

# Energetic Inflammation: *Cause, Effect, Relief*

By Mara Bishop, MS, ThM, CSC

Most of us have experienced physical inflammation. If you've had a cold, your nasal passages have swelled. If you've sprained an ankle, the soft tissue there has become inflamed. Whether in reaction to an accident, a virus, or an aggravating substance, the body says, "*This feels threatening, and I'm going to try to correct the situation.*" The effects of that defensive reaction are often pain, swelling, and irritation.

Energetic inflammation is similar. If you find yourself in a situation that feels threatening to your well-being, your energetic body reacts to protect you. The body's instinctual systems respond to situations (or substances) that are irritating and get inflamed as well. Rather than physical swelling and redness, energetic inflammation may present as angst or cognitive overload, among other things.

As a protective mechanism, the inflammatory response in both our energetic and physical bodies is trying to do one of three things:

- Eliminate the cause of the problem.
- Minimize the potency of the problem.
- Provide a barrier between the self and the problem.

There can be temporary discomfort for longer-term benefits. When the inflammation is minor, and the situation is short-term, it's generally not hard to manage. However, when we can't conquer the situation quickly,



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the inflammation response itself becomes problematic and exacerbates the situation.

As with physical inflammation, we often recover from minor instances of energetic inflammation quickly. Mosquito bites or stubbed toes are annoying and relatively short-lived. A two-hour commute or a heated exchange with a telemarketer can jangle our nerves for a time but rarely causes ongoing consequences. Chronic long-term situations are more complicated, and our bodies can get stuck in an inflammatory response mode.

It's important to see a physician or mental health professional for any medical or psychological concerns. Considering the parallels between our bodies and our spirits can be helpful as we complement our medical care with self-care or work with a spiritual or energy-based practitioner.

## SHAMANIC METHODS FOR ENERGETIC INFLAMMATION

Here are a few examples from my practice. As usual, some details have been changed to assure privacy. James is an accomplished biker, riding scores of miles most days and racing regularly despite chronic joint and muscle pain. He'd been to many practitioners with little relief of the tightness and pain in his back and hips. The problems were intermittent and manageable for a while, but they became intense and persistent about three years ago. At that time, James's father passed away after a long illness. He was also considering a transition away from an all-encompassing work situation, and a long-term relationship ended.

During our session together, James talked about the pain, but understood that in my work as a shamanic practitioner I looked at the energy underlying the situation. In this case, it felt like James's whole spiritual system was inflamed. For this traditional hard-driving overachiever who kept everything under control (or tried to), the emotional intensity of these situations seemed to have condensed and taken root energetically in his joints and muscles. He also gave them a hell of a workout! We did a session using shamanic methods to clear energy that did not belong and also focused explicitly on calming and soothing the sense of energetic overload. James emailed me shortly after that to tell me he felt much better, and had made

"tremendous progress," even after long rides.

After this kind of work, I commonly hear people say they feel "clearer" and "lighter" and increasingly able to handle whatever situations they encounter with less agitation. One client said she felt like "the barometric pressure had gone down" after working in this way. In some sessions, we work on a specific issue. In other instances, we work over time to untangle complex problems and develop practical and energetic strategies for helping overwhelming situations feel more manageable.

There are different ways to describe this sense of systemic overload or inflammation, but I see it more frequently in these intense times. Fortunately, even when working remotely, energetic inflammation can improve, especially when people make conscious changes in their lives that support and nourish them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. **h&h**

*Mara Bishop, MA, CSC has over 25 years of experience helping people find spiritual health and well-being. Her Personal Evolution Counseling™ method draws from shamanism, psychology, intuition, energy healing, and nature-based practices. Mara's work includes Shamanism for Every Day, Inner Divinity, and Shining Bright Without Burning Out. Mara's books, sessions and courses help people connect to innate sources of guidance and healing. She lives in Durham, NC with a beloved family of people, animals, and plants.*

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