



# JING SHEN

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from the **College of Integrated Chinese Medicine**

## **The Ethereal Soul**

Giovanni Maciocia on the source of our intuition and inspiration

## **Spring greens**

Danny Blyth opens his new series about Chinese food energetics

## **Being a highly effective acupuncturist**

Angie Hicks shares her insights

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Why *Jing Shen*?  
Just as *jing* and *shen*  
stand alone but  
unite as a combined  
power, so do TCM



Hello and welcome to the second  
edition of *Jing Shen*!  
I'd like to start by celebrating the  
success of our first edition. It appears  
our new publication is being thoroughly  
enjoyed and the response has been  
amazing! Thank you very much for your  
feedback. Your opinions are extremely valuable and will  
contribute to the evolution of the magazine in the future.

The encouragement received has provided useful  
sustenance to motivate us through the winter months,  
and this time for your enjoyment we are very proud  
and honoured to present contributions from Giovanni  
Maciocia, Angela Hicks, John Hicks, Peter Mole, Peter  
Firebrace plus much, much, more. We hope that these  
articles provide food for thought and contribute to your  
practice of Chinese medicine in a positive way.

Much love *Charlotte*

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# 精神

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# Hun, the Ethereal Soul

**Giovanni Maciocia** explores the level of consciousness responsible for intuition, inspiration, purpose and direction



The Ethereal Soul broadly corresponds to our Western concept of soul. According to ancient Chinese beliefs it enters the body shortly after birth. Ethereal in nature, after death it survives the body and flows back to Heaven (*tian*).

This is the Chinese character for **Ethereal Soul**:

It is composed of two parts:

云 = clouds    鬼 = spirit, ghost

A large, bold Chinese character '魂' (Hun), which is the character for the Ethereal Soul. It is composed of the radical '鬼' (ghost/spirit) on the right and '云' (clouds) on the left. The character is black and has a traditional, slightly calligraphic style.

The ancient character for spirit or ghost was itself composed of two parts, a head without a body and a swirling movement.

This ancient radical therefore depicts the bodiless head of a dead person flowing to Heaven or swimming in the realm of spirits and ghosts in a swirling movement. It is like a ghost or the spirit of a dead person but it is essentially harmless, i.e. it is not one of the evil spirits (hence the presence of the cloud radical).

The concept of Ethereal Soul is closely linked to ancient Chinese beliefs in spirits, ghosts and demons. According to these beliefs, spirits, ghosts and demons are spirit-like creatures who preserve a physical appearance after death and wander in the world of spirit. Some are good and some are evil.

What is the Ethereal Soul and what does it do? An analysis of the Chinese character depicting the Ethereal Soul is essential to gain an understanding and a feeling for what it is. The presence of the radical for *gui* within its character immediately tells us that the Ethereal Soul has a somewhat dark nature, in ancient Greek philosophy we would say it has a Dionysian nature. It pertains to a subterranean world that is different from the world of the Mind (*shen* of the Heart).

The Ethereal Soul is the *gui*, i.e. the dark, intuitive, non-rational side of human nature: *yang* in character, it enters and exits through the nose and communicates with Heaven. The *gui* in the character *hun* for the Ethereal Soul has also another important meaning. The fact that the Ethereal Soul has the nature of *gui* means that it has an independent existence from the Mind (*shen*). The Ethereal Soul has its own life and agenda over which the Mind has no say: the interaction and integration of the Mind with the Ethereal Soul is the basis for our rich psychic life.

Unlike the Ethereal Soul, the other two mental-spiritual aspects of Intellect (*yi* of the Spleen) and Will-Power (*zhi* of the Kidneys) do not have an independent existence but could be said to be part of the Mind (*shen* of the Heart).

According to ancient Chinese beliefs, the Ethereal Soul was imparted by the father three days after birth during a naming ceremony,



i.e. the baby was given a name and the father imparted the Ethereal Soul to him or her. This is significant as it is symbolic of the social, relational nature of the Ethereal Soul (as opposed to the Corporeal Soul). The Ethereal Soul is responsible for relationships and our relating to other people in the family and society. The Ethereal Soul corresponds to our individuality, but within the context of the family and society.

When describing the Ethereal Soul, the theme of ‘movement’, ‘swirling’, ‘wandering’ is ever present. The Ethereal Soul provides movement to the psyche in many ways: movement of the soul out of the body as in dreaming, movement out of one’s everyday life as in life dreams and ideas, movement towards others in human relationships, movement in terms of plans and projects. The Ethereal Soul is rooted in the Liver and in particular Liver-*yin* (which includes Liver-Blood). If Liver-*yin* is depleted, the Ethereal Soul is deprived of its residence and becomes rootless. The Ethereal Soul, deprived of its residence, wanders without aim.

The nature and functions of the Ethereal Soul can be summarised under seven headings:

- **Sleep and dreaming**
- **Mental activities**
- **Balance of emotions**
- **Eyes and sight**
- **Courage**
- **Planning**
- **Relationship with Mind**

## Sleep and dreaming

The Ethereal Soul influences sleep and dreaming. If it is well rooted, sleep is normal and sound and without too many dreams. If Liver-*yin* or Liver-Blood is deficient, the Ethereal Soul is deprived of its residence and wanders off at night, causing a restless sleep with many tiring dreams. Sleep disturbances related to excessive dreaming are particularly related to the Ethereal Soul. Tang Zong Hai says: ‘At night during sleep the Ethereal Soul returns to the Liver; if the Ethereal Soul is not peaceful there are a lot of dreams’.<sup>1</sup> Chinese books do not define ‘excessive dreaming’ but in my experience, dreaming can be defined as excessive either when there are nightmares or when one has unpleasant or anxiety-causing dreams the whole night, waking up exhausted.

If Liver-*yin* is very depleted, at times the Ethereal Soul may even leave the body temporarily at night during or just before sleep. Those who suffer from severe deficiency of *yin* may experience a floating sensation in the few moments just before falling asleep.

Of course, the length and quality of sleep also depends on the state of Heart-Blood and there is an overlap between the influence of Heart-Blood and Liver-Blood on sleep.

The Ethereal Soul is also responsible for daydreaming. Zhang Jie Bin says in the *Classic of Categories*: ‘Absent-mindedness as if in a trance is due to the Ethereal Soul wandering outside its residence’.<sup>2</sup> Thus, if Liver-Blood or Liver-*yin* is deficient, the Ethereal Soul wanders off in a daydream and the person has no clear sense of direction in life.

The Ethereal Soul may even leave the body temporarily: some Chinese idiomatic expressions confirm this. For example, *fan hun* (literally ‘*hun* returning’) means ‘to come back to life’, as after being in a trance during which the soul leaves the body. *Hun fei po san* (literally ‘*hun* flying, *po* scattered’) means ‘to be scared out of one’s wits’ or also ‘to be struck dumb’, e.g. by love.

### Mental activities

The Ethereal Soul assists the Mind in its mental activities. The *Five-Channel Righteousness*, a text from the Tang dynasty, says: ‘Knowledge is dependent on the sharpness of the Ethereal Soul’.<sup>3</sup> The Ethereal Soul provides the Mind, which is responsible for rational thinking, with intuition and inspiration. It also gives the Mind ‘movement’ in the sense that it allows the Mind the capacity of self-insight and introspection as well as the ability to project outwards and relate to other people. It also allows the mind creativity, dreaming, planning and imagination. This capacity for movement and outward projection is closely related to the *Liver-qi* quality of quick and free movement. The Ethereal Soul gives the Mind the necessary psychic tension of Wood. The Mind without the Ethereal Soul would be like a powerful computer without software.

### Balance of emotions

The Ethereal Soul is responsible for maintaining a normal balance between excitation and restraint of the emotional

life, under the leadership of the Heart and the Mind. Emotions are a normal part of our mental life: we all experience anger, sadness, worry, or fear on occasions in the course of our life and these do not normally lead to disease. The Ethereal Soul, being responsible for the more intuitive and subconscious part of the Mind, plays a role in keeping an emotional balance and, most of all, prevents the emotions from becoming excessive and therefore turning into causes of disease.

This regulatory function of the Ethereal Soul is closely related to the balance between Liver-Blood (the *yin* part of the Liver) and *Liver-qi* (the *yang* part of the Liver). Liver-Blood and *Liver-qi* need to be harmonised and Liver-Blood must root *Liver-qi* to prevent it from becoming stagnant or rebelling upwards. On a mental-emotional level, Liver-Blood needs to root the Ethereal Soul thus allowing a balanced and happy emotional life. This is one of the meanings, on a mental level, of the Liver being a ‘regulating and harmonising’ organ.

The free flow of *Liver-qi* is the physical counterpart of the ‘coming and going’ of the Ethereal Soul: this ‘coming and going’ should be regulated and balanced. If it is deficient (as in *Liver-qi* stagnation), the person is depressed and not in touch with his or her emotions; if it is excessive (as in *Liver-yang* rising or *Liver-Fire*), the person may be agitated, angry, too emotional or slightly manic.

These two opposing emotional states, characterised by a hyperactive *Liver-qi* (with excessive ‘coming and going’ of the Ethereal Soul) or a stagnant *Liver-qi* (with insufficient

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'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul) are described in *Simple Questions* as 'fullness and emptiness' of the Mind (*shen*). Chapter 62 of *Simple Questions* says: 'What are the symptoms of Fullness and Emptiness of the Mind [*shen*]? When the Mind is in Excess, the person laughs uncontrollably; when the Mind is Deficient, the person is sad'.<sup>4</sup>

## Eyes and sight

The Ethereal Soul relates to the eyes and sight. Tang Zong Hai says: 'When the Ethereal Soul wanders to the eyes, they can see'.<sup>5</sup> The *Secret of the Golden Flower* in chapter 2 says: 'In the daytime the Ethereal Soul is in the eyes and at night in the Liver. When it is in the eyes we can see. When it is in the Liver we dream'.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from physical sight, the Ethereal Soul also gives us 'vision' in life, i.e. the capacity to have life dreams, projects and creativity. This connection with the eyes can easily be related to the rooting of the Hun in Liver-Blood as Liver-Blood nourishes the eyes.

## Courage

The Ethereal Soul is related to courage or cowardice and for this reason the Liver is sometimes called the 'resolute organ'. Tang Zong Hai says: 'When the Ethereal Soul is not strong, the person is timid'.<sup>7</sup> The 'strength' of the Ethereal Soul in this connection derives mainly from Liver-Blood. If Liver-Blood is abundant, the person is fearless and is able to face up to life's difficulties with an indomitable spirit.

Just as in disease Liver-*yang* easily flares upwards causing anger, in health the same type of mental energy deriving from Liver-Blood can give a person courage and resoluteness. If Liver-Blood is deficient and the Ethereal Soul is dithering, the person lacks courage and resolve, cannot face up to difficulties or making decisions, and is easily discouraged. A vague feeling of fear at night before falling asleep is also due to a lack of rooting of the Ethereal Soul. The quality of courage and resoluteness is also dependent on the strength of Gall-Bladder *qi*.

## Planning

The Ethereal Soul influences our capacity for planning our life and giving it a sense of direction. A lack of direction in life and a sense of spiritual confusion may be compared to the aimless wandering of the Ethereal Soul: such a sense of lack of direction and plans is due to the insufficient 'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul. If the Liver is flourishing the Ethereal Soul is firmly rooted and can help us to plan our life with vision, wisdom and creativity. If Liver-Blood and Liver-*qi* are deficient, the Ethereal Soul does not 'come and go' enough and we lack a sense of direction and vision in life.

**Please note** I translate the *shen* of the Heart as **Mind**; I translate as **spirit** the *shen, hun, po, yi* and *zhi* together.

## Relationship with the Mind

It is important to consider the relationship between the Mind and the Ethereal Soul. Both *yang* in nature, they are closely connected to each other and both partake in all the mental activities of a human being. Through the Ethereal Soul, the Mind can project outwards to the external world and to other people and can also turn inwards to receive the intuition, inspiration, dreams and images deriving from the unconscious.

The perfect relationship between the Mind and the Ethereal Soul is one in which the latter provides the former with movement manifesting with aims, intuition, creativity, ideas, life dreams, plans, etc; on the other hand, the Mind provides control and integration to the material coming from the Ethereal Soul as it can only cope with one idea at a time originating from the Ethereal Soul. It must also integrate the material deriving from the Ethereal Soul in the general psychic life. If the Mind is strong and the Ethereal Soul properly gathered, there will be harmony between the two and the person has calm vision, insight and wisdom.

If the Ethereal Soul does not 'come and go' enough, it may lack movement and inspiration and the person may be depressed, without aim or life dreams. The Ethereal Soul may be restrained in its movement either by itself or because the Mind is over-controlling it. This happens, for example, in people who are rigid in their views and repressed.

If the Mind is weak and fails to restrain and control the Ethereal Soul, it may be too restless

and its movement excessive, only bringing confusion and chaos to the Mind, making the person scattered, unsettled and slightly manic. This can be observed in some people who are always full of ideas, dreams and projects none of which ever comes to fruition because of the chaotic state of the Mind which is therefore unable to restrain the Ethereal Soul.

The Mind should integrate the Ethereal Soul so that images, symbols and dreams coming from it can be assimilated. For the conscious Mind this means bringing together two disparate ways of seeing the world: the conscious and rational one (of the Mind) and the entirely different one in which the Ethereal Soul holds sway. If not, the Mind may be flooded by the contents of the Ethereal Soul with risk of obstruction of the Mind and, in serious cases, psychosis.

Whilst the Mind and Ethereal Soul are closely connected, there are some differences between the two. The main difference is that the Ethereal Soul pertains to the world of Image, i.e. non-material existence, to which it returns after death, whilst the Mind is the individual mind of a human being that dies with the person. Drawing from Buddhist and Jungian ideas, the Mind could be said to be the individual Mind, and the Ethereal Soul the link between the individual and Universal Mind.

The Universal Mind is the repository of images, archetypes, symbols and ideas belonging to the collective unconscious in Jungian psychology. These often manifest to our Mind as myths, symbols and dreams.



They come into our consciousness (individual Mind) via the Ethereal Soul since this belongs to the world of Image and ideas. Thus the Ethereal Soul is the vehicle through which images, ideas and symbols from the Universal Mind (or collective unconscious) emerge into our individual Mind (conscious).

This shows the vital importance of the Ethereal Soul for our mental and spiritual life. Without the Ethereal Soul, our mental and spiritual life would be quite sterile and deprived of images, ideas and dreams. If the Liver is strong and the Ethereal Soul firm and flowing harmoniously, ideas and images from the Universal Mind will flow freely and the mental and spiritual state will be happy, creative and fruitful. If the 'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul is insufficient, the individual Mind will be cut off from the Universal Mind and will be unhappy, confused, isolated, aimless, sterile and without dreams.

According to Jung the unconscious is compensatory to consciousness. He said: 'The psyche is a self-regulating system that maintains itself in equilibrium. Every process that goes too far immediately and inevitably calls forth a compensatory activity.'<sup>8</sup> This compensatory relationship between the unconscious and consciousness resembles the balancing relationship between the Ethereal Soul and the Mind.

The Mind discriminates and differentiates, whereas the Ethereal Soul is like an undifferentiated sea that flows around, under and above the Mind, eroding certain parts and

depositing fresh ones. The Ethereal Soul is an underwater world and a total immersion of the Mind in it means insanity.

The relationship between the Mind and the Ethereal Soul is all about expansion and contraction in our psychic life. *Shen* and *gui* can be interpreted as the two opposing states of expansion (*shen*) and contraction (*gui*) in our psychic life. The proper alternation of expansion (stimulation of the 'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul) and contraction (restraint of the 'coming and going' of the Ethereal Soul) symbolises a healthy and normal psychic life.

When we feel 'up', we are in an extrovert mood, we feel like going out, and we are active, then we are in a state of expansion and the Ethereal Soul is 'coming and going' normally. When we feel 'down', we are in an introvert mood, we do not feel like going out, and we feel passive, then we are in a state of contraction and the Ethereal Soul's 'coming and going' is restrained.<sup>9</sup>

Chinese herbal medicine reflects this polarity of expansion and contraction in our psychic life. Within the category of herbs that calm the Mind, some are pungent and stimulate expansion, while others are sour and astringent and stimulate contraction. For example, *Yuan Zhi* (*Radix Polygalae*) is pungent, bitter, warm, dispersing and draining, resolves Phlegm and opens the Heart orifices, i.e. stimulates expansion. *Suan Zao Ren* (*Semen Ziziphi spinosae*) is sour, sweet, astringent, promotes sleep, and anchors the Ethereal Soul, i.e. stimulates contraction.

What are the patterns that arise from the Ethereal Soul 'coming and going' too much or too little? The coming and going of the Ethereal Soul may become excessive either from Full conditions of Heat or Fire or from Empty conditions with a deficiency of Liver-Blood and/or Liver-*yin*. In case of Full conditions with Heat or Fire, these agitate the Ethereal Soul and stimulate its coming and going excessively; in the case of deficiency of Liver-Blood and/or Liver-*yin*, these fail to anchor the Ethereal Soul so that this becomes agitated and its coming and going becomes excessive.

The coming and going of the Ethereal Soul may become deficient under three conditions. Liver-*qi* stagnation, Liver-Blood and Liver-*qi* deficiency, and deficiency of *yang* of the Spleen and Kidneys may all impair the coming and going of the Ethereal Soul and result in depression. Although we are often told that 'Liver-*qi* cannot be deficient', this is not quite true. Deficiency of Liver-*qi* does exist and it manifests primarily in the psychic sphere with depression. The normal and correct flow of Liver-*qi* is ascending and one important aspect of its movement is the ascension towards the Heart and the Mind (*shen*). In this way the Ethereal Soul stimulates the 'coming and going' of the Mind. A deficiency of Liver-*qi* always implies a failure of Liver-*qi* to ascend to the Mind and therefore results in depression.

To sum up, the Ethereal Soul is basically another level of consciousness, different from the Mind but closely related to it. It is responsible for sleep and dreaming, mental

activities, balancing the emotions, eyes and sight, courage and planning. It is a part of the psyche that is not rational like the Mind (*shen*) but is responsible for intuition, inspiration, ideas, life dreams, artistic inspiration. Finally, it ensures the movement of our psyche towards the environment and other people in relationships, enabling us to move through life with both purpose and direction.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Tang Zong Hai 1979 *Discussion on Blood Patterns (Xue Zheng Lun)* People's Health Publishing House, first published 1884, p 29
- <sup>2</sup> *Classic of Categories*, p 50
- <sup>3</sup> Kong Ying Da *Five-Channel Righteousness (Wu Jing Zheng Yi)*, cited in *Theory of the Mind in Chinese Medicine*, p 37
- <sup>4</sup> *Simple Questions*, p 335
- <sup>5</sup> *The Essence of the Convergence between Chinese and Western Medicine*, cited in *Theory of the Mind in Chinese Medicine*, p 36
- <sup>6</sup> *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, p 26 <sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p 36
- <sup>8</sup> Jung C G 1961 *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London
- <sup>9</sup> Classical music often displays alternation of expansion/contraction, none more than Beethoven's with its musical phrases of intense, deep, romantic feeling (expansion) followed quickly by phrases of turbulent and dark passion (contraction), as in his Violin Sonata no 5

**Giovanni Maciocia** is one of the most highly respected practitioners of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine in Europe. He reads Chinese so has access to Chinese medicine textbooks (old and new) published in China and is the author of *Tongue Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine*, *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine*, *The Practice of Chinese Medicine*, *Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Chinese Medicine*, *Diagnosis in Chinese Medicine* and *The Channels of Acupuncture*. Firmly rooted in TCM, his ideas are often innovative as Chinese medicine theories need to be adapted to Western conditions and new Western diseases.

# Round the ole camp fire

In some qualitative research undertaken at the College **Marcus James** looks at Five Element diagnosis from an unusual angle



As a new practitioner I find myself looking everywhere for ways to improve my skills. I'm constantly analysing each stage of my diagnoses and treatments, and one particular patient really set me thinking.

I carried out a full Traditional diagnosis on the young victim of a homophobic assault. Throughout the interview his body language, voice tone and responses to questioning were extreme examples of what I consider to be stereotypically camp. He was hilarious, but I couldn't be sure who I was observing.

Of course Five Element diagnosis relies upon colour, sound, odour and the expression of emotion (CSOE), but in the case of sound, and to some extent emotion, the manifestation in this case seemed to be subject to the influence of this young man's social peers. He was camping it up on a grand scale, and as I watched this flamboyant performance unfold I wondered what this could tell me in terms of the Elements. He had learned to behave and to speak in this way and, whether consciously or unconsciously, he had changed as a result of social conditioning. I wanted to know if this had any value diagnostically, if it could be a barrier to diagnosis or if it was something I just needed to acknowledge and see beyond.

Camp is essentially, although not exclusively, a homosexual sensibility which

reflects a consciousness that is different from the mainstream. It has been described as a 'solvent of morality,' a creative strategy using laughter and irony as a means of dealing with the incongruous position of gay men in society. By making others laugh, the camp builds bridges to the heterosexual community.<sup>1</sup> Significantly for the Five Element practitioner whose diagnosis relies upon the assessment of inappropriateness, Newton defines camp as a set of incongruous juxtapositions, in which its style manifests as theatricality, its strategy humour. The modification of an individual, in which aspects of culture are anchored in the body, was given the Latin title *habitus* in 1935. Embodied phenomena such as voice tone, express a relationship to the social world and provide us with 'symbolic capital' for use in our daily interactions. By adapting in this way we literally carry our social and cultural history with us, but how does this affect us as practitioners of Chinese medicine? Consideration of environmental influences certainly formed a fundamental part of the diagnostic process in Ancient China, and is documented in the *Su Wen* 80. Camp, by its easy deconstruction, provided the stimulus for lively discussion with experts from four acupuncture colleges into the nature of Five Element practice and the difference between behaviour and emotion. Its extravagance and

its singing voice, could appear to resonate with Fire and Earth, with Metal displayed within irony. Isolating the individual characteristics of camp, and talking about these in terms of the Five Elements really highlighted the danger of stereotyping and the ease with which this can lead to incorrect diagnosis of the constitutional, or causative factor (CF). *Habitus* can be useful as a diagnostic tool provided it is recognised as such and separated from CF diagnosis. This value lies in its application as a means of monitoring progress. If learned behaviour is holding the patient back in some way then treatment will help them to move away from old patterns. *Habitus* can also be an indicator of imbalance, where such behaviour is judged to be inauthentic. Once in the treatment room it is as inappropriate for a patient to continue to behave as though they are in a gay bar as in a management board meeting. Where this happens, it is the emotional impetus behind the behaviour that is relevant. However, regardless of the *habitus* embedded, the CF should still be apparent, since social conditioning will impact upon different CFs in different ways, determining how they take on cultural influences, and there will still be within that expression a quality that is unique to that Element or Official. True CF diagnosis is a sensory experience that should not be influenced by behaviour. It demands of the practitioner that they have an acute awareness of when they are predominantly experiencing an Element. When this is not achieved, and behaviour is allowed into the equation, perhaps because CSOE are unclear,

the diagnostic process is confused. The temptation to attribute labels to behavioural patterns is strong, even seductive. How often does one patient remind us of another, and that thought start to influence our perception of the CF? Camp proved to be a useful example of *habitus* and its impact upon Five Element diagnosis, but we could equally have been talking about ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic class. As Five Element practitioners we make decisions on a daily basis as to the appropriateness of aspects of our patients, but this must take into account what is the norm for each. As we strive to be the best we can be in practice, our journeys must include the development of a high level of cultural competency whilst retaining an awareness of our sensory input, as distinct from the observation of behaviour. It was a wonderful opportunity for me, to talk to practitioners with so much experience and insight, and thinking about Five Element practice in this way has certainly improved my diagnostic skills.

You can contact Marcus at [marcusjamesclinics.co.uk](http://marcusjamesclinics.co.uk)

<sup>1</sup> Newton, E (1993) 'Role Models' In: Bergman, D. (ed) *Camp Grounds: Style and Homosexuality* pp 39-53 Amherst MA, University of Massachusetts Press

I wish to sincerely thank to my co-researchers Cherith Adams, Guy Caplan, Gerard Kite, Stella King and Peter Linthwaite.

**Marcus James** studied image science and medical illustration, and worked in diagnostic imaging for 12 years. He trained in acupuncture at this College. Now he practises in Islington and Sevenoaks, also running a clinic in Westminster serving the transgender community.



# Emotion testing

Acupuncturists use different modes of diagnosis with a common aim: to get the patient better. But different methods result in slightly different treatment plans and results. **John Hicks** describes one method of diagnosis practised by Five Element constitutional acupuncturists and explains how it might benefit those who practise TCM



My own experience is of using both TCM patterns and the Five Element constitutional imbalance. They are both essential to me. In this article I am making two suggestions:

The first is that the Five Element constitutional imbalance be recognised as a pattern and used in *bian zheng* practice in a similar way to any of the TCM syndromes. The second is that **emotion testing** be recognised as a valid way of establishing the constitutional imbalance. So, join me in this exploration.

Emotion testing is part of the diagnosis of the Five Element constitutional imbalance. The patient's facial colour, sound in the voice and body odour are also used; but emotion testing, while not easy, results in the most reliable indicator of the patient's Five Element constitutional type.

Emotion testing discovers the Element to approach when directing treatment at the most long-term underlying imbalance – useful with chronic illness and especially with those poorly-specified problems when people know more that they are not right and less what exactly is wrong. These may be patients who do not manifest an easy TCM diagnosis. There

seems to be little coherence amongst the signs and symptoms and therefore difficulty in sorting them into simple, prioritised patterns.

I would acknowledge that treating the constitutional imbalance is not the whole of treatment by any means. It does not do first aid, it does not deal with trauma and it does not deal with well-established pathogenic factors (although it will help). However, with some patients, constitutional treatment is almost all they need; with others it is an important part of the treatment. Hence, Five Element constitutional diagnosis can add to the effectiveness of your diagnosis and treatment.

Those who already use emotion testing will find this review helpful. Those who don't have the most to gain and will begin with the greatest uncertainties.

## The underlying theory

As all practitioners know, Five Element theory proposes a division of the world into five energetic phases, usually called Elements. These Elements are: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. Different aspects of life – colours, sounds in the voice, seasons, animals – all **resonate** with one or other of the Elements.

The digram below shows how **emotions** resonate with the Elements.

Two important points about these emotional associations or resonances:

**1** In spite of the one-word description of the emotion, e.g. anger for Wood, this emotion covers a wide range of related emotions from ballistic rage to inert depression. There is a similar range for the other emotions. For example, joy ranges from hysteria to a complete inability to feel joy (*bu li* or lack of joy).<sup>1</sup> To understand the range of an Element's emotions, it is useful to relate the emotion to the function of the Organs (especially from *Su Wen 8*). For example, anger to the smooth flow of *qi*, worry to transformation, joy to the Heart housing the Blood, grief to taking in '*qi*' from the Heavens and fear to the cleverness of the Kidneys.

**2** This connection of Organs to the emotion implies a relationship between the emotions and the health of the Organs. For example, if the Organs are chronically unwell, the manifestation of the related emotion will be out of balance or inappropriate. Equally, if a person is constrained by life's circumstances to suffer an excess of an emotion (sadness, worry, grief, fear or frustration), then the relevant Organs may be adversely affected.

The basis of emotion testing lies in the **balance** or **imbalance** of each Element (or the Organs associated with it). When the energy of an Element is balanced, the associated emotion is expressed **appropriately**. When the energy of an Element has been chronically out of balance, then the associated emotion will be expressed **inappropriately**. In this context,

### How emotions resonate with the Five Elements



'appropriately' means that the emotion is expressed smoothly and with an intensity appropriate to the context. This smoothness is a characteristic of the flow of healthy *qi*, emotions being nothing more than the flow of *qi*.

On the other hand, ‘inappropriately’ means that the emotion is expressed without the normal smoothness. In addition, it is expressed either less or more frequently than the context suggests, less or more intensely and is less or more under control than the other emotions. As an example, some Wood types never get angry and some are angry all the time; some are intensely and others are minimally angry; some have their anger completely under control and others have their anger out of control. What is not the case is that these expressions are appropriately balanced.

So there are two important related ideas: One is that for each Element there is a *range* of related emotions, and the other is that a chronic imbalance of the Organs leads to emotions being expressed inappropriately.

Here are some examples of inappropriate emotions:

- **Anger** out of control, too intense and initiated by trivial circumstances.
- **Joy** is expressed in face of a sad event.
- **Worry** which seems to be recurring even when realistically there is nothing to worry about; or a **request for understanding** that seems to be repeated frequently, and on which expressed sympathy or understanding makes little impact.
- A non-verbally expressed sense of **ongoing loss** when there is nothing really missing.
- **No fear** is expressed even though the circumstances are threatening; or vice versa, **many fears** arise with no real threat present.

‘For each Element there is a range of related emotions, and a chronic imbalance of the Organs leads to emotions being expressed inappropriately’

When such examples are ‘in our face’, they seem odd if not obvious. Yet we have a curious blind spot for inappropriateness. We feel that it is ‘odd’, but we pass it off as just the way people are, and say, for example, that people are just different. We seem to have the insight to make the individual judgements, but don’t know how to organise the various observations into a Five Element framework. As practitioners we do know how to organise the symptoms/signs of a floating empty pulse, dry skin, constipation, thirst and night sweats into a meaningful pattern. We do not have a traditional framework within which we can see an emotional pattern and the indicated imbalance. As patterns, *yin xu* and a constitutional Elemental imbalance are similar and similarly useful. The difference between the two is that the constitutional imbalance does not use symptoms, only signs.

So what does it mean that an Element is *constitutionally* imbalanced? One of the Elements is less in balance or simply weaker than the other four – from birth or very early in life. There are two characteristics of early imbalances. One is that the Organs of the weaker Element process many of the traumas of growing up; being weak, these Organs naturally are more affected by the various stresses of life.

The other is that the psyche's development takes place in the internal context of this imbalance and this context affects how core beliefs and values are formed. Fire types with a weak heart, when asked to list their core values in a relationship, will list 'trust', much more often than the other constitutional types. Metal types and Earth types have a different internal set of values and different core beliefs. Of course, much of the variation in people depends on the external reality of their upbringing; but a great deal also depends upon their original constitutional imbalance.

For example, a Metal constitutional type will often deal less appropriately with loss. Given a normal loss, the expression of grief is either excessive or minimised – usually minimised. Equally likely, the Metal constitutional type will often, with no immediate loss occurring, appear to be suffering from a loss where something or other just seems to be missing but can't be identified in the environment. The emotion is internally generated and overrides whatever might be being evoked by the environment.

Given that this process starts early in life, there are many aspects of our psyche that develop as a reaction to the imbalance. For example, a Fire type might think 'I feel vulnerable, weak and don't trust those around me, and therefore I must be strong and stand up for myself'. Or, 'I feel vulnerable and weak, and therefore I must not take risks in relationships; better safe than sorry'. The development of our psyche, in the context of a pre-existing imbalance, explains how we

**'As individuals we are often not conscious of our core values and beliefs and how they developed, although we may be willing to die for them'**

differ one from another. Significantly, it also presents patterns that can point to the long-term underlying imbalance. As individuals we are often not conscious of our core values and beliefs and how they developed, although we may be willing to die for them.

Another example from the Earth Element. We all at times get worried, need some understanding, or are heartened by someone giving us sympathy. This 'support' is the glue that helps society and various groups within society to stick together. It explains why we gravitate to those who understand us and avoid those who don't share our concerns. It is the basis of familial, tribal, gang, organisational and small group loyalty. But some people seem to be needy and want support too much of the time. Non-verbally they seem unable to 'digest' the support they do get. Like the chocolates that disappear and don't seem to satisfy the need for which they were intended ('did I eat all those?'). The need for support seems more than the situation requires. The opposite pattern, but still an Earth pattern, is to compulsively support others – maybe even when they don't need it, and for the 'supporter' not to address his/her own needs with the same fervour.

Again, we often notice these events, but we do not go the whole way and see the larger pattern. We see the incidents of emotional



inappropriateness, but we do not notice how they all come from one Element and that the emotions of the other four Elements are expressed appropriately. Put those together and you have an important clue to the underlying constitutional energetic imbalance. After all, emotions are just the movement of *qi*.

### **What does emotion testing look like?**

Were you to watch a practitioner emotion testing, from the outside it would look like two friends chatting whilst having a cup of tea. The tester and testee would appear similar, but there would, of course, be underlying differences. In a genuine cup-of-tea conversation, the friends are close. They may easily match each other in non-verbal behaviour. The conversation moves from topic to topic by association ('oh, that reminds me'). No judgements are made about appropriateness or inappropriateness. No one is trying to remember what was talked about; no one is consciously and carefully watching the other's non-verbal behaviour.

Alternatively, in an emotion testing context, the tester pays particular attention to what has been said and how the patient is responding emotionally. In order to develop rapport, the tester may be consciously matching the non-verbal behaviour of the patient. The tester will, apparently spontaneously, be introducing subjects and placing subjects on the 'stage' of the patient's mind. The tester will be responding emotionally and on occasions be obviously doing so, either requesting the

patient to take in an emotion (e.g. sympathy or support) or making a request for the patient to express an emotion (e.g. 'You must have been very annoyed' with appropriate voice and face). From the outside, this looks like the cup-of-tea conversation. On the inside, different things are happening and the whole process is intended ultimately to produce a diagnosis and ultimately help for the patient.

Learning to do all these things at the same time requires some skill and timing, but the value is to be judged by the result.

**'Every person's mind is a stage, and endlessly people or situations put things on this stage'**

There is another important aspect to emotion testing. Shakespeare said that 'All the world's a stage /And all the men and women merely players'. There is another and similar notion that is important in emotion testing. Every person's mind is a stage, and endlessly people or situations put things on this stage. A threat in the environment, another person's chance remark, the news on TV, a family situation – all these evoke thoughts, memories, pictures, internal dialogue – the stuff that occurs on the stage of our mind. When I ask someone what their fondest memories are, I am helping to put something on the stage of their mind. It isn't exactly like in a theatre bringing on a table with a large envelope on it or having a man in a black cape enter from the left; but it is similar. When we pay careful attention to our ability to put 'things' on the stage of another's mind, we are getting close to knowing how to emotion

test. Put happy thoughts on the stage and we should elicit joy. Put scary thoughts on and we should elicit fear. Put personal thoughts of what is missing or lost and we should elicit grief. This is not the whole story, but putting the right stuff on the stage of the mind – that is, stuff that would normally lead to the non-verbal expression of an emotion – is essential to emotion testing.

So emotion testing is more than just a cosy cup-of-tea chat. It also requires some skill in putting things on the stage of a person's mind. But how do we really know that, as the result of an emotion test, we have seen an *inappropriate* or *appropriate* expression. Surely there are too many variables for that to be possible?

The ability to make these judgements comes from experience – a certain *accumulation* of experience. If you take a pattern for testing anger (which I haven't clearly spelled out in detail), and use it on Fire, Earth, Metal and Water types – say eight to ten of each – then you acquire a 'database' of **normal** responses. In this database, there will be a range of responses, but they would all be classified as normal – smooth flowing with appropriate intensity. When I referred earlier to how we notice individual cases of inappropriate responses, but don't put together the overall pattern, one of the missing pieces is this database of normal responses. With this database of normal, when you hit the inappropriate response, you know it, even feel it as a kind of shock.

So there is an internal comparison between your bank of normal responses and the one in front of you right now. The **abnormal** response

usually involves a tightening of muscles in the chest and throat areas, a jerky or not-smooth response, denial of what was previously said, lame excuses which are designed to change previous assumptions, an over or under intensity which you might also describe as a lack of smooth flow of *qi*. Acquiring the relevant database is an essential part of the overall skill, and it obviously requires some systematic practice.

What are other similarities and differences between simply observing a patient's emotions and emotion testing? One is that emotion testing and observation both involve acute observation. After the request to express anger, or giving a patient clear-cut understanding/support/sympathy, the practitioner has roughly 4-7 seconds to notice and judge the response. In some cases, the initial response is covered over by another response in less than a second that makes accurate observation difficult.<sup>2</sup> Good observation and a process we call 'slowing time' are both essential.

On the other hand, a crucial difference between testing and simple observation is that emotion testing permits the practitioner, through putting things on the stage of the patient's mind, to engage with *all* of the Five emotional areas. Patients are not there to express much more than their issues. So often simple observation doesn't touch on what may be a crucial Element. In testing, however, the practitioner's familiarity with the emotions and their natural context of expression, the subsequent knowledge of how to navigate into each Element area and the practitioner's expressiveness, all combine to

make all the Five emotions accessible. So this is a significant difference. It makes the overall assessment possible.

As an example of how testing leads to better observation, I remember when adjudicating a practical exam watching a student trying to find an opening to test anger. In the debrief, the student explained how she had tried and failed to find an opening for an anger test. She very accurately described in detail the patient's strategy for avoiding an opening and she judged that to be abnormal, putting her finger on the emotions of Wood as inappropriate. This was not a conventional test result, but I knew the patient, thought the student was right and she got a high mark. Knowing how to test both allows for a more creative approach and improves observation.

## How to learn/proceed

This article gives you some partial guidance as to how to learn emotion testing and how to make the process more objective and less subjective. Anyone in practice can begin to work with their existing patients. The basic TCM patterns – deficiency syndromes and those involving pathogenic factors – usually accompany the constitutional imbalance.<sup>3</sup>

An essential point is that the constitutional imbalance is a pattern like any of the syndromes and it can be recognised by the way the patient expresses his/her emotions, signs only, no symptoms. No matter how unconscious we are of our emotions, we are definitely emotional beings and thus reveal our constitutional imbalance in our emotional expression. Why not use this pattern?

I am available for criticisms or queries.

You can email John at [john.hicks@cicm.org.uk](mailto:john.hicks@cicm.org.uk)

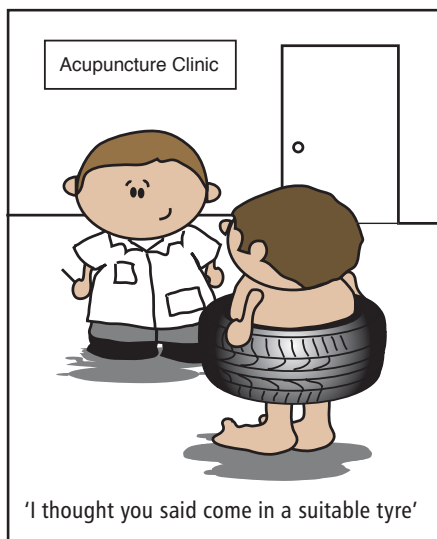
## References

<sup>1</sup> See *Five Element Constitutional Acupuncture*, Hicks, Hicks and Mole, Churchill Livingstone 2004

<sup>2</sup> See *Unmasking the Face*, Ekman P and Friesen W, 1975, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, p 31 and pp 144-5 (republished in 2003 by Malor Books, Cambridge, MA)

<sup>3</sup> Where this is not so, you need to look for patterns arising from the 'miscellaneous' causes of disease

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## Breathing life into the winter months

### More from Gio on Daoist *qi gong* and energy practices

Hello again! In the last article I looked at how to make best use of the expansive energies of spring and summer in your practice and daily life, exploring how to stretch and open your body and energy without strain, and introducing the key technique of moving your shoulder blades and arms to release and smooth out the energy of the heart. Here we consider how to approach autumn and winter, especially with regard to your breathing.

#### The energy of autumn and winter

After the outwards expansion of spring and summer, autumn marks the beginning of energy returning inwards towards the earth. Plants shed their leaves, fruits and seeds go back into the ground; animals prepare for winter and grow more efficient in their food-gathering activities. The energy of the earth cools and the nights grow crisp and clear. This return inwards reaches its completion in winter, where the energy of the earth cools fully and sinks back down to its origin, animals turn to rest and hibernate, and the way is cleared for regeneration in spring.

In essence, this is seen as a dual process of energy returning inwards and refining, storing the essential and clearing away the non-essential for a healthy new growth in spring.

Daoist practices move in sympathy with this natural inwards process. They follow the

reversal of the flow of energy inwards, first into the lungs, spine and brain in autumn, then as winter takes hold, back to the origin, the kidneys, lower *dan tien*, and the earth.

The flow of energy towards the lungs, spine, and brain in autumn has several functions:

- It begins the process of storing energy inwards towards the body's core. Unlike in winter however, this inwards flow is directed towards the deeper layers of the upper body and back, i.e. the *yang* aspect of the body's core. This activates and stabilises the body's deeper *yang* energies and the body's protective energy or *wei qi*.
- Activating the lungs (especially the upper lungs), brain and spinal cord also activates the mental clarity needed to store energy efficiently, and to be able to progressively let go of all unnecessary habits as we progress into winter.

Especially in damp, cooler countries such as the UK, autumn practice is not to be missed! Come winter, the practitioner will have developed the strength, stability ('backbone') and clarity necessary to better see through the trials of winter (such as colds, flu, depression), and so allow oneself to rest, recharge and 'let go of the old' effectively in the winter months, making full and productive use of the winter season. In winter, the body's energy is allowed to return and collect in the deepest *yin* aspect of the body's core, all unnecessary baggage is released, and the scene is set for vital and healthy new growth in spring.



‘In winter, it is important to make sure your breathing does not shut down... people’s breathing often becomes next to non-existent in this season.’

## Daoist breathing techniques

Your breathing is key to your health in autumn and winter. Daoist breathing teaches you how to breathe like a baby, with the whole of your body. Everything in your front, back and sides, to the depth of your spine, moves easily and in unison as you breathe in and out. The chest and front of your lungs remain still so that the diaphragm activates fully and your *qi* rises naturally up the back and falls down the front of your body, naturally causing the ‘micro-cosmic’ orbit up the *ren* and back down the *du* channels. It is one of the bedrocks of Daoist longevity practices and is an invaluable life skill to learn. In winter, it is important to make sure your breathing does not shut down and go dead, as people’s breathing often becomes next to non-existent in this season.

- Have your breath become very fine, breathing through your nose if possible. Let the in-breath merge into the out-breath and back into the in-breath, like water flowing into water. Allow this fine circulation of the breath to become very subtle and quiet, your chest to become relaxed and still, and let your sense of feeling settle into the lower *dan tien* and legs.
- Your autumn practice will have developed your internal clarity. Now as you breathe in, feel for any subtle tensions in your system which prevent you from being able to *rest*. Any tensions in your breathing, any holding in your nerves, any strength in your emotions or thoughts (especially the *yin* emotions such as grief, fear, depression,

anything you are not normally aware of but can’t really name). Gradually become aware of how they block a restful state.

- Each time you breathe out, allow your feet, hands and the tissues of your forehead and face to steadily sink and relax. Gradually let go of the strength you are using to hold all the subtle tensions inside you, feeling them flow out with your breathing, smooth out of your nerves, and drain out of your hands and feet, connecting you to the earth. Let yourself become more relaxed, smooth and quiet with each out-flowing of the breath, and allow yourself to *rest* as you breathe.
- Each time you breathe in, let your energy absorb into your kidneys and lower *dan tien*.
- Allow your breathing to become ever more fluid and continuous, and as you breathe out, allow yourself to let go of anything of any kind you feel you no longer need inside you. Breathe naturally, store what is essential, and let go of what isn’t.

**Gio Maschio** has taught Daoist internal arts for over a decade, and practised them for more than 17 years. He designed and teaches the College’s *qi gong* for acupuncturists course, has conducted seminars for the BACC, and is one of Master BK Frantzis’ most experienced instructors in Europe. He also studies buddhism and *dzogchen* meditation, is a tutor at the Oxford School of Massage and teaches and practises internal arts full time. He has an MPhil, speaks three languages and is a keen amateur musician.



# Being a highly effective acupuncturist

In practice for over thirty years, Angie has valuable insights to share

I never cease to be intrigued by the talents students bring to their initial training. Most students are mature and are making major career changes. Having had their fair share of life experience they have developed many skills. I notice that some have 'good hands' and palpation skills, others make rapport easily, others have good academic ability or well-tuned senses of sight, smell or hearing.

Students come with several talents. By the end of their training they have usually fine-tuned these strengths and have also developed other skills that enable them to build a successful practice.

So which of these are important? What enables practitioners to have a practice that

flourishes, patients who love seeing them and an enjoyment of treating their patients?

Below are listed (in no particular order) the seven key qualities I see in many of the most successful practitioners:

- **A good heart**
- **Passion for acupuncture**
- **A thirst for knowledge**
- **Clear outcomes**
- **A desire for self-development**
- **A sense of worth**
- **Staying power**

## A good heart

When Dr John Shen, a famous practitioner, was asked 'what is the most important quality for a Chinese medicine practitioner?' he said 'having a good heart'. Acupuncture is a caring profession and to do it well we must have the desire to help others. One sign that practitioners have a good heart is that they can be 'present' with a patient; another is that they are able to create good rapport.

Presence means the ability to 'be there' for patients – to hear them and accept them as they are. This enables patients to open themselves up to the practitioner. Being accepted can in itself be part of the patient's healing process. It doesn't matter if the patient's problem is depression, a sore shoulder or a gynaecological problem – everyone needs to know they matter.

A good heart is also expressed in how



we connect with people, so the ability to make rapport and have easy interactions is important too. This has been termed having a 'good bedside manner'. Most practitioners have this ability – and it may be why they want to do this work. It is easier to be in tune with some people than others and effective practitioners also strive to find things in common with those they wouldn't normally relate to. Good rapport enables patients to feel secure so that they can trust and relax while being treated.

Practitioners may develop a 'good heart' by coming through their own painful adversities. Having recovered, they want to give something back. Strange though it may sound, many practitioners learn to feel grateful for these past physical, mental or spiritual difficulties. Their struggle may have enabled them to resonate better with their patients' distress.

Most of all a good heart comes from the practitioner's own authenticity – when we truly relate from within ourselves the patient will pick this up and want to come for treatment.

## Passion

Passion is infectious. The more practitioners have of it, the more patients will flock to their door. Passionate practitioners show they are excited and animated by their work. This may be apparent when they discuss Chinese medicine, advise a patient, or create a special 'something' about their treatment room. It can even be shown in the design of a leaflet or card. It's the small details that demonstrate that practitioners care about what they

**'How students learn Chinese medicine affects their enthusiasm. An interesting curriculum with inspiring teaching can feed students' and practitioners' desire to make a difference in the world. It can fuel a passion for acupuncture that lasts a lifetime.'**

are doing and patients will pick this up – consciously or not.

Our patients want to know that we believe in and love what we do. The more they feel that excitement, the more they want a piece of it for themselves. Conversely, if a practitioner seems to be bored with practice, patients will pick that up too – who wants to be around someone who doesn't seem interested in what they do?

Practitioners' passion may originate from their experience of their own treatment and this may even be the reason that they decide to learn acupuncture. At least 90% of those I talk to say their interest in acupuncture developed when they benefited from treatment and was nurtured while talking to their practitioner.

How students learn Chinese medicine affects their enthusiasm. An interesting curriculum with inspiring teaching can feed students' and practitioners' desire to make a difference in the world. It can fuel a passion for acupuncture that lasts a lifetime.

## A thirst for knowledge

It's one thing to be enthusiastic about Chinese medicine, but in order to practise competently practitioners also need to study Chinese

medicine thoroughly and then continue as 'lifelong learners'.

The most effective acupuncturists aren't necessarily academically brilliant but they do have a thirst for knowledge. When students first study Chinese medicine their understanding is very basic. Over time as they become increasingly competent it builds to a deeper insight into and intuitive sense of their patients. Intuition develops from a firm knowledge base.

Lifelong learning means that practitioners continue to extend their knowledge after they qualify. It is an interesting paradox that we can be both extremely knowledgeable and at the same time know that we are always just beginners. Those who continue to learn from a 'beginner's mind' will always remain curious and open to new understandings about Chinese medicine. As it is an ancient system of medicine we can learn both from the earliest classics as well as keep up with new developments and deepen what we already know.

There are many ways in which practitioners continue to develop. These vary from formal supervision groups to informal discussions with colleagues; from seminars or post-graduate courses to our own study and reflection. And of course we learn through practice! However they do it, effective acupuncturists know that *knowledge is power!* The more we continue to learn and understand, the more choices we have about our patients' treatment.

## Clear outcomes

Practitioners who do well in their practice create clear outcomes for treatment that are unique for each patient.

Two patients with the same 'named' condition will not, of course, have the same diagnosis. Effective practitioners will use points according to the patient's individual needs rather than using the same old points for the same condition.

Both the patient's and the practitioner's expectations need to be realistic and in agreement. Some patients have over-idealistic expectations about what acupuncture can do. A recent patient with a degenerative disease needed clear guidance to ensure he had reasonable expectations from treatment – but without lowering his morale.

There are many skills involved in the process of treatment planning. Treatment planning includes a thorough diagnosis and culminates in an overall treatment strategy. As well as having an overall plan, practitioners need to keep in touch with their sense of sight, hearing, smell and touch and take in the patient's needs each time she or he comes. This keeps treatment fresh and alive and ensures the patient is treated as a whole.

Practitioners who plan well are properly prepared for any eventualities. Changing the treatment as the patient changes takes flexibility and sound judgement and ensures that the patient makes steady progress.

## Self-development

Effective practitioners understand the importance of self-development. This can take many forms. For instance, *qi* exercises such as *qi gong*, yoga, martial arts and some meditations are popular with acupuncturists. They are especially useful as self-development tools to strengthen energy, gain greater internal awareness and prevent burnout.

Another area may be therapeutic work which may be carried out one-to-one or in a self-development group. NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) and Focusing are two of my favourites – but there is a long list that others find effective. Our own treatment can also be part of self-development. This may be acupuncture, herbs or massage or some other complementary therapy that benefits our health and therefore our internal development.

Our self-development can also come from things in our lives that appear very ordinary but that nourish us. For instance, being with family, going dancing or following a healthy diet. These encourage our growth and help us to develop life skills.

Thriving practitioners know that their self-development will help their own wellbeing – and as they grow their patients benefit too. By developing ourselves we never get stale and the benefits to our wellbeing feed into our practice ensuring it always remains interesting.

## A sense of worth

Having worked hard to qualify, competence is not enough. Practitioners need to value



themselves. How much they charge, time management, contracts and boundaries with their patients are all examples of this.

How much we charge is, of course, always a choice and many practitioners choose to reduce fees in certain circumstances. Practitioners must be able to make ends meet, however, and consistent undercharging leads to burnout and resentment. In the early days of my practice I reduced a patient's fee only to later hear about her wonderful holiday abroad – and at that time I couldn't afford one!

Another issue is time management. Practitioners who always try to fit treatment times around their patients, for example, will end up exhausted. An effective acupuncturist, although flexible, sets limits.

Effective practitioners will make a verbal contract with the patient before starting treatment and will create boundaries and sometimes say 'no' or be firm with a patient if necessary. Saying 'no' on occasion can be an important part of the healing process.



Patients can sense that we value ourselves. The more we demonstrate this, the more they will value our treatment.

## Staying power

Whatever the practitioner's talents, building a practice takes time, effort, and perseverance. The phone won't always ring and things won't always go to plan. Effective practitioners are determined. They keep on going when things don't go their way; they pick themselves up after mistakes and failures.

**'Practitioners who succeed in building a practice know they're not perfect, so difficulties motivate them to keep developing their skills. They can learn from their mistakes and turn "failure" into feedback.'**

When patients respond to treatment like a dream this is very encouraging. I've also observed, however, that encountering a difficult patient is an opportunity to develop staying power.

I recently supervised a student who treated a patient in her late seventies. She could have been labelled a 'hopeless' case having been on a string of strong medicines for depression and other conditions for almost forty years. Initially the patient didn't respond to treatment. The lack of progress only made the student practitioner more determined. After fine-tuning the treatment plan a turning-point came and the patient came to treatment with a bright smile on her face. In time she reported that she was not only no longer depressed, her



twenty-year bowel problem had cleared and urinary problems, diagnosed as untreatable, had also improved. It's the 'difficult' patients rather than the easy ones that make treating the most worthwhile.

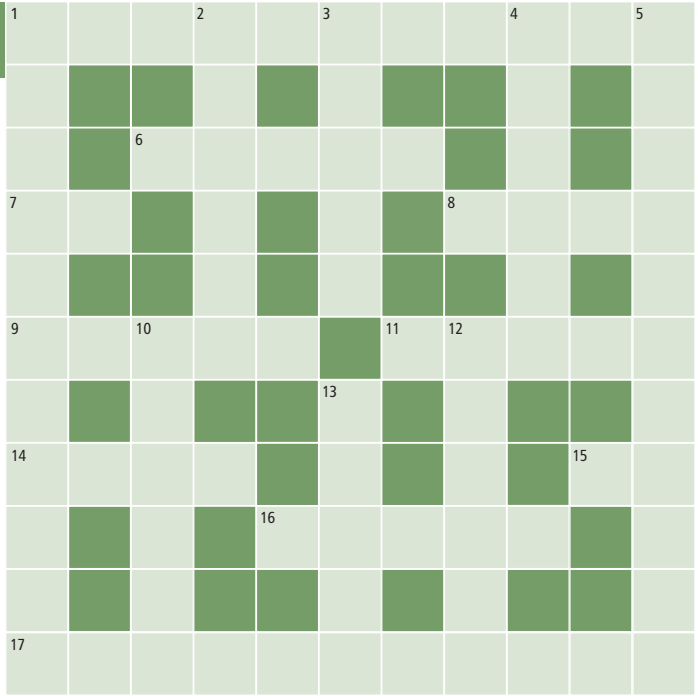
Practitioners who succeed in building a practice know they're not perfect, so difficulties motivate them to keep developing their skills. They can learn from their mistakes and turn 'failure' into feedback.

My purpose in writing this article is to enable us to think about what makes us thrive as practitioners and how we might develop ourselves further. You may even want to rate yourself on each quality! I'm sure many of you can think of other strengths (perhaps ones you have) to add to this list and I will be happy to hear from you about any important ones I've missed...

You can email Angie at [angela.hicks@cicm.org.uk](mailto:angela.hicks@cicm.org.uk)

**Angie Hicks** is joint principal of the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine. She has been an acupuncturist since 1976, is a Chinese herbalist and has written/co-written six books including *Five Element Constitutional Acupuncture*, *Healing your Emotions* and *The Acupuncture Handbook*. She is especially interested in body-based therapies, *qi gong*, meditation and Focusing.

# crossword



## Across

- 1 You might look this up to differentiate paralysis (2 words)
- 6 Organ of the Fire Element
- 7 Great (*pin yin*)
- 8 A lasting mark – can be physical or mental
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ intestine
- 11 A lack of this can cause disease
- 14 *Du 16* – has been used to treat people who are deaf \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 It can be from cold, damp, wind or heat
- 16 We do this when we investigate thoroughly
- 17 They could be red, pale, orange or purple (2 words)

## Down

- 1 Which one of the five? (2 words)
- 2 It helps to do this well during a traditional diagnosis
- 3 The direction of Water
- 4 They once used tortoise shells – we might use the *I Ching*
- 5 The only one that doesn't start at the first point is *Li 4* (2 words)
- 10 The name of *St 29* is \_\_\_\_\_ing
- 12 Lower back
- 13 In 2014 it's this animal's year

J	I	N	G	L	U	O	N	H
I	U	F	Y	O	U	G	I	U
N	B	E	Q	A	N	O	Y	A
G	E	I	Y	I	N	G	N	T
S	N	M	J	I	A	G	I	U
H	U	I	G	S	N	O	P	O
E	E	N	A	N	E	H	S	J
N	U	I	N	J	I	N	Y	I
W	U	X	I	N	G	M	U	A
E	H	U	A	N	G	D	I	J
I	H	Z	Z	O	N	G	Q	I

# pin yin wordsearch

There are at least 26 pinyin words in this wordsearch – and maybe more! Every square has been used for at least one word. Words may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal and maybe reversed. See page 32 for solution

**Jing Shen 1 crossword solution** Across 1 kidney yin 5 *ova* 6 south 8 tone 9 pain 12 *du mai* 14 *shi* 15 balancing  
Down 1 knotted 2 drain 3 east 4 you 7 hanging 10 *ah shi* 11 sign 13 *mal* (solution to this issue's crossword on page 32)

# Why so weary?

Patients frequently complain of profound feelings of tiredness. **Peter Mole** looks at the bigger picture, beyond the reasons they give



There are many reasons why someone may feel tired. Some are completely understandable and anybody would feel tired in such circumstances. But

people's perception of their tiredness and why they think they are tired is a very complex issue. The reasons why our patients frequently believe they are tired are often only part of the story. The three main categories of causation are:

- **lifestyle**
- **physiological/medical**
- **emotions.**

Generally patients tend to blame their tiredness on the first two causes. I believe, however, that the third cause, the emotions, is the most widespread cause of tiredness in the patients that we see.

## Lifestyle

In the model of Chinese medicine this largely comes in the category of the 'miscellaneous' (*bu wai bu nei yin* – neither internal nor external) causes of disease.

**Lack of sleep** There appears to be a minimum amount of sleep that people need in order not to feel tired much of the time. It varies somewhat from person to person. If one's young baby is keeping one awake half the night then of course one is tired.

**Overwork** There is no doubt that some of our patients are working too hard and/or playing too hard. Tiredness is obviously likely to follow unless one is still pretty young or constitutionally very strong. There is no substitute for having strong *jingshen*.

**Too much sex** Chinese medicine books always give this as a cause of tiredness, albeit as a bigger issue for men than women. This may be the case for a few patients, but frankly most of my patients should be so lucky!

When these reasons underlie our patients' tiredness then we must treat them as best we can and discuss with them the consequences of their lifestyle.

But for most of our patients, these factors do not lie at the heart of their feelings of tiredness. And they generally know this to be the case.

## Physiological/medical

### Biomedical

Some patients have physiological reasons that contribute to their tiredness. When they complain of tiredness to their GP the doctor generally runs a series of blood tests to see if there is a biochemical basis for the condition. Anaemia is one possible cause. Glandular fever, infection or low thyroid function are examples of other 'medical' reasons for someone to feel more tired than they should.



Partly in an attempt to diagnose a physiological basis it has become fashionable in recent years to diagnose low thyroid function in patients who previously would not have been regarded as having deficient thyroid function.

If a patient is suffering from chronic tiredness it is always worth them having some blood tests. But patients seldom find that laboratory diagnosis of their blood yields much insight into their exhaustion.

I once had a patient who said she had never felt as energetic and positive as when her GP used to give her amphetamines (speed) in the 60s. But nowadays prescribing a 'tonic' has been dropped from the doctor's repertoire of treatments in the UK – though not in some other parts of Europe. Deprived of this method of attempting to enhance function, and in the absence of any diagnosis of a known medical condition, the GP has little to fall back on other than anti-depressants.

The issue as to whether ME (or chronic fatigue syndrome) is truly a biomedical condition is still being fought over. There is no doubt that some people have genuine physiological dysfunction that accounts for their fatigue, but many doctors think a large question mark hangs over many sufferers of these complaints. There are physicians working with such patients who do not think that psychological factors play an enormous part in many of their patients' difficulties. Even if the cause is largely psychosomatic the feelings are just as debilitating as those from purely physiologically based fatigue.

People also obviously have less energy as they get older. It is very hard to know, however, what is a reasonable expectation and people often blame their age when other factors are more important. It is easy for someone who feels tired in their 50s or 60s to feel inadequate when the newspapers have stories of people running marathons in their 80s. They often say things like 'But I don't feel any different now to when I was 20' and it seems that there is an unchanging aspect of one's mind/spirit (*shen*) throughout one's life. And yet one has to accept that as one gets older one can't party as one used to and not feel the consequences for a good deal longer than in one's youth.

Some people are tired because they are insomniac for purely physiological reasons. Some hormonal imbalances, indigestion, hyperthyroidism, bipolar disorder, chronic pain and other syndromes can be responsible for a small minority of people's insomnia and, therefore, tiredness. But even in these cases it is often hard to be sure of the extent of the psychosomatic component of the illness.

### **Complementary medical**

Practitioners' views on why people become ill are largely shaped by the medicine they practise. Nutritionists naturally suspect a lack

of nutrients for someone's lethargy and are inclined to prescribe changes to the person's diet along with vitamin and/or mineral supplements. The vitamin and supplement industry is now enormous as people spend large amounts on supplements in pursuit of better health and vitality. Most people taking health supplements in an attempt to boost their vitality self-diagnose or take something based on the recommendation of someone they know or advice from a book or the internet. Over the last few decades royal jelly, Q 10, ginseng and a host of other natural remedies have, rightly or wrongly, been touted as being able to give someone more energy.

In the 90s diagnosing excessive *candida albicans* in the body was a popular diagnosis with naturopaths, nutritionists and people reading about it in various books. Some people benefited from the much improved, more limited diets they were encouraged to endure. But as the old maxim says 'Just because the patient improves it doesn't mean that the diagnosis was correct'. Cutting out sugar, alcohol, wheat, coffee, processed foods, etc definitely helps some people.

There is a multitude of diagnoses and treatments. For example, diagnosis of parasites – despite the fact that blood and stool tests can detect none – has been growing in popularity recently. Practitioners of colonic irrigation also have their views on why people feel fatigued. Only time will tell whether these diagnoses and treatments remain popular.

Many patients are very keen to receive a diagnosis from their conventional or complementary physician which will explain

why they are feeling so tired. They naturally hope that if they can take some pills, be they iron tablets, thyroxine, vitamins, herbs or whatever, the problem will be solved. They won't have to significantly change their lifestyle and perhaps more importantly the problem will be something they 'have'. This effectively means that they won't have to examine too closely the real cause of their problem – their internal state.

## Emotions

Physiological reasons are not the primary reason why most people sleep badly. Why can a person who is exhausted not sleep when they want to? For most people it is because they struggle to calm their mind/spirit (*shen*). Most people know what it is like to have trouble getting off to sleep because they have been upset. Or to wake early and be unable to return to sleep because of anxieties. But for some people this disturbance in the *shen* has become chronic and despite being exhausted they cannot get enough sleep. Agitation robs them of their sleep and therefore their vitality. In terms of Chinese medicine, deficiency of *yin* or excess of *yang* are usually present.

But most people who feel tired get plenty of sleep. Because the feelings of lethargy feel so physical, so tangible, they fail to see the tiredness as primarily psychosomatic. Chinese medicine textbooks also never give emotional difficulties as a cause of tiredness.

In recent times many people increasingly regard some of their symptoms as dependent on their internal state. Patients often talk of 'tension' headaches and seem to accept



## ‘Many of our patients feel tired because they lack enthusiasm for the life they are living’

that syndromes like IBS and tense shoulder muscles are often caused by ‘stress’. In these cases frustration and anxiety are recognised as causes of symptoms. But people don’t seem to be so ready to recognise chronic disappointment, loneliness, feelings of failure and inadequacy, sadness or sense of loss as the underlying cause of their tiredness. The reason why many of our patients feel so tired is because they lack enthusiasm for the life they are living.

They often feel that they are low *because* they are tired and not the other way around. If they think that they are tired because they are low, then self-examination is required to discover why that might be. And that might lead them to thoughts that they would rather not have. Perhaps they no longer find purpose in their work, love in their relationship or meaning to their life.

## ‘Acupuncture’s ability to bring about change in someone’s *shen* makes it such an effective therapy for tiredness that results from emotional causes’

Being prepared to examine one’s self and one’s life and realise that change is necessary is sometimes the motivating force that impels people to start acupuncture treatment. It is not that acupuncture can, in itself, restore meaning to a person’s life or love to their marriage. But at best it is capable of generating change in peoples’ *shen* and vitality

that in turn enables them to make changes in their life or changes in how they perceive and feel about their life. As it says in *Su Wen* chapter 7, ‘When the body is well and the *shen* suffers, illnesses arise in the channels. Moxa and needles are the proper treatment.’ Acupuncture’s ability to bring about change in someone’s *shen* makes it such an effective therapy for tiredness that results from emotional causes.

People who have recently ‘fallen in love’ very rarely complain of tiredness, despite often getting very little sleep! The heightened feelings of pleasure easily transcend the feelings of fatigue. ‘Falling in love’ is, by definition, a temporary state. For many of our patients the crucial realisation they must come to, and the practitioner must understand, is that the solution to their problem is in a revitalisation of the *shen*. French philosopher Henri Amiel wrote that ‘Happiness is the basis of health’. Certainly in regard to tiredness there is no substitute for a sense of meaning to one’s existence, intimacy with people one loves, enthusiasm and a zest for life.

**Peter Mole** has practised in Oxford since 1978. He studied with JR Worsley, receiving his MAc in 1984. He has been teaching for twenty years, and is dean of this College. He is author of *Acupuncture: Energy Balancing for Body, Mind and Spirit*, and also co-wrote *Five Element Constitutional Acupuncture* with Angela and John Hicks, the first comprehensive textbook on the subject. A founding council member of the BACC, Peter is also a member of the BAAB and chairman of the Oriental Medicine Research Trust.

## Clinical study trip to Guangzhou, China

31 Oct – 20 Nov 2008

A three-week study trip for practitioners of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine including two weeks' clinical experience in one of China's most modern hospitals with the opportunity to treat patients under the watchful eye of senior TCM doctors, and lectures from hospital staff. Optional trips and sight-seeing tours also available. For more details and an application form, follow the link from our newly relaunched website home page [cicm.org.uk](http://cicm.org.uk) or call **Silvia** on **0118 950 8880**. Study trip coordinator **Tony Booker** is also happy to answer any queries [tony.booker@cicm.org](mailto:tony.booker@cicm.org)



## Points guide revised



This indispensable study aid is one of the resources we have developed to support our students in their learning. Points are explored

in detail with information presented in an accessible way, including the use of charts and diagrams. Recently revised and improved, it is available in a handy filofax format in two sizes: **A6 size** £25 + £2 p&p **A5 size** £30 + £3 p&p

To order a copy by post send your name, address, cheque and requirement to **Mary West** at the College, quoting JS2 *See inside back cover for full postal address*



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## Chinese medicine in the twenty-first century with Lonny S Jarrett 5–8 June 08

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**Crossword solution** Across 1 wei syndrome 6 Heart 7 da 8 scar 9 large 11 sleep 14 mute 15 bi 16 probe 17 tongue areas Down 1 Wood Element 2 seeing 3 north 4 oracle 5 entry points 10 return 12 lumbar 13 horse **Wordsearch solution** jingshen, huatoujiaji, mingmen, huangdi, neijing, jingluo, jueyin, wuxing, nu, pinyin, zongqi, xue, yin yang, shen, po, yi, zhi, mai, hu, qing, xin, ben, fei, mu, si (see puzzles on page 27)

# fifteen treasures

## Peter Firebrace



### **What is your idea of happiness?**

Peace within and peace without. However, while peace within is largely up to me, peace without is not. So happiness is only relative and ultimately unattainable while there is still suffering.

### **What is your greatest fear?**

That some deep connections I have made will not be fulfilled.

### **How do you relax?**

Meditation, walking in the mountains, listening to music, writing songs, playing guitar, being with friends and family.

### **Which historical figure do you most identify with?**

None.

### **What trait do you most deplore in yourself?**

Self-pity.

### **Which living person do you most admire?**

Anyone with a perceptive mind and generous heart who can weather the storms of life and still retain their *shen ming*.

### **What is the trait you deplore in others?**

Self-satisfaction.

### **What makes you depressed?**

The feeling that none of us will ever learn and so the tide will never turn.

### **What is your favourite smell?**

Hard to choose between mountain pines, fresh baked bread or a bonfire.

### **What is your favourite fantasy?**

That all will be well.

### **For what cause would you die?**

The welfare of humanity.

### **What is your greatest regret?**

None yet, but probably worth asking again on the day I die.

### **What keeps you awake at night?**

My overactive brain trying to sort out the unsortable.

### **How would you like to die?**

Consciously. I've always liked travelling and see it as the ultimate journey.

### **What is the most important lesson that life has taught you?**

To accept the unacceptable, while expecting the unexpected.

**Peter Firebrace** BAc MBACC studied acupuncture at the International College of Oriental Medicine (ICOM) in England, the European School of Acupuncture in France and the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Chengdu, China. He has also studied Chinese at the Ricci Institute in Paris. Past Principal of ICOM, he is a co-founder of Monkey Press, publishing the Chinese Medicine from the Classics series. Co-author of *A Guide to Acupuncture*, he has produced educational DVDs on *The Roots of Chinese Medicine* and *The Body Map of Chinese Medicine*. He teaches widely in Europe and practises acupuncture in London.

# Feeding our qi: spring greens



In the first in a series on Chinese food energetics **Danny Blyth** delves into the deep underworld of the winter soil, emerging with some ideas on how to adapt our diet from heavy winter stodge to the fresh, light produce of spring



It's that time of year again when everything in the garden starts to come to life, and our system adjusts to the change of pace that spring brings. And the burning dietary question at this

time of the year is 'how do I use my knowledge of the five flavours to make a smooth transition from the restfulness of winter into the potential of spring?' (a euphemism for 'how do I get rid of those extra pounds I piled on eating half a turkey, a mountain of chocolate and far too many mince pies?').

Patients in their droves ask if acupuncture can help with weight loss at this time of the year. My answer is generally no, unless there is marked Spleen or Kidney *yang* deficiency (these patients seem to put on weight despite all good eating and exercise habits). However, I do offer this (often ill-received) advice:

- 1 Cut out snacking** – it weakens the Spleen.
- 2 Plan a relatively large breakfast, normal lunch, and small dinner** – eat when the digestive system is at its strongest at the start of the day, and avoid overloading it at the end of the day. (Sumo wrestlers reverse this, exercising early and eating late so they become fit and very large. They skip breakfast to keep morning metabolic rate low, and nap after eating.)

**3 No food at all after six o'clock.** If this is just too much to bear, try a few grapes.

**4 Eat relatively more vegetables, and less protein and carbohydrates** – more carrots and salad, less pie, chips, pasta or cheese!

**5 Avoid overeating** – only 80–90% of capacity – and eat slowly too, as the stomach's 'I'm full' receptors are slower than the brain's 'I'm famished' indicators. This of course is obvious – try filling your washing machine all the way to the top and see how well it washes! You can also avoid stagnation by having a **little walk** shortly after a meal rather than a nap.

**6 Cut out refined sugar** – I put this one last because it is the hardest to do.

The desire or need to initiate a dietary 'spring clean' seems to be older still than the mince pie. This time of year has long been associated with cleansing and purifying, as our bodies eliminate the extra heat that was needed to power us through the winter.

The taste associated with spring is **sour**. Most of the sour food that we consume is **fruit**. So did the ancients have magical ways of preserving fresh fruit for the spring detox, or did they jet it over from Peru too? **Pickles** (also sour) are generally good digestives, help to help cut through fatty foods, wake up the Gall Bladder and stimulate saliva production.



Some good common sense comes from the wonderful herbalist and scholar Li Shi Zhen. He suggested pungent foods at this time of the year (spicy and aromatic, but not hot – for example **basil, rosemary, coriander, garlic, spring greens**). These tend to circulate the *qi*, clear Phlegm and improve digestion – all good for the Liver and the transition between stillness and movement.

The Liver also likes food that is ‘*qing*’ or light. Although a rather vague and unscientific term, anybody can tell the difference between a light meal, and a heavy or rich one. This means limiting fats and oils, cooking foods gently (steaming or lightly boiling), and eating relatively more vegetables; remember the old adage ‘grains build, vegetables cleanse’. And in this modern world avoiding the nasty stuff (preservatives, flavourings, additives, colourings) is also important for the Liver. I’m sure Li Shi Zhen would have lots to say about this if he was around today!

However, we also have to be careful that we don’t overcool our poor Spleen. A simple light meal mainly of veg is a great way to detoxify the system, but a smoothie with orange juice, bananas, yoghurt and ice cubes is perhaps not so good due to its cooling sticky nature.

If this all sounds complicated, we can simply look and see what food nature provides us with at this time. **Sprouting plants** (purple

sprouting, spring greens, spinach, rocket) are great for getting the *qi* moving, and have the added bonus of nourishing the Blood. The **alliums** (spring and ordinary onions) are pungent, warming and moving – great for the Liver. But they can also be heating if eaten too much. In fact, many monks refrain from them because they ‘stimulate the desires’ and ‘stir up anger’. So opt for leeks – a relatively mild allium, both sour and pungent – surely this must make them the best spring food of all! The **cabbage** family tend to be sweet and a little pungent, and help to strengthen the digestive system. **Root vegetables** tend to be the most neutral and easy to digest of all foods (that’s why we wean our children with them – they are basically stores of *qi* and fluids for the plants themselves) – carrots, sude, parsnips and beetroot. And it won’t be long before the more cooling **salad leaves** and lettuce are here.

No great surprises? Lao Zi in the *Tao Te Jing* wrote ‘my teachings are so simple, yet people still don’t seem to get it’.

**Danny Blyth** studied acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine at this College and has a postgraduate diploma in Chinese language. He practises in Cheltenham and the Cotswolds as well as teaching *tai chi* and *qi gong*. He also teaches here at the College including on our CPD programme (see **Feeding your qi** on page 37).



### Channel palpation



**Jason Robertson**

11–12 or 13–14 March

Channel palpation is a classical diagnostic tool seldom used in modern acupuncture practice.

It offers a reliable, verifiable, relatively measureable way for practitioners to confirm diagnostic hypotheses derived from more mainstream Chinese medical approaches. Because it provides significant information about the state of organ function it can help focus diagnosis and treatment, allowing for greater diagnostic precision, smaller point prescriptions and, most importantly, better clinical results. It does not involve radically changing one's clinical approach but instead provides a useful tool which can be used in the context of much that has already been learned. It was a principle diagnostic tool in early acupuncture therapy. The *Nei Jing (Inner Classic)* and *Nan Jing (Classic of Difficulties)* include descriptions of techniques for palpating the channels to search for nodules and other tissue changes. In the modern clinic there is often a cerebral approach to acupuncture point choice that fails to consider palpatory findings beyond the information provided by the pulse. At the same time, practitioners who are interested in finding ways to integrate palpated findings into their diagnosis often lack a useful theoretical structure to categorise what they are feeling.

See Jason D Robertson and Wang Ju-Yi's article in *The Journal of Chinese Medicine* 83, February 2007 (available online at [jcm.co.uk](http://jcm.co.uk))  
For seminar details go to the CPD events section of our website

### The spiritual development of a healer



**Jeffrey Yuen**

29 April

Master Jeffrey Yuen is recognised internationally as a master of acupuncture, Chinese herbology, classical

Chinese medicine, Daoism, *tai chi* and *qi gong*. Apprenticed for more than 20 years in Classical Chinese Medicine and other Daoist healing arts with Master Yu Wen, he also studied under the direct tutelage of Lu Xin-Zu, a Daoist priest of the Long Men tradition. He holds academic positions in the USA, and has a herbal practice in New York City with a special focus on caring for people with cancer. He bridges western and oriental traditions, translating the classical tradition of Chinese medical culture into terminology familiar to westerners. This extends to a fuller understanding of the energetic map of the body and a practical education in the spiritual and psychological dimensions that were either expressed solely as somatic symptoms or eliminated as unsuitable for a modern medical practice. He is committed to the spiritual education of the practitioner and to deepening our understanding of what it is that we attempt to do in our practice. He is a wonderful teacher, kind and affirming of his students and generous to those who study with him. His teaching is challenging but also immensely rewarding. **Celine Leonard**

**Celine** has been a student of Jeffrey's for five years. She practises acupuncture in Dublin (specialising in gynaecology) and chairs the Irish Herbal Council and Irish Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine.

Register online at [cicm.org.uk](http://cicm.org.uk) or call 0118 950 8880

# CPD events for practitioners



The popularity and value of our events programme is well established. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine professionals from this and other colleges come to Reading to develop their knowledge and meet their peers. We update our website regularly to show which events are fully booked.

**Danny Blyth and  
Greg Lampert** 21 Feb 2008  
**Feed your qi**

How to incorporate dietary advice in your treatments.

**Angela and John Hicks**  
28 Feb 2008

**Getting better at getting  
the CF**

'Oral tradition' seminar.

**Jason Robertson**  
11–12 Mar or 13–14 Mar 2008

**Channel palpation**

Diagnostic technique rarely taught in the West.

**Tony Brewer**  
19–20 Mar 2008

**The limbs: examination  
and treatment**

Common limb injuries.

**Bruce Frantzis** 26 Mar 2008  
**The Fire Element  
and the Heart**

*Qigong* workshop with this Daoist Lineage Master.

**Alex and Judi Brazkiewicz**  
24 Apr 2008

**Emergency first aid**

Includes how to react in an emergency; latest health and safety legislation.

**Jeffrey Yuen** 29 Apr 2008  
**The spiritual develop-  
ment of a healer**

**Jeffrey Yuen** 30 Apr 2008  
**Chinese medical  
gynaecology**

**Rachel Peckham and  
Jacqueline Mangold**  
12–13 May 2008

**Substance misuse**

The NADA five-point ear detox protocol.

**Michael Cassidy**  
19 May 2008

**Auricular acupuncture:  
an introduction**

**Radha Thambirajah**  
20–21 May 2008

**Age-related problems**

**Steve Gascoigne**  
9–10 Jun 2008

**Diseases of the  
endocrine system**

**Lillian Bridges**  
23–24 Jun 2008

**Basic face reading**

**Lillian Bridges** 25 Jun 2008  
**Feng shui in the  
treatment room**

**Michael Pringle** 10 July 2008  
**Fire cupping**

**Scott Tower** 17–19 Sep,  
22–24 Oct, 18–21 Nov 2008  
**Contemporary pulse  
diagnosis**

A ten-day course on the Shen-Hammer System offering a rare opportunity to develop advanced skills in pulse diagnosis.

**Charlotte Stone, Calum  
Thomson and Nik Tilling**  
25 Sep 2008

**Multi-bed clinics**

**Sarah Budd**  
2 Oct 2008

**Obstetric complications  
in pregnancy**

Focusing on obstetric 'red flags'.

**Day Post** 16 Oct 2008  
**Scalp acupuncture**

Techniques to treat motor and sensory disorders.

31 Oct – 20 Nov 2008  
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# New MSc programme

Exciting changes afoot. Charlotte Brydon-Smith puts the questions to **Tony Booker**

### What inspired you to rewrite the College's Chinese herbal medicine programme?

It's definitely been a joint effort between various staff members. Following on from the success of our undergraduate BSc (Hons) Acupuncture course we felt what was needed was a postgraduate qualification in herbs with robust educational credentials. That's what really started the ball rolling towards launching an MSc, with Greg Lampert doing much of the detailed work involved in developing the syllabus, and Di Eckersley using her expertise to bring it in line with the educational requirements of a masters course.



### What are the main changes afoot?

We'll be offering three courses (subject to validation). The **one-year postgraduate certificate course** for acupuncturists will cover, amongst other things, the use of pre-prepared formulae (**patents**) and entitle graduates to prescribe them. The natural next

step for postgraduate certificate holders will be our **postgraduate diploma course**, and the third option will be our new **MSc**, which will confer full practitioner status. In all cases accreditation of prior learning will determine the precise details of an applicant's course.

We have taken on some **new lecturers** who will bring additional energy and ideas to the mix, including some great home-study packages in the western science elements. We also have a **new dispensary** and a **student herb clinic** that's open to the public which will give students the dispensary training they need early on in the programme.

### How will interested students or practitioners benefit from these changes?

This new programme is going to be challenging and stimulating but I also think it's going to be fun. We have some great lecturers who really bring their subjects to life. We'll be visiting the Bristol Chinese Herb Garden during the dispensary training, and making trips to the herbarium and laboratories at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Couple this with the warm and friendly learning environment for which this College is known, and you have a sure recipe for success.

If you'd like to discuss any aspect of this training, and what it can offer you please arrange to speak to me by ringing **0118 950 8880** or email **tony.booker@cicm.org.uk**

For more details of this training visit our website **cicm.org.uk**

# The College of Integrated Chinese Medicine offers training in acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine



For years two main styles of acupuncture have been taught in the UK, **Five Element** acupuncture and **TCM**. What makes our degree course special is the combining, in one training, of both styles of treatment – by teachers experienced in their **integration**.



We've also offered training in **Chinese herbal medicine** since 1994. Restructuring of the study package means MSc options will be available soon – see website for details.

And we keep in touch with our graduates and others when they come to the College to take advantage of our programme of **continuing professional development** workshops and seminars.



We are committed to training competent, confident practitioners in a supportive and friendly environment where learning is made as natural and enjoyable as possible.

And we place strong emphasis on the quality and practical experience of our teaching staff, many of whom have been involved since the College was created in 1993.



Two elegant Georgian buildings in the centre of Reading, Berkshire provide ample space for teaching and learning as well as a **public clinic** which has seventeen treatment rooms staffed by students during their clinical training, and by qualified practitioners at other times.



To find out more about the training we offer, or about using the College clinic call **0118 950 8880** or go to **[cicm.org.uk](http://cicm.org.uk)**

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