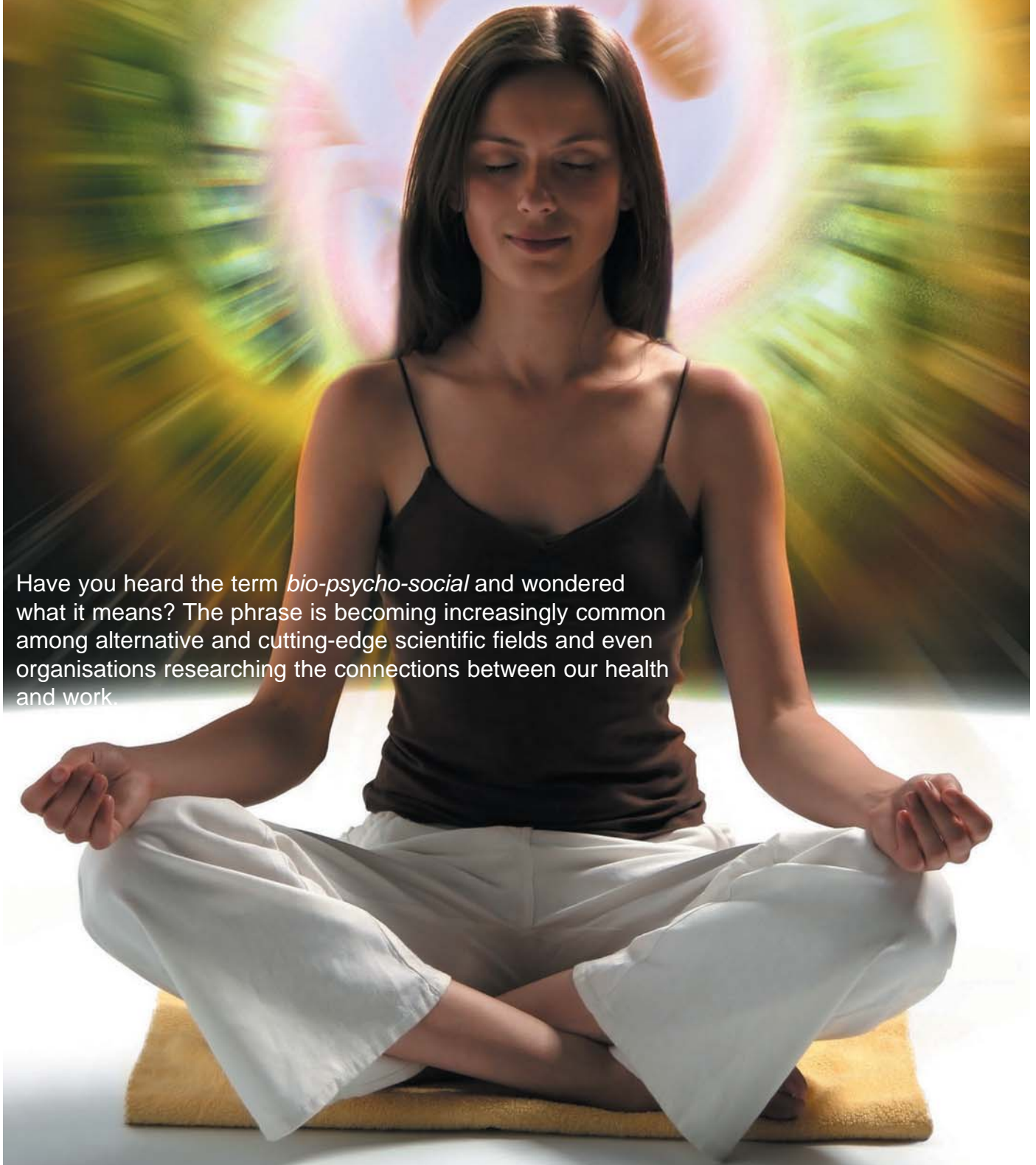


# What is the *bio-psycho-social* connection?

Have you heard the term *bio-psycho-social* and wondered what it means? The phrase is becoming increasingly common among alternative and cutting-edge scientific fields and even organisations researching the connections between our health and work.



**H**ave you ever looked for evidence of the *specific* links between our health issues and our thoughts, feelings and behaviour? Or noticed how our environment affects our health and wellbeing? Perhaps you've noticed these connections with clients after your therapies.

If you're interested in new and advanced health perspectives, and are seeking evidence for the mind-body connection, a bio-psycho-social understanding is the next step!

### Explaining the bio-psycho-social connection

For many centuries, Western science has been based on the duality of mind and body. This idea was proposed by the ancient Greeks, and is most commonly associated with 17th-century philosopher Rene Descartes. This dualistic belief led to a reductionist, biomechanical and biochemical model of health. According to this perspective, risk factors such as pathogens, genetics and accidents are responsible for all illness.

The bio-psycho-social model takes a much broader view of health and wellbeing. It refers to the interconnection between our body (bio-), mind (psycho-), and environment (social). The term *biopsychosocial* was first coined by George Engel, a psychiatrist, in the US journal *Science* in 1977.

Although Engel's idea that our biology, psychology and environment are connected challenges the existing Western models of health, research into this exciting area has grown rapidly. This research is providing us with evidence for the mind-body connection - and thus providing a greater understanding of how and why many alternative and complementary systems work.

One approach that's taking our mind-body understanding to the next level is META-Medicine. META-Medicine is a system based on a detailed *bio-psycho-social* understanding, enabling us to pinpoint exactly why we get ill. META-Medicine explains the *specific* connection between our health issues and other aspects of our lives.

### This article will introduce several key bio-psycho-social concepts:

- How emotional shocks are the beginning of health issues

- How our health issues, such as eczema, back pain and thyroid problems, are intimately connected to our personality and behaviour
- How the brain is involved in *every* health issue
- How illness can be seen as an opportunity for increased awareness, conscious evolution and empowerment - instead of something to be avoided or feared

### How shock starts an illness

META-Medicine takes our understanding beyond risk factor explanations: it explains exactly why an illness begins. A single, defining moment of shock starts an emergency programme (commonly labelled an illness). For a shock to begin an emergency dis-ease process, it has to be unexpected, emotional and isolating, and leaves us feeling momentarily stunned. Common shocks include social conflicts, bad news or physical traumas.

For example, a baby may get a shock if he is suddenly and unexpectedly taken from his mother, or an employee could get a shock if her boss suddenly shouts at her, telling her she's no good at her job.

### At the moment of shock, we experience immediate changes at all levels:

- Mind:** The unconscious mind records every detail of the shock taken in through the five senses - sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch;

- Body:** The nervous system goes into fight-flight-freeze (sympathetic stress). We feel cold, lose our appetite and get an increase in stress chemicals;

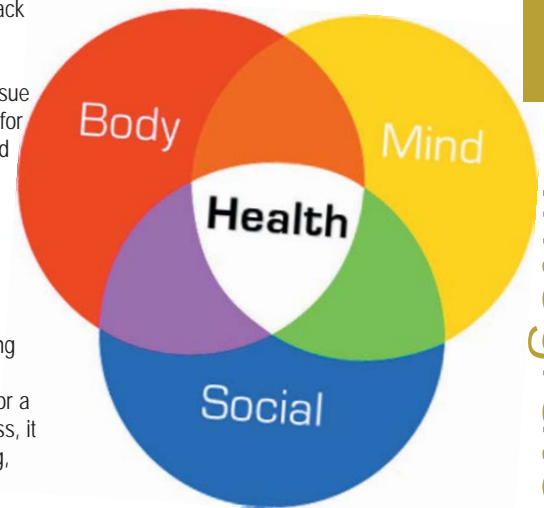
- We also get an organ change, depending on the emotion we experience. In the case of the baby, if he feels separated from his mother, his epidermis (outer skin) will react;

- Social environment:** Our perceptions of the environment change. We take in all the information about the event, so we have an early warning signal for future similar events.

These bio-psycho-social changes are not linear, they are synchronous: they all happen at the same time.

### Health issues are meaningful

In modern Western medical thought, the majority of illnesses are idiopathic (meaning that they



cause themselves): in other words, they are meaningless. META-Medicine demonstrates that our emergency programmes are highly intelligent and meaningful. The intention is for the person to overcome the shock.

For example, the baby's epidermis will begin to desensitise at the moment of shock. The biological meaning is to stop him from feeling the separation: it doesn't happen by mistake.

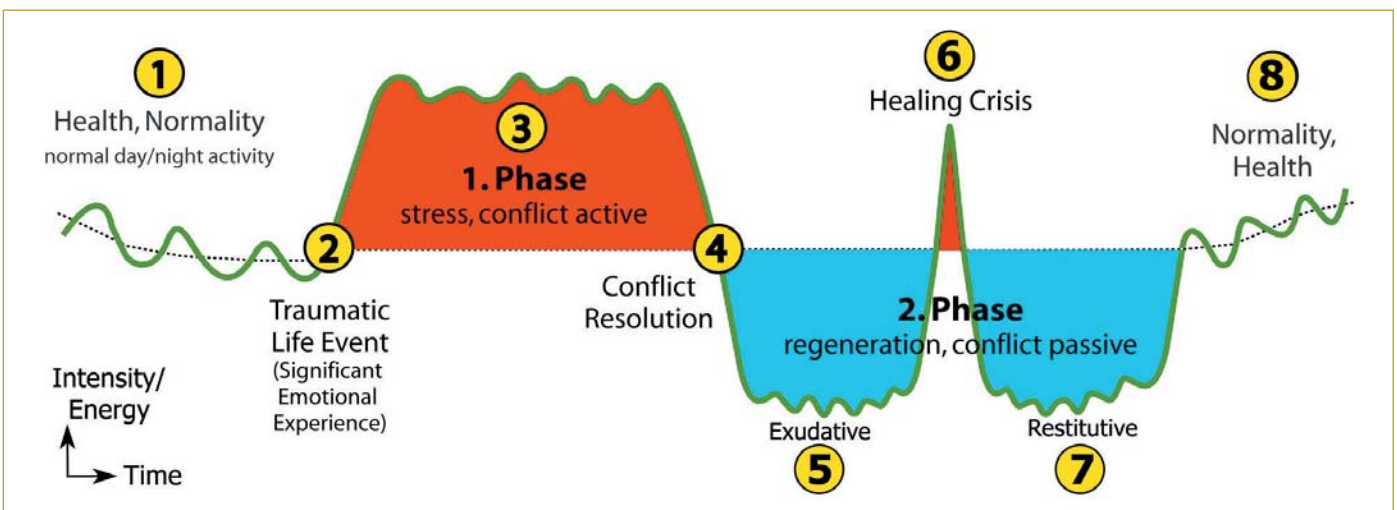
### Scientific evidence of the impact of shock and a hardwired mind-body connection

The original research that led to the findings of META-Medicine came from brain CT (Computer Tomography) scans. The doctors who made these discoveries noticed that every time a person had a specific illness, they also had a corresponding change in a particular part of the brain.

Over time and through thousands of case studies, the researchers were able to map each organ to its corresponding brain relay. When somebody has a shock, there are simultaneous changes in the brain and organ. We can also observe changes in the individual's thoughts, feelings, behaviour and reactions to their environment.

### Our bio-psycho-social reactions under stress

After a shock, we remain in Phase 1, the first of the body's two modes (see diagram).



## Examples *bio-psycho-social* reactions

Bio			Psycho		Social
Organ	Organ reaction in 1st phase (stress)	Organ reaction in 2nd phase (regeneration)	Emotion (stronger in 1st phase)	Thought pattern	Social and Environmental preferences
Skin - epidermis	Cell loss; skin thinning & de-sensitisation, rarely noticed	Cell growth; itchy, red skin, eczema	Fear of separation	Wanting to be connected to others	To be with others, and feel connected
Thyroid ducts	Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid)	Hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid)	Fear of attack, helplessness or powerlessness	Wanting to be in control and regain power	To be in control of the environment, and in a place or with people where attack is unlikely
Lower back (lumbar spine)	Cell loss; muscle or bone (depending on issue) becomes weaker	Cell growth; pain and aching	Self-devaluation or inferiority; bending over backwards to please others	Not feeling good enough compared to others; wanting to please others	To be in supportive surroundings; avoid confrontation

### There are changes at all levels:

- ☉ **Mind:** We tend to obsess about what happened, and how it could have been different;
- ☉ **Body:** We remain in sympathetic stress (fight-or-flight), with cold extremities, sleeplessness and reduced appetite. Depending on the specific organ that reacts, and which part of the brain directs it, the organ either increases in cells or function, or decreases. In the case of the epidermis, there is a cell decrease;
- ☉ **Social environment:** The way we interact with people and how we feel about our environment will be altered.

### Our *bio-psycho-social* reactions in regeneration

When we resolve the shock, either through a change of circumstance or internally letting go of the emotion, we go into Phase 2: regeneration. It's during this regeneration phase that we experience most symptoms of illness, including 'flu, colds, bronchial infections, eczema and diarrhoea. Hence the common pattern of getting ill as soon as we go on holiday - after a period of stress at work, we're able to go into resolution and healing!

### Common changes in this phase include:

- ☉ **Mind:** The mind becomes stiller (sometimes even fuzzy!) as we let go of obsessive thinking;
- ☉ **Body:** We switch into the parasympathetic nervous system, which includes warmer hands and feet, increased appetite and sleepiness. The affected organ will begin to rebalance, either reducing or rebuilding to counteract the effects of the stress phase;
- ☉ **Social environment:** We may withdraw socially, needing to be alone and resting in order to recuperate.

### How our emotions and environment lead to chronic illness and allergies

As the information recorded at the time of shock is stored in the unconscious mind, experiencing similar stimuli can trigger off the dis-ease process again. Example triggers could be a certain word or tone of voice, a scent like pollen, the taste of a particular food - or commonly, re-experiencing the

emotion felt at the time of shock. For example, if the child felt separated from his mother again, his eczema could flare up.

Allergies to foods and other environmental substances develop through being linked unconsciously to the shocking event. How the person responds to the allergen is also relevant - for example, their eyes could stream, skin flare up or stomach react etc

### How a *bio-psycho-social* understanding can help therapists

A *bio-psycho-social* understanding enables us to build a holistic picture of our clients' lives. META-Medicine gives us the correlations between clients' health issues and their emotional patterns, and enables us to uncover the social or environmental triggers affecting them.

This knowledge empowers both the therapist and client, because it provides a more complete understanding of the problem, and pinpoints what we need to do to heal. Just like the causes, solutions need to address every level:

- ☉ **Mind:** Mentally and emotionally letting go, such as forgiving somebody or accepting a situation;
- ☉ **Body:** Releasing the physical trauma can also release our emotions. Clients feeling tearful or exhausted after a bodywork session demonstrates the mind-body connection;
- ☉ **Environment:** Changing the situations that are triggers. If the tone of the manager's voice started the issue, changing jobs could be a resolution!

We can go a step beyond the *bio-psycho-social*, and venture into the spiritual dimension. If our health issues are intimately linked to our emotions, behaviour and perceptions of our environment, then overcoming a health issue is not simply physical. It is part of our evolutionary journey and enables greater conscious evolution.

Want to find out more about META-Medicine,

- ☉ Sign up for our newsletter
- ☉ Find out about our events, talks and courses
- ☉ Read more articles
- ☉ Register for a free 15-minute discussion of your health issue. TT

**Contact authors Joanne Ross and Robert Waghmare, META-Medicine Health Coaches and Trainers, on 0845 838 6787 or email**

## Beat your New Year blues!

With the New Year upon us there isn't a better time to make some healthy changes and get in shape. But the cold, wet weather isn't always conducive to getting out there, as muscles and joints simply say 'no'. But help is at hand in the form of an unusual muscle and joint rub called Blue Active Gel, which really could help you keep those fitness resolutions...

Voted as Best muscle and joint rub in a trial by Runner's World magazine (the UK's foremost running publication), and named as one of the top ten back pain relievers by The Daily Mail, Blue Active has won many advocates this year.

Blue Active Gel combines a whole host of effective natural ingredients, including Golden Emu Oil, made famous by the likes of Paula Radcliffe, Glucosamine Sulphate, renowned for its beneficial effects on joints, aloe vera, one of today's most popular natural remedies, and willow bark extract, nature's aspirin, to create a powerful dual action muscle and joint rub that cools on immediate application, but whose soothing properties last for hours.

Beating the likes of Tiger Balm in the recent Runner's World survey, it is Blue Active Gel's unique dual action and combination of effective ingredients, rather than reliance on just one, that makes it stand out from its competitors.

Used by everyone from professional sports men, women and therapists to weekend gardeners Blue Active Gel is a must for anyone who knows what it feels like to wake up with an ache or pain after exerting themselves physically. TT

**For more information visit [www.blue-active.com](http://www.blue-active.com) or call the Pioneer Trading Company on 01526 344971 / 345613.**