angry about. If there is nothing suitable in the environment, it may

dredge up something from years in the past to get angry about. This happens for all the elements. Our brains offer reasonable explanations for our emotions because it doesn't understand that these emotions are being caused by elemental imbalances. I call these reasonable explanations, these stories, narratives. Do not become mesmerized by the narrative.

Any action we undertake creates a neural path. The more we use a pathway, the more myelin (nerve insulation) we lay down and the faster and more efficient that path becomes. This is how we learn. On the other hand, neural pathways we don't use break down (neural/synaptic pruning).

Thoughts and emotional responses are habits we have created. They are highly myelinated so we must take time to rewire ourselves. It takes 500 repetitions to learn a new habit but 5,000 to change a bad habit, so be patient.

Changing our narratives means rewiring our brains and this is a gradual process. Changing brain architecture takes time and dedication. One way to change our narratives is to change our language choices. To be effective and sustainable however, the change must be authentic. This means we must

change at a speed that is not faster than the brain can rewire at.

The change must be large enough to be useful, but small enough to be believable. The person who when angry repeats over and over “Serenity now, serenity now” is not being authentic. It is not genuine for them to feel serene if they were just feeling angry. It is a fantasy. Likewise, the person who denies the emotion they are feeling only suppresses it and pushes it deeper into their subconscious. That is not the nature of this work. We want to become more conscious, not less. In fact it is consciousness itself that we are harnessing to make the changes we need in the first place.

## **Authentic change**

The brain can change (has plasticity) so if we can move at a pace that it can change at, if we are patient and persistent, we can create new pathways and let old ones fall away. By changing our linguistic choices, we can redirect neural energy away from negative habitual thoughts and emotions and into alternate pathways of our own choosing. Over time, these then become our default pathways. Here are some examples of how to authentically change narratives.

**Air:** If there is a situation that we are afraid of, consider reframing the experience as something that you are concerned about instead.

**Earth:** If there is something that you want or need or are very attached to, consider reframing the experience as having a preference instead.

**Fire:** If there is a situation that you are angry about, consider reframing the experience as something that is inconvenient instead.

**Water:** If there is a situation where you feel sad, consider reframing the experience as being unfortunate instead.

**Space:** If there is a situation that makes you want to detach, consider reframing the experience as one where you would benefit from some perspective instead.

Find words that work for you. The English language does not have enough nuance and variety to give us perfect words for these experiences. These are the words that are the closest for me to my experiences of the elements. These words only point to emotional states, so if the words I have

listed aren't authentic for you, choose others. The idea is to find less charged words than fear, anger, attachment, sadness and disassociation. Just remember to rescript your narratives with words that you can actually believe. If you pick a word too far from what you are experiencing, it will not be authentic and will not be sustainable.

Linguistic upgrades disempower negative experiences. That energy has to go somewhere. Where does it go? It goes to empower you.

Once you are able to shift your narrative, the next step is to experience the elements... as elements. No narrative needed other than "ah, I'm experiencing the \_\_\_\_\_ element right now."

### **Three invitations**

Our mind is always inviting us to accept its narrative. I call our mind's narrations The first invitation. By authentically changing the narrative, I am declining my first invitation.

The more you can observe your own narrative, the more you will notice narratives in other people. Remember, not only does your mind invite you to a

narrative, the same happens for everyone else as well.

This then is the second invitation. If someone is telling you about how scary, unfair, scarce, sad or meaningless their world is, they are inviting you into their negative narrative. You are free to politely decline their narrative as well.

The third invitation is where you help upgrade narratives for other people. It is up to you to decide if you want to attempt this... and if you do, whether you want to explain what you are doing or simply do it. It takes skill to be able to help a person turn their dials (adjust their elements) without pushing their buttons (triggering their defenses).

If you want to rewire your brain faster, the next step is to begin a meditation practice.

## **Meditation**

In the same way the changing narratives must be authentic to be successful, meditation must also be authentic. That is, we must move at a pace that we can handle. If we try for very advanced meditations when we are not capable of them, we

may either be deluding ourselves or give up. So, we begin with the easy parts. First, find a comfortable position you can remain in without needing to move or fidget. Static charge on the body makes deep physical and mental relaxation more difficult, so you have two options. First, meditate outdoors where you can make conductive contact with the earth (natural materials between you and the earth). Second, meditate indoors, but while being electrically grounded (look up earthing).

## **1- Clear the channels**

As you inhale, visualize the bones of your body becoming turning into white light. Do this from the toes up. It is helpful to study the skeletal system, especially of the hips and ribs so you can visualize correctly. As you exhale, let the body disappear. The sign that you have succeeded with this technique is that you feel as if your body has vanished.

## **2- Balance the Hemispheres, soften the breath**

When the right nostril is more open, our left brain hemisphere (logic/masculine) is more active. When the left nostril is more open, our right brain

hemisphere (intuition/feminine) is more active. In meditation we are trying to activate the Central Nervous System and to do this, we need both hemispheres (and therefore both nostrils) equally balanced.

Place a finger (or the rounded end of a dowel if you have one) on the side of your more open nostril. Apply just enough pressure to make the airflow through both nostrils equal. It may be as little as a feather's touch. Make the breath as soft as possible. A pause in your breathing will appear between your exhale and inhale. The sign that you have succeeded with this technique is that a pause appears between your exhalation and inhalation.

*If your nostrils are very imbalanced, try sniffing peppermint oil into the blocked nostril. Be careful not to get any on your nostril, or it may sting.*

### **3- Let go**

During your inhale, observe your thoughts, then during your exhale let them go. In the pause, notice that your thoughts have become still. See if you can find the impulses that create them. The sign that you have mastered this technique is called a

Samadhi state. There are several, but that is beyond the scope of this work. The first one typically is associated with an indescribably blissful experience.

## **The best time to meditate**

It takes time for the body to relax, the breath to soften, the pause to appear and the mind and emotions to settle. Preferably you meditate for an hour a day, but if you only have a few minutes to dedicate to meditation, then the best time is 4 minutes before sunrise and or sunset. At these two times, the hemispheres tend to naturally balance and we are in the Space Element, which is the Element most conducive to meditation.

## **Meditation challenges**

Meditation will make your mind more effective. Having both intuition and logic balanced makes it easier to solve difficult problems and as a result, you may be distracted with insights during your meditation. Keep a recording device or pen and paper nearby so that if you feel that your insight is valuable enough to interrupt your meditation, you

can write it down. Try to move slowly when you record your thought and not be too excited about your insight or you will have to start back at the beginning of your meditation again.

On the other hand, you can always choose to meditate specifically for mental clarity and new ideas. Many great scientists and inventors do just this.

## **Orgasms**

On a brain scan, an orgasm looks like a hit of heroin. Some people will have imbalanced brain neurochemistry for up to two weeks after orgasms making it more difficult to reach higher meditative states. If you are not satisfied with the progress of your meditation. Consider abstaining from orgasms for a little while and see if this makes a difference. This does not mean abstaining from sex. In fact sex without orgasm is one of the most powerful ways to charge up your body. For men, do not press on the perenium to prevent ejaculation. It can damage the prostate. To learn to control this takes time. Let's say 0 is no sensation, 8 is a 50-50 change of you holding on versus having an orgasm. 9 is an immanent orgasm and 10 is the orgasm itself, strive to stay at 5 or 6 in the beginning until you learn your

capacity. For a man to be successful, his woman will have to help and be sensitive to his breathing and other bodily cues that he is going over the edge. If you make it to about day 90, the next 10 or so days can become **very** difficult. Stay the course. Once you get to about 3 months, you will have mastery and your energy level will be fantastic.

## **Elemental traps**

Successful meditation requires you to have a degree of mastery of your elements. Each element has a 'trap' that can limit your meditation.

### **Air trap**

The Air element is motion. Every time we move or adjust our position we activate our Air element. This is why the first step in meditation is being physically still.

### **Earth trap**

The Earth element is goals. If we have goals for our meditation, then the Earth element is activated. So why meditate at all? It is our duty. We eat, exercise and sleep because it is how we maintain our physical bodies. Meditation is how we maintain

our spiritual body. So, meditate, but not with any goals in mind, simply because it is your duty to do so.

## **Fire trap**

The Fire element is judgement. As we sit in meditation, thoughts come. If we judge the kinds of thoughts we have or that we are even having thoughts at all, then we activate our Fire element. The thoughts will come because we have created neural pathways for them over the years. Simply let them go without judging them or yourself. As long as there is something about the universe, ourselves or ourselves that we don't accept, the mind continues to create thoughts. To advance further in meditation requires that we accept the universe as it is.

## **Water trap**

The Water element is flow. As we sit without moving, especially if our eyes are closed, we are creating an environment conducive to daydreams and sleep. Instead, harness the Water element to carry away thoughts that you have. The 2nd half of each exhale is the Water element. As thoughts

inevitably come, let them go during the Water portion of the breath.

## **Space trap**

Many people enter a spiritual path because they are dissatisfied with the physical world. Then they come across a teaching that espouses non-attachment to the world. This is a Space Element teaching.

Detaching from the world can activate higher functions and bring you many amazing meditations, but it is also a trap. Overly detaching can create an existential crisis. If we are letting go authentically, wonderful. Let go, find your center and then return. If we are letting go as a defense mechanism, then that is the trap. We can use the Space element to 'neutralize' the other elements. It gives us perspective and wisdom and detachment from fear, attachments, anger and sadness, but we must use it in balance. Too much and we risk becoming apathetic.

It is easy to get attached to 'non-attachment' and confuse it with spiritual achievement. How do we let go of our attachment to being detached? How do we re-engage with the world... but not get attached

to outcomes and suffer? One answer is compassion.

## **Psychic trap**

As you progress in this work, you may notice the development of psychic phenomena. You can experience unimaginable blisses, see lights at various places on or in your body. You can feel energy moving in your subtle anatomy. The esoteric schools have oral and written testimony of these experiences but mistakenly believes that you should try to have the experience directly. They suggest harnessing your imagination and focus to trigger them. This is the cart before the horse. The experience comes as a result of your meditation, it is not the goal itself.

There are two traps here. First, a person can get attached to these experiences (Earth element). Second, a person may have them before they are ready to assimilate them. If you have a psychic experience, simply be present with it, then let it go.

## Conclusion

When confronted with any work of great magnitude, it is helpful to be able to break the challenge down into smaller, more manageable pieces. The Elements are an outstanding way to categorize the physical, emotional, mental and psychic experiences we have and give us a workable construct to begin the process of recognizing and addressing our imbalances.

The rule is that we work from gross to subtle. If our physical body is imbalanced, then it is difficult to work on the emotional level. If our emotions are out of balance, it is difficult to observe the thoughts and subconscious beliefs that are behind them. If our thoughts are undisciplined, then our conscience is difficult to hear.

The brain with its 100 billion neurons is prone to deception and rationalization. The heart is more simple. With only 40,000 neurons, it only tells us if a plan of action feels right or wrong. This is our conscience. We must calm the mind to be able to hear our conscience.

Once we can live a life in harmony with our conscience, we go subtler still. We go to a place of

contentment that has been called Shen. Gross to subtle, this is the journey.

Thus ends the third book of this series