

## **The Vagus Nerves: Antahkarana of the Body**

Fran Oppenheimer RN, LMT, CPEH

“For the average disciple..... the major directing agent via the brain is the Vagus nerve along which the energies (entering via the head center) are distributed to the rest of the body.” Esoteric Healing, Alice Bailey, pg. 122

“There are not more than ten structures in physical substance which are of great esoteric significance. Of these the Vagus Nerve is said to be one of the most important. It is said to hold the physiological key to superconscious experience.” Dr. Douglas Baker, Esoteric Anatomy, part 1, pg. 179.

“Man is able to express Soul qualities through this physical tissue (Vagus nerves) more effectively than any other, except perhaps through the eyes.” – D. Baker

### **Physical Aspects of the Vagus Nerves:**

- ❖ There are 12 pairs of cranial nerves.
- ❖ Cranial nerves arise from the brain itself, mostly in the area of the brainstem.
- ❖ The Vagus nerves are the 10th pair of cranial nerves.
- ❖ Cranial nerves are numbered using Roman numerals, i.e. Vagus X; X means 10
- ❖ The Vagus nerves originate in the medulla.
- ❖ The medulla is the portion of the brainstem just before it exits the skull.
- ❖ The medulla controls autonomic (automatic) functions and connects the higher levels of the brain to the spinal cord.
- ❖ It is a center for many vital functions that are necessary for survival such as breathing, heart rate and blood pressure.
- ❖ The Vagus nerves exit the skull via a small holes, called foramen, in the base of the skull on each side.
- ❖ The Vagus nerves are the longest cranial nerves in the body and have a huge impact on the organs and systems of the body.
- ❖ The Vagus nerves send branches to the heart, lungs, diaphragm and all the organs in the abdomen and pelvis.
- ❖ The name Vagus comes from the Latin word for wanderer. There are so many branches and extensions of the Vagus nerves that their full extent is still unknown.

- ❖ The Vagus nerves are a part of the nervous system called the Autonomic nervous system (ANS).
- ❖ The ANS is responsible for the automatic functioning of organs and systems of the body that are vital for life.
- ❖ The ANS can be divided into two divisions: the sympathetic (SNS) and parasympathetic (PNS) nervous systems.
- ❖ The SNS increases alertness, energy, blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing rate.
  - This is the fight or flight system.
- ❖ The PNS, of which the Vagus nerves comprise about 95%, decreases alertness, blood pressure, and heart rate, and helps with calmness, relaxation, and digestion.
- ❖ The SNS and PNS are always in a constant state of balance; one is never off or on but is rather more dominant at that time.

	<b>Parasympathetic</b> <i>Body at rest</i>	<b>Sympathetic</b> <i>Emergency situations</i>
<b>Eyes</b>	Constricts pupils	Dilates pupils
<b>Heart</b>	Beat more slowly	Beats faster and stronger
<b>Lungs</b>	Constricts airways	Relaxes airways, which lets you breathe more deeply
<b>Digestion</b>	Stimulates digestion	Inhibits digestion
<b>Muscles</b>	Reduces blood flow to skeletal muscles	Increases blood flow to skeletal muscles

- ❖ The Vagus nerves have many different functions:
  - Receive information from the throat, heart, lungs, and abdomen allowing the brain to regulate these organs and systems.
  - Provide motor function for the muscles in the neck responsible for swallowing and speech.

- Promote relaxation with deep breathing: The Vagus nerves communicates with the diaphragm. With deep breaths, a person feels more relaxed.
- Decreasing inflammation: The vagus nerves send an anti-inflammatory signal to other parts of the body.
- Fear management: The vagus nerves send information from the gut to the brain, which is linked to dealing with stress, anxiety, and fear – hence the saying, “gut feeling.” These signals help a person to recover from stressful and scary situations.

### **Antahkarana: The Rainbow Bridge:**

- ❖ Antahkarana: The bridge to the Sacred. Antahkarana is a Sanskrit term meaning the ‘inner cause’.
- ❖ The name given to the energetic bridge that connects the lower mind with the higher mind or mind of the Soul.
- ❖ The Antahkarana is the path to the journey home to our spiritual self.
- ❖ Steps of the journey start with a narrow focus on me, myself and I. One is concerned about survival, safety, food, shelter, possessions and protection and can feel as if they are a victim of life.
- ❖ Slowly, the sense of tribe develops but the focus is still narrow; others are not to be trusted.
- ❖ Eventually one starts to question the norm. This is a period of crisis where self-awareness is growing and one wonders who they really are. It is a period of seeking and this is often challenging and scary.
- ❖ Finally there is no other choice but to leave what was once comfortable and seek more knowledge. This can be taking classes, watching something on YouTube, reading books, asking more questions, seeking out new friends or community, joining a drum circle or healing group or joining a new church.
- ❖ The process eventually opens the mind to new possibilities and allows it to be open to connection from the Higher Self or Soul. The gates to higher mind swing open.

- ❖ The spiritual influence of the Soul is conveyed via the Antahkarana to the personality and the lower or concrete mind.
- ❖ In the same way, the lower mind, as it seeks understanding related to spiritual unfolding, can reach out to the Soul or Higher Mind.
- ❖ The Antahkarana first builds between personality and causal body/higher mind and then the connection continues to reach upward to the spiritual triad and monad.

### **Metaphysical Aspects of the Vagus Nerves:**

- ❖ Vagus nerves: Antahkarana of the body
- ❖ All tissues of the body are made up of cells.
- ❖ Cells are independent units of life that work in cooperation to form tissues, organs, systems that make up the body.
- ❖ 'Minor lives in occupation.'
- ❖ Cells have consciousness and are on their own spiritual path.
- ❖ Cells, just as all lifeforms, are either on the involutionary or evolutionary path.
- ❖ Involutionary path:
  - Gain experience by coming down into greater density.
  - Majority of cells in human body are on involutionary path.
  - "To them, progressive immersion in material of denser and grosser structure constitute spiritual development. Any expressions of rage, of loss of temper, of emotional instability in the human host, represent experiences of a spiritual quality to such elementals." Baker
  - This includes worry, anxiety, fear, aggression, confusion, and rage.
- ❖ Evolutionary path:
  - Moving from greater to lesser density.
  - Cells on this path make up the 'structures of esoteric importance' in the body. (Baker)
  - Find spiritual expression in the experience of energy of a higher order.
  - The evolving cells of the Vagus nerves are stimulated by, and function to bring in, high frequency Light energy to the body.
  - This is their spiritual path.

- ❖ “The Vagus nerve is an outpost of Solar Fire [or spiritual energy]. When this (Solar Fire) is projected into the human aura, it is these cells, more than any which have the capacity to pass the fire down into the physical tissues, transmuting, through this splinter of alchemical gold, all that is in contact with it. It is truly said that every disciple must rebuild his physical temple so that the overshadowing Lord, the human Soul or Overself may dwell therein increasingly.” Baker
- ❖ The Vagus nerves function as a highway of Light from Spirit into the physical body.
- ❖ The energy of the Vagus nerves elevates the energy of the rest of the body and allows it to hold higher and higher vibrations of energy. This is vitally important in preparing the vehicle to receive and embody the energy of the Soul.
- ❖ As we adapt our consciousness to this higher vibration it becomes our ‘new normal’.
- ❖ The Soul becomes the seat of our awareness and the personality becomes the vehicle of Soul expression in the world of form.
- ❖ “That which fills, which transmits the light achieved in making the eye single, deep down into the body tissues, is the Vagus Nerve.” Baker
- ❖ “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be filled with light”. Matthew 6:22.

### **Some ways to vitalize the energy of the Vagus nerves:**

- ❖ Meditation
- ❖ Squared breathing
- ❖ Mindful yoga
- ❖ T'ai chi, chi gong, etc.
- ❖ Listening to beautiful music
- ❖ Giving from the heart
- ❖ Reading something inspiring
- ❖ Walking in nature; Earthing
- ❖ Gratitude

As Esoteric Healing practitioners we learn how to allow balance to the Vagus nerves specifically, as well as to the body and its systems.

Esoteric Healing sessions are often deeply relaxing allowing the Vagus nerves to transmit more Solar Fire or spiritual Light to the tissues.

In this way the Vagus nerves are truly the **Antahkarana of the body**.