

A Community of Health, Happiness & Harmony

Yang-Sheng

Nurturing Life

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LIFE'S CHALLENGES, THE NINE PALACES

- The Way of Wu Wei
- Cultivating the Mind -
Mind Matters Connections
- Mind-Body Medicine Research Updates
- Spring - Renewal/Reinvention



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Cultivate Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

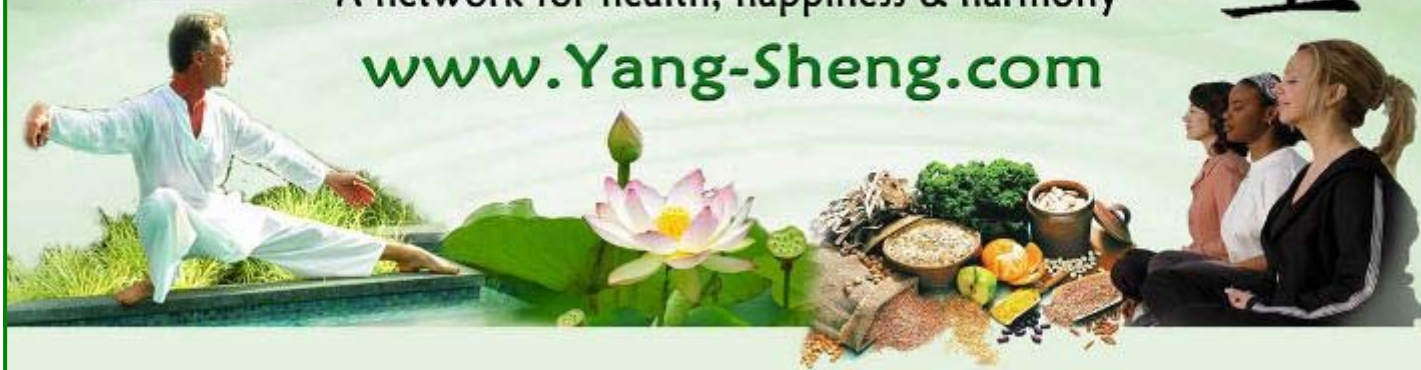
Yang-Sheng

(Nurturing Life)

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A network for health, happiness & harmony

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Yang-Sheng (養生 Nurturing Life) is a FREE e-magazine and a network for health care professionals - complementary medical practitioners, Qigong, Tai Chi, Yoga, Reiki and other mind-body and spirit cultivators. It promotes methods of self-healing, positive mindfulness and health preservation. Yang-Sheng merges traditional knowledge with modern scientific research and clinical evidence and combines ancient wisdom with modern experience to support health and well-being.

Your participation, contribution, sharing and feedback are truly appreciated.



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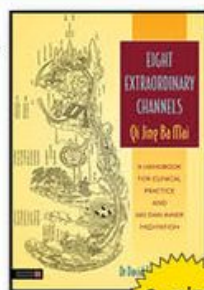
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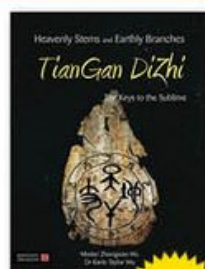
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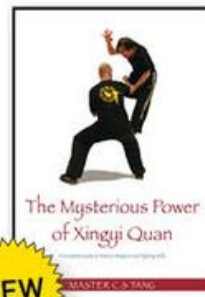
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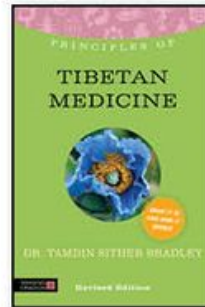
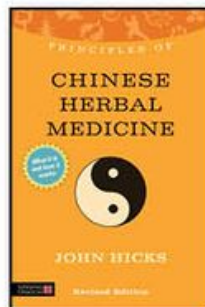
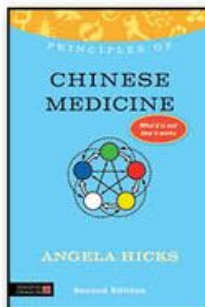
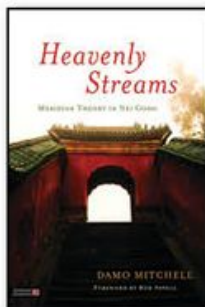
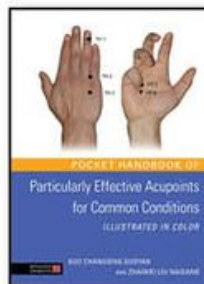
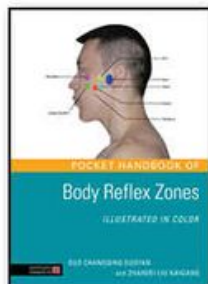
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From the Editor 编者的话

Dear Readers,

I am happy that our theme for this first Yang Shen issue of 2014 is Nurturing Spirit. This is a wonderful way to experience the second half of the quiet, winter season as well as prepare ourselves for an exciting year of growth when spring arrives!

Our selection of articles for this issue offers a wide variety of information as well as practical tips and methods of self-nurturing.

A **"New" Love Story** by Nadia Linda Hole MD is an amusing and interesting look at what allows people to live long lives. It's not just diet and exercise, a lot of it has to do with love! Raven Cohan shows **Why My Number One Priority is Nurturing My Spirit** By Raven Cohan shares her journey to self-realization through many different and diverse but compatible systems, offering a wonderful blueprint showing the successful merging of Western and Eastern teaching and practices.

Simple Taiji Technique to Calm the Mind By Eric Borreson This very simple and easy Open and Close Hands practice is very effective at helping with relaxation and calming. When feeling stressed, take a moment to practice open and close, and you'll find that your stress level will immediately be reduced. Also on the topic of mind is **Cultivating the mind – Mind Matter Connections** by Sharon Montes, an exploration of just what we really mean by "mind," and how it really connects with the Body.

From the Daoist perspective, **The Way of Wu Wei** by Solala Towler Wu wei (oo way) is one of the most difficult yet pivotal concepts in Daoist philosophy. Roughly translated, it means "doing nothing." The true meaning of the phrase wu wei is something like "not doing anything that is not natural" or "not doing anything that does not have its roots in Dao."

A **Daoist Practical Journal: Come Laugh With Me** by Michael Rinaldini (Shifu Li Chang Dao), a book reviewed by Michelle Wood. Written in a diary-entry style, Shifu Li Chang Dao's book certainly lives up to the title: it is, indeed, a marvelous journal chronicling the eighteen-year journey of Michael Rinaldini's personal progress as a Daoist priest and practitioner.

In this issue's feature article, **Life's Challenges, the Nine Palaces** by C Zinnia Maravell discusses the areas of life in which we may face challenges. Rather than a psychological approach, she offers suggestions to effect wellness energetically through the Extraordinary Meridian channels. **Fibromyalgia and Dancing** by Joyce Del Rosario offers an alternative for fibromyalgia treatment: dancing! Studies show the efficacy of dance intervention on pain when performed once or twice a week with moderate intensity.

Of course we have our regular columns, the backbone of Yang Sheng, with Dr. Marty Eisen's **Scientific Qi Exploration** and Dr. Kevin Chen's **Mind-Body Medicine Research Updates**, and the most delicious **Seasonal Harmony** in which Ellasara Kling offers not only information, but recipes to excite the palate and heal the body.

Please enjoy this issue, and Nurture Your Spirit throughout 2014, and always!

Many blessings,

Michelle



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A New Love Story

by Nadia L. Hole M.D.

"Enjoy life. There's plenty of time to be dead"
- Hans Christian Anderson

"When you find the Love, you find Yourself" - Sidi

*"Live each day like it's your last,
and one day you'll be right" - Quincy Jones*

*"From your I Am is born ... the song that
beautifies all" - Aramaic Lord's Prayer*

*"Start the day with Love. Fill the day with Love.
End the day with Love" - Sai Baba*



Want to Live a remarkable Life?

Want to “age well”?

As integrative holistic physicians, we can easily write you doctor’s orders, for an exhausting “to do” lists of lab tests and nutraceuticals; from super food mega vitamins, nano-minerals, green and red “instant” juices, to enhancers for your stem cells, adaptogens for growth hormone, cordyceps for telomeres, ashwagandha for adrenals; sepia or vetiver for libido, and so on; not to mention the newest other state of the art “proven” therapies – from EEG brain wave entrainment to quantum vibroacoustic “Qi machines,” and more.

Baby boomer or not, how much time, money, and energy, do YOU really want to spend on aging “well?” AND – With the ever escalating demands of modern day life, is Shangri-La just a dream, forever to elude us?



Wait! Maybe there’s hope? Have you heard of the people who “forget to die?”

Researchers have discovered 5 pockets in the world - Loma Linda in Mexico, Nicoya in Costa Rica, Sardinia in Italy, Okinawa in Japan, and Ikaria in Greece - where remarkable numbers of people, live *remarkable* lives, to remarkable ages. Elders regularly outlive the elderly of more industrialized nations by over a decade, with significantly less morbidity from cancer, cardiac, and other chronic disease. Interestingly 3 of the 5 are island communities.

Ikaria, an isolated Aegean Greek island, tops the world longevity list, with more people living past age 90, than anywhere else in the world, often still socially AND *sexually* active, with virtually no dementia. Our Aloha state of Hawaii, incidentally, tops the US longevity list, with the US capitol Washington DC, at the bottom.

What secrets do these islands, and our elders, have to teach us?

Years ago, two Greek immigrants, Yiannis Kari-malis and war vet Stamatis Moraitas, got unexpected news – Yiannis a diagnosis of stomach cancer, Stamatis, lung cancer. Doctors gave each only months to live. In lieu of costly western treatment and hospitals, both chose to return Home instead, to their native Ikaria.

When Yiannis and Stamatis returned home, they did not come home to bottles full of pills, and days scheduled full of appointments, practices, and/or special diets.

Yiannis and Stamatis returned Home to a timeless life style, for many of us forgotten - simple, walks, talks, dances, siesta’s, sipping cups of tea, and breaking bread together, with family, friends, and community. Both happily each outlived their doctors by decades, cancer free.

From the Doctor 医生之窗

Interestingly, in Ikaria and here in Puna Hawaii, the native diet of choice, is a “poor man’s” indigenous diet, with food all harvested fresh from land, or wild, high in organic local greens and grains, with plenty of *raw* dairy, *raw* honey, fresh herbs, fish, and game. Regular exercise, like herding goats walking, dancing, and swimming; and weekly community gatherings are a part of life.

Before you jump on a plane to isolate whatever active anti-aging ingredients there are in Ikarian or Hawaiian native herbs, teas, honey... Stop! With sincere gratitude, for good medicine, from all traditions – are there possibly other, deeper, secrets? (*Real Food is Good Medicine*, YS Jul Aug 2012)

My parents, both physicians, from Yale in China, were raised on a “poor man’s diet.” As prize-winning ball-room dancers, they happily stole every dance floor they could, well into their 80’s. They also absolutely loved their work as doctors helping people. My father just celebrated his 90th birthday.

One of my favorite Hawaiian near-octogenarians is Uncle Sam, a four-time Purple Heart vet. Like my parents, he doesn’t pay much attention to diet or exercise. Uncle lives life passionately, to keep Aloha alive. His joy is protecting our beloved Hawaii as a paradise for our children. One of his dreams is to re-create prisons, literally without walls, for convicted “offenders;” with growing their own food, and sacred Hawai-



ian teachings, chanting, and community, as their rehab.

Recently, I ran into an aging mosque couple whom I haven’t seen for years. Both radiated happiness and health, and looked far far younger than years ago. Their secret? “Just praying.”

One of the most revered elders in integrative medicine, the late cardiologist Dr Lee Lipsenthal MD, past president of *American Board of Integrative Holistic Medicine*, who when diagnosed with terminal esophageal cancer, wrote *Enjoy Every Sandwich - Living Each Day as if it Were Your Last*; spoke often about the vital importance of *connectivity, touch, relationships, and love*, in the practice of medicine, and their measurable outcomes for morbidity and mortality. Lee wrote, “Being fully alive, I discovered, has nothing to do with the presence or absence of disease... It’s really about enjoying the simplicity of life.”

Why waste time on old hurts? Instead, like my parents, Lee loved dancing. I once had the honor of dancing with him. As one of our colleagues





puts it, Dr Lipsenthal, for sure, “didn’t dance like a white boy.”

My parents, Uncle Sam, and mosque friends had no mind for diet, exercises, or nutraceuticals. Dr Lipsenthal’s favorite sandwich was a BLT. What’s their common secret?

Dr Stefanadis, Dept Cardiology, Athens Medical School, writes, *“There is increasing scientific evidence that there are protective health benefits from traditional ways of living, involving diet, physical activity status, an active social life, and an optimistic attitude.”*

One fascinating study which summarizes the results of nearly 150 earlier studies, found that **“friendship (has) as much impact on the risk of death as smoking, drinking, physical activity or obesity.”**

The ELSA study of 10,000 aging Brits concludes that happy people are likelier to stay alive, than the unhappiest people over a given time period. The “grumpiest” people had 3 times the death rate as the happiest. Happy people tended to also stress less.

Andrew Steptoe, Dept. Epidemiology and Public Health at U College London and co-author of ELSA, writes, *“The link between psychological well-being, and long-term health and **survival, was in-***



dependent of other factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, wealth, education and baseline health.”

Times as is – As a doctor, I hear more than my share of heartbreak stories, often totally beyond control of the survivors – unimaginable losses of health, loves, work, finances, safety/security, and oftentimes of life itself. As a mother, daughter, friend, beloved, I too know loss.

Face it - If life challenges aren’t enough, we’re ALL, nowadays, being bombarded with unprecedented solar and earth changes, with definite effects on our physiology and psyche. Times as is - With one big bang, the whole topic of “aging well” could be moot in a second, for any of us.

If all we have is NOW, and we can’t pack our bags and move to an island like Hawaii or Ikaria - how now can we possibly embody the secrets of the island and our elders, within ourselves?

Okinawan elders live a life style culture, imbued with “Ikigai,” or “what makes one’s life worth living.” Like their Japanese counterparts, **Yiannis and Stamatis**, by living what makes life worth living, they **simply forgot** to die.

What’s *your* Ikigai?

What makes life worth living for YOU?

What *simple* joys do you gift yourself?

Who and what are your true Loves?

From the Doctor 医生之窗

Whom is it time to break bread with?

Share a cup of tea with?

Who and where, is your “tribe?” Family? Children? Loved ones? Do they know how you love them?

Who needs a hug?

What choices would you make, if today were your last sandwich?



**If you could give yourself ONE gift,
for your life, for TODAY, for yourself,
what would it be?**

A friend of a friend suggests “Perhaps it’s time to write a *new* love story for Yourself - one with a *happier* ending. Perhaps it’s time for a *bigger* story, a story bigger than You, ME, our selves, US...” Perhaps it’s time, no matter what your circumstances, to simply enjoy life, help others live their joy too... and Love, **Love, Love**, as if there’s no tomorrow!

One of the oldest women in the world, a recognized chocoholic, drank red wine daily. When asked her secret, she smiled, “I have only one wrinkle and it’s between my legs.”

Smiles! Perhaps it’s high time to fall in love with **YOU!**

Bless you and **THANK YOU!** 🙏



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Dr. Nadia Linda Hole MD is a pioneer in bridging Qigong, Oriental, Western, and Energy Medicine. Recognized as a “master” by other masters, with degrees from Princeton, Duke, USHS, and Oneness Universities, she has served on the faculties of the American Holistic Medical Association, and American Academy of Pain Management, among others. She is a contributing author for complementary medicine textbooks; consulting editor for Chinese Medical Qigong, and co-founder of the Free Distance Healing Qi Project. Besides dancing, dolphins, healing in the way of Love, peace, and the practical science of “miracles,” Dr Hole’s passion is bringing a more heart centered, Qi approach, to medicine.

Why My Number One Priority is Nurturing My Spirit

by Raven Cohan



When I saw the theme of this month's issue of Yang-Sheng, it was a happy moment. Of course when one spends a great deal of time in nurturing oneself, it isn't a strange occurrence to have fulfilling moments more often than lost ones. It isn't some fairytale life I am living that is 100% magical. Years of heading toward an intention to be better in charge of my spirit has blasted away the pining ideal of "wanting to be happy."

This article hopes to track my efforts made to bail myself out of any self-imposed 'jail of low spirit.' By no means is it done magically. Adjusting my dials from low moods and responses to things outside my control, are easier. That's a good thing. Years ago, it wasn't easy to get out of low moods. Now, long on this road, called Tao, I'm neither

aiming toward immortality, nor do I stay long term in the muck and mire of lost, low, lazy, spiritual moods. I am happier in enjoying all layers that connect me to an empowered life of one who doesn't have to prove much. (I had enough of that when as a youth until into my 40's... I was struggling to keep alive in show business.) Even though I kept performing as a part of my life over a decade more, studies of Tao and teaching of it paved my way toward the nurturing of my once hugely ego-led spirit. (Yes, there still are traces because I befriended ego.)

My spirit is trainable. Like everyone trained or yet untrained, learning to perform self-awareness techniques is a brave new world. There are plenty of surprises along the way. It takes most people many dedicated years of practice to feel it is working well. We all have areas

Experience Exchange 经验交流

that are weaker or stronger. From Chinese Alchemy exercises, I have learned some of the best ways I've found enabling me to go deeply into reprogramming my reactive nature. But also I have come from an earlier background of self-training via Science of Mind techniques of Ernest Holmes, from back in 1969. That background, also called "Religious Science," focused less on going deeply into the spirit/soul. Every day, (and most often more than once a day,) some practices I do, shall be summarized here in a minimal way. Other background practices I did as a young woman in my early 20's include: a. meditating on 3 symbols daily from the age of 18 prior to learning of Holme's system. b. Having read spiritual books from 15 years of age occurred after being disillusioned with my Jewish upbringing. Yet, adding Holmes' system became a great background for me to build upon. In fact, I feel my practice methodology would possibly not be as comfortable without having learned the spiritual mind training system from Ernest Holmes' N.Y.C. staff of speakers. One speaker went on to be very well known, and she is Louise Hay. She is known for cataloging both diseases and parts of the body effected that are "spoken to" in "spiritual-mind-treatments." Her work greatly furthered that of Ernest Holmes, 1887-1960. (Yes, he was dead before I came to his teachings.)

The Neigung practices I learned from Grand Master Mantak Chia, since 1980, were revealed to me during innumerable classes given by him. His solid system enables anyone to go from the

ground floor upward, and move most literally through layers of spiritual places. Training in this way, eventually, through meditations and neigung exercises, involves self-massage, tapping parts of the body, and certainly a study of human anatomy, and rooting (which truly has one connecting with deep, Mother Earth power.) "She" assembles

for you a safety net. You are enabled to be cleansing every part of the body energetically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally as well as physically. One begins to bring out several systems of identifying the colors of spirit bodies around yourself as well as the organ's sounds and the colors of your organs in relationship to the five element organs, seasons, power animals, plants and minerals and virtues, within the structures of Chinese Medicine. You methodically learn your yin and yang organ's connections to the acupuncture meridians.

In my first five years with Master Chia, I was well on my

way to learning the deeper levels of the system. It is a great feeling to be one of his first fifty Western students in his first class in 1981 in NYC. It is like having a family that may not be of your same blood, but there is a connection around the world with soul sisters and brothers I have known well, briefly or long term. Learning many different movement systems for me required unlearning, too. Nothing was more challenging than transforming my muscular dancer's body to one that relied more on a connection with tendons, fascia, and certainly chi/qi, rather than the very large leg, arm, and shoulder muscles I developed by being an acrobatic adagio dancer from '68-'80. It took years to transform a hard body to one that is strong like the wonderful Chinese image of silk:



It is strong on the inside but it also is soft on the outside.

The reason I am going to only hint at some of the meditative and physical practices I do every day when waking early before I teach is because no one would like to do guess work with transformatives requiring specific trainings. They take time to practice to get right. (In a way, it's like tasting some food that is half baked. Wouldn't you prefer the taste of a carefully cooked recipe, (or later on, that which the instincts of the cook's recommendations bring in?) Half- baked recipes are disappointing and you might even vomit them up.) So please don't experiment with this minimized version. Any deep practice requires instructions from a Universal Healing Tao instructor or other teachers of similar alchemy systems or different ones. Powerful teachings from an experienced, masterful teacher can show you when you are on the same page as he or she. A sampling of energy cannot be digested in the same way. When you are in the presence of a high-level teacher, you might not know it until you have developed yourself within safety walls arranged at gradient-like levels. Newcomers go slowly. Aren't many of us, when first approaching something new, rather skeptical? To me, being a little wary is a good thing if it is balanced with open mindedness.

Why do I think Chinese alchemy formulas work even better for me than the meditation sys-

tems I tapped to help me, back when I was in my twenties?



1 It's important that we connect with organ systems that are color-coded in specific ways. I am an artist and relate to that

very well. It also is amazing that so many branches of connections correspond to the emotions, elements, etc. and they all have yin and yang sides. Even the power animals are felt deeply by me, but that took time. It is amazing that all of the world wide has or had people who were labeled primitive and dismissed as such by explorers who mostly scorned their meditative practices and dances. Martial applications gain respect more easily.



2 As in many Yogic systems, the chakras are colored. What is powerful to me is that the rainbow going up the spine seems quite logically organized. Different from the Indian

Yogic system is the numbers of chakras. The number of chakras is a bit different in Chinese medicine as taught by Chia. My own sense of order has found a way that I have customized that works well and is based on the powerful number nine. I am a person who needs organization and this offers it. The system I have learned is integrated by me. It's rearranged in parts, as someone living temporarily in a rented room might do. Teaching in my own way comes from seeing a few things preferentially. I teach my students to stick to what they are taught at first. Master Chia taught me to do that. But if an area strongly requires 're-arranging,' students eventually honor their inner teacher. If students go for teacher training from Chia, I ask them to peruse his teaching materials. (Master Chia himself found many



Experience Exchange 经验交流

areas he was taught which have needed adjustments.) People change as the times change. The students are raised differently than the Ancients Masters and hold to values that greatly vary.



3 Humanity loves external baths and showers, but few learn to do internal cleansing. Their health restoring transformations can gradually emerge out of the sludge. We refresh our habits.



4 We learn to eat whatever foods are marketed to our gluttonous natures, but few are supplied with stepping stones toward shunning chemical additives and even poisons. Our foods can thicken arteries, and I imagine it is similar to how the oil pipes are now tearing up our Mother Earth, especially in our oceans through 'fracking.' The coddling that we had as children, (okay... I speak for myself,) enabled to eat so much junk food that it took me over 45 years to change my habits. I joke, (but it's no joke,) that... "I ate enough chocolate in my life to feed a small third-world country."



5 Now is the time for anyone to resolve to move along with new behaviors. A Horse can ride us toward the never ending path we call Tao. It has its hills and valleys. You can become one who feels ever equipped to hold the reins consciously during your journey. **Happy New Spirit Year.** 马



Raven Cohan is writing a book about her studies with Master Mantak Chia. She is a Senior Instructor of his system since '10, but is certified since 1983 and has ten certifications. She writes for many local S. Florida

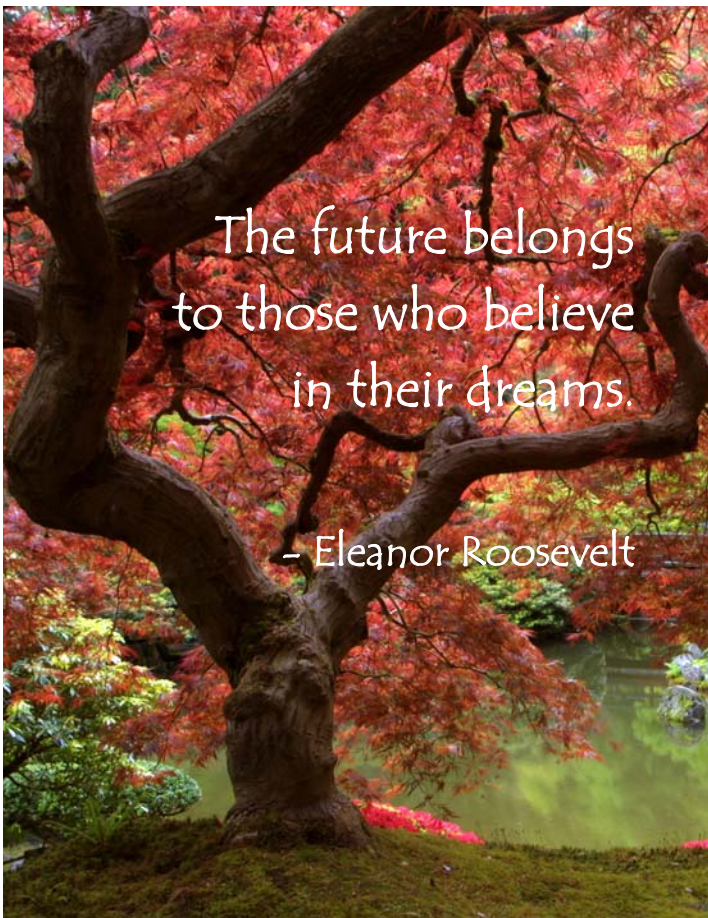
magazines and some national and internet ones, plus has nice conversations on groups in Linked In and Facebook. She enjoys writing poems also. This photo was taken last summer in the area around Mt. Shasta, California. Past and presently, her life is so interesting and she enjoys it greatly. You might care to look at her website: www.taoTLC.com Raven lives in Hollywood, FL. USA



"Faith makes all things possible, love makes all things easy."
- Dwight L. Moody

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The future belongs
to those who believe
in their dreams.

– Eleanor Roosevelt



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A Simple Taiji Technique to Calm the Mind

by Eric Borreson

One of the signature movements of Sun style taiji is the open and close hands.

On the surface, it is just a simple movement of the hands. Start by holding your hands in front of you, about chest height or head height, as if you were holding a ball. Hold your hands about 6 or 8 inches apart. Slowly separate your hands to about shoulder width. Slowly bring your hands back in to the starting position. That's it. Or is it? Let's look a little deeper.

Find Your Qi

This is an exercise to help you become aware of your qi.

First, stand in wuji. Raise your hands in front of you at a comfortable height. Cross your arms at the wrist with the insides together. Hold the inside of your wrists near each other, about an inch or so apart but not touching. Slowly move your wrists past each other in a small circle without touching. Repeat about 10 or 15 times. Focus on any feeling between your wrists.

Next, hold your hands close together with the palms facing each other but not touching. Slowly move your hands past each other in a small circle without touching. Repeat about 10 or 20 times. Focus on the feeling between your palms. Many people start to feel a warmth or tingling or pins and needles while this is happening. This is your qi.


Learn to manipulate the qi that you feel between your hands. Start by holding your hands in front of you, about chest height or head height, as if you were holding a ball. Hold your hands about 6 or 8 inches apart. Feel the qi between your hands. Inhale slowly while you move your hands apart (open) to about shoulder width. Concentrate and feel the air moving through your nose and filling your lungs. It may feel like there is resistance to movement. It can feel like it takes force to separate your hands.

Slowly bring your hands back in (close) to the starting position. Exhale slowly while you move your hands together to the starting position. Concentrate and feel the air moving through your nose and emptying your lungs. It may feel like there is resistance to movement. It can feel like it takes force to push your hands back together. Repeat as often as you wish.



Calm the Mind

Open and Close Hands is very effective at helping with relaxation and calming. Whenever you feel stressed, take a moment to practice open and close. Take

slow, gentle breaths and open and close your hands. You will find that your stress level will immediately be reduced. 



Eric Borreson – a student and teacher, finds teaching taiji, qigong, and meditation to be a path to a more meaningful life. Eric is the founder and director of Meditation in Motion, specializing in teaching about living healthier and happier lives. He teaches taiji, qigong, and meditation at the prestigious Heartland Spa, a top 10 destination spa, located in Gilman, IL. In addition, he teaches taiji (Yang 24, Sun-style taiji, and Dr. Lam's Taiji for Arthritis and Taiji for Diabetes) at other venues. He conducts workshops and teaches private lessons on request. He writes a weekly wellness column at <http://eric-taichi.blogspot.com>.

Life's Challenges, the Nine Palaces

by C. Zinnia Maravell, L. Ac., DOM



The Nine Palaces are the nine life challenges that each of us faces. Working with the Nine Palaces gives you a way to help a patient with emotional problems that do not require you to know why he has the problem. You do not have to play at being a psychotherapist. You just need to identify which of the palaces is causing difficulty. For most patients it is not necessary to focus the whole treatment on a palace but you can add points to the treatment that address the palace such as the opening point for the Extraordinary Meridian. There are, however, a few patients when the entire treatment is to help them organize their energy so that they can successfully meet the challenge of the palace.

The effort your patient makes to maintain his integrity while solving these challenges is a taxation of his essence/jing. When the essence/jing is depleted, people develop illnesses, emotional problems, and other physical symptoms. Taking the Nine Palaces into consideration gives you another way of analyzing the patient's presentation. In general, when treating patients for a Palace issue you would use one of the Eight Extraordinary Meridians.

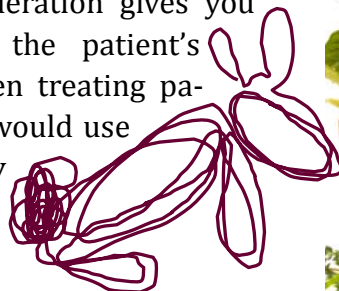
As you read this article, think not only of your patients but of your self. Which of the challenges have you not met or would like to resolve better?



As an infant, it is the parent's responsibility to maintain your **health** so that you survive but as you mature, it is your responsibility to cultivate good health. As an adult, good health is usually the result of lifestyle choices, eating properly, exercising, and resting. Most of our patients come to us for health problems but a Nine Palaces approach would not be appropriate unless the health issue is very long term or constitutional. *Dai Mai/ Belt channel* is the bridge between prenatal and postnatal qi so it is ideally suited to addressing constitutional or inherited health conditions.



Abundance means having enough to live comfortably. That is having enough food, clothing, shelter but it is also an attitude of being satisfied with what you



have. When your sense of abundance is weakened, you lose a sense of adequacy. When you have abundance in your life, you do not feel compelled to be constantly acquiring more things or eating more food to feel adequate. When you have not successfully created abundance, you can expect to have digestive issues, especially dampness. The dampness can also manifest as a lack of sense of direction. You can't see through the fog. *Yang wei mai/Yang Linking channel* works with abundance problems because it links all the palaces together and frees energy so you can figure out how to have an attitude of abundance.



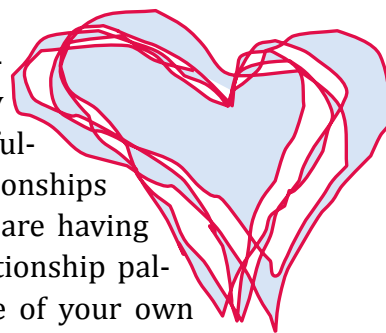
The difference between the abundance and the **prosperity** palace is that prosperity involves giving rather than acquiring. Prosperity also involves a sense of movement. You feel life is going well. What you do bears fruit. If you have an attitude of prosperity, you will be generous to others. You feel you have enough to share. This expansiveness is a fire quality. If you feel miserly or feel people are always imposing on your time or energy, then you have prosperity problems. *Du Mai/the Governor vessel* as the most yang channel and the home of ming men fire treats prosperity issues.



Like health, **relationships** start at birth with the parents and then expand to include other family members, friends, and a life partner. Unlike Maslow's view that relationships revolve around the need to be

loved and accepted, the Chinese take a less emotional look at relationships. What you are trying to do is have relationships with the world that allows you to fulfill

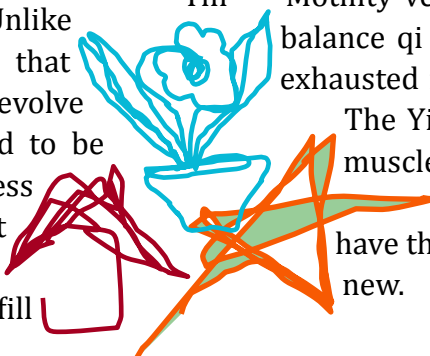
your destiny. For example, an ascetic may choose to be alone to fulfill his destiny. Relationships are a fire issue. If you are having difficulty with the relationship palace, you may put some of your own needs aside just to stay in a relationship. Conversely, you may not be accepting of others. You may have problems even physically standing because emotionally you cannot stand up for yourself. The *Yang Qiao mai, the Yang Motility vessel* deals with the present and how one appreciates oneself. Self acceptance is the key to having relationships that support your continued cultivation. On the physical level it is how you stand and present yourself to the world.



In the past, **creativity** was seen as the fruit of a relationship because it referred to having children. The child makes you eternal. We can interpret creativity more broadly to include anything you produce that

can endure past your life time such as art, music, literature, inventions, corporations etc. It is what you will take pride in as you die. In some sense, your ability to create gives your life meaning. You may have a problem with the creativity palace if you are dissatisfied with the choices your children have made, or have difficulty completing projects, or are often day dreaming about making your mark on the world. Creativity involves the *Yin Wei mai*, Yin Linking vessel and *Yin Qiao mai*, Yin Motility vessel. The Yin Wei mai helps to balance qi and blood which have become exhausted from thinking about the future.

The Yin Qiao mai provides the form/muscles for keeping your orientation in the world, and helps you have the flexibility to create something new.





The **adventure** palace makes you want to leave the confines of your family or a relationship and experience something new. It is about not feeling you are stuck in a rut. It can be satisfied through traveling, tasting new food, learning a foreign language, meeting people different from yourself. If you always talk about taking a cross-country road trip but never take it, get help with this palace. The *Yin Qiao mai* works with this palace because it helps the person have the strength to adapt to the new situations.



The **career** palace involves not only your desires but society's willingness to facilitate the fulfillment. For example, can you get the education you need to meet qualification standards for an occupation? Do you have

the resources, intelligence, determination to prepare yourself? The career palace is not a job but an occupation that nurtures your soul. Does the occupation give you a feeling of abundance, self worth? People often identify themselves by their occupation or job and see the world through the values of that profession. Typical career palace problems are feeling trapped in a job that does not use your talents or losing a job you really liked. Challenges to this palace are treated with *Chong Mai/the Penetrating vessel*, because Chong mai goes to the heart, which houses the Shen, spirit, and down to the legs. Symbolically, the legs represent action, the ability to move toward what you want.



Wisdom

evolves naturally from satisfying the other palaces. Wisdom is self reliance and ac-

ceptance. You are comfortable with who you are. It is knowing that whatever happens in life, you will be able to handle it. This is treated with *Ren mai*, Conception vessel. The Ren mai consolidates the qi needed to solve problems.



The **home** palace is the sanctuary where you find peace within yourself. Home is accepting that everything has a happy ending. Returning home is the idea of dying and returning to the Tao. There is no need

for treatment if the person has successfully met the challenges of the other palaces. If the person has not, determine which palace is causing the most problems and help the patient with that palace.



CASES

In my practice there is a patient who was born very prematurely. Since infancy, she has had allergies and digestive issues. I have been treating her on the paired channels of Dai mai and Yang wei mai. Just recently she reported that she visited a friend with cats and did not have a problem. She said she is feeling much less stressed now that she knows she will not have an allergy attack every time she goes somewhere unfamiliar. The decreased stress may improve her digestion.

Another patient is an 85 year old woman with lung cancer. She is very aware that she is dying. For the last several years she has been complaining about her children's life choices, and lamenting the fact that she has not written more books. I have been treating her for creativity palace problems and the complaining is not as strident.

A young woman came to me for weight loss and smoking cessation. She said both problems were caused by emotions. Her problem is that she feels caught in a job that does not allow her to use her education. I have been treating her on Chong mai and she says she can now resist eating when she is not hungry and stops smoking for a few days at a time.

Just recently I have started to work with a woman who has satisfied most of the Nine Palaces. She finds her career rewarding, has several creative outlets, travels, has good relations with her family and friends although she would like to establish an intimate relationship. She has had recurrent breast cancer. Her problems are in abundance and prosperity. She feels she never has enough money although she is living comfortably and feels guilty about not being generous to others. So, unlike a Maslow type model, you can successfully satisfy higher level needs but still be

struggling with what he would consider basic needs. The reason the Chinese model is different is that the Chinese are viewing abundance and prosperity as states of being rather than purely physical conditions.

When you are treating a patient for a Nine Palace issues, you need to let the patient know that it may take three to six months for them to feel more comfortable with the life challenge represented by a palace. For this reason it is important to make sure that you and the patient have a trusting and caring relationship.



C. Zinnia Maravell is a licensed Acupuncturist working in Washington, DC. She was trained in TCM but studies Five Elements acupuncture with Niki Bilton and Daoist acupuncture with Jeffrey Yuen. Zinnia teaches Yoga in the tradition of Khrishnamacharya. She is an authorized meditation instructor in the Shambhala Buddhist tradition. She teaches the Mind Body Stress Reduction program pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn. She has a BA from Bryn Mawr College and an MBA from the University of Chicago. Her web site is www.attentivedragon.com

Coming to our pages

THIS SPRING

- Learn about these complementary principles and what drives these two natural forces that make up all aspects of Life.
- Identify the feminine and male characteristics of your Yin-Yang.
- Read about the theory and history of this ancient Eastern philosophy.
- Find out why these two interdependent forces cannot exist one without the other.

Yin Yang



The Way of Wu Wei

by Solala Towler



Wu wei (oo way) is one of the most difficult yet pivotal concepts in Daoist philosophy. Roughly translated, it means “doing nothing.”

The true meaning of the phrase wu wei is something like **“not doing anything that is not natural”** or **“not doing anything that does not have its roots in Dao.”** It can also mean not *over* doing.

Laozi says:

Overfilling a vessel is not as good as stopping before it is filled.

Oversharpen a blade and it will lose its edge.

Pile up gold and jade and it will be impossible to guard it.

In going after rank and titles in an arrogant and haughty way you will bring about your own downfall.

Withdraw when the work is done.

This is the way of Dao. - 9

Wu wei is the opposite of *yu wei* or action with useless effort. It is when we attempt to impose our will onto any situation that we often meet with disappointment and even disaster.

The path of Dao is the path of non-resistance. If at any time, on your path of self-cultivation, you encounter resistance, that is not Dao. To try and *force* anything to happen – even if it is something that would be good and of great benefit to the world or for yourself – that is not Dao.

Zuangzi says:

It is when we give up our personal views that we see things as they truly are. In seeing things as they truly are we arrive at complete understanding. To reach complete understanding is to reach true happiness. To reach true happiness is to reach completion. To reach completion is to enter Dao. - Chapter 2

Many of us are full of opinions and judgments. We think we know the answers to everything and we are sure that we are right and if only other people would listen to us the world would be a

better place! But Zhuangzi tells us to “give up our personal views.” What does he mean by this?

Perhaps he means that when we are quick to pass judgment, quick to voice an opinion, quick to decide what we like and don’t like, we may miss out on some of the greatest experiences of our lives. We may be so stuck in our small world of opinions and viewpoints we can never see the wider world that surrounds us.



In the first chapter of the *Zhuangzi* we are told about a magical fish that turns into a bird. And not only a bird, but a gigantic bird, whose wings “are spread out so far, that no one knows just how far they go. When it heaves itself out of the sea and into the air its great wings are like billowing clouds across the sky.” Not only that but its wings beat so fast that the sea beneath them is “whipped and roiled, its waves reaching three thousand li.”



This great bird rises up higher and higher into the sky “until it is ninety thousand li into the air. So high! Then the great and mighty bird Peng travels for half a year until it arrives at its destination.”

Meanwhile, down below a cicada and a dove look up and laugh at this mighty creature.

“When we want to fly up into the lower branches of the elm or the sandalwood tree we just flutter our wings as hard as we can. Of course, sometimes we don’t make it and fall back to the earth. No matter, we just pick ourselves up and try again. Eventually we make it. What is all this talk of needing to fly ninety thousand li into the sky! And why fly for six months to reach the Southern lands! Is it so important?”

Zhuangzi calls this small understanding. “Small understanding,” he says, “is no match for great understanding. Small knowledge cannot understand what great knowledge knows.”

Daoists are very interested in what we might call “the big picture.” How can we think we know when we only see such a small part of the big picture? How can we presume to judge other people when we barely know ourselves? How can we think we know what to do to save the world when don’t really know what the world is?

It is like when we watch a movie on a television screen. At first the picture looks so small. We are aware of the TV and the room it sits in. Then, eventually, once we get caught up in the movie we cease to see the room and even the TV set. Instead we are transported into the movie and that is all we see.

This is how we live our lives. We don’t see the big picture, only the small part of it that we are focused on, which is usually the part we are in! If instead, we could pull our focus back and see the whole picture, what is on the screen in front of us and what is all around it, all around *us*, then we would have a much different viewing experience.

Tales from the Dao 道的传说

The problems we face today – the degenerating health of humans, animals, the forests, seas, the very life of the planet itself, ongoing wars between nations as well as individuals – can be addressed and even healed by the teachings and practices of the masters of Dao, both in ancient times as well as modern. These fearless explorers of inner space have given us advice, guidance and practical ways to heal ourselves and our planet in this challenging time.

Laozi says:

Those who value their own well-being equally with the rest of the world, can be trusted with the world.

Those who love their life as if it were the whole world, will be trusted with all things under heaven. - 13

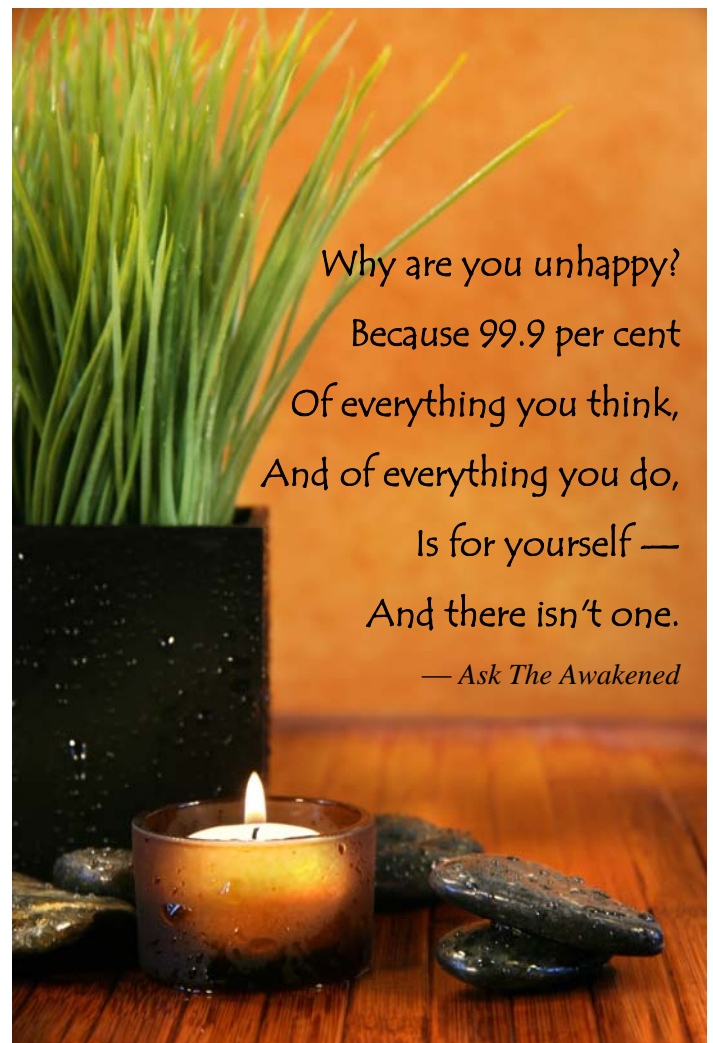
Zhuangzi likens this state to that of a drunken man who falls out of a cart. Because he is not conscious of riding in the cart he also not conscious of falling out of it. He is so loose he is able to fall in such a way that he doesn't get hurt. "If such security is gotten from wine," Zhuangzi asks us, **"how much more is gotten from spontaneity?"**

What this means is that we must become very sensitive to the moment, to our own energy and to the energy of those around us. Not only that but we must become sensitive to the energy of the world around us. In this way we will be able to remain loose like the drunkard yet awake at the same time. We will be able to use each moment fully. In this way we will, while living fully in the present, always be ready for whatever comes next.

My friend and mentor Chungliang Al Huang says our future is behind us while our past is before us. What does he mean by this? Perhaps it is something about how we are always well aware of our past; sometimes it even haunts us. But our

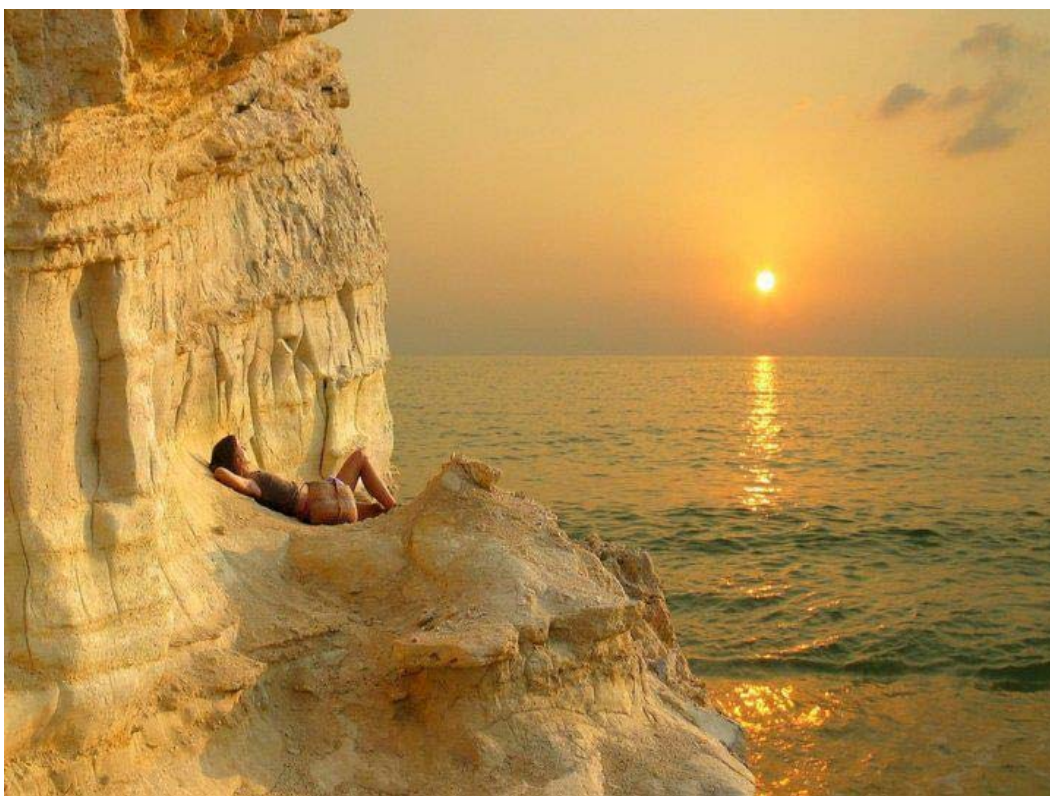
future is hard to see; it is behind us. Dao people say how we respond to the present moment is what will build the future. Ni Hua Ching says:

"Sometimes you do better in life and other times you do poorly. When your cycle is high, you enjoy your life more than when you are having difficulties in a low cycle. To harmonize the flow of your life, don't become excited by the high points or depressed by the low. Always remember the high is built by the low. You should respect the times when you are in a low cycle . . . When people have a low cycle, they think of it in an emotional way and feel terrible. They want to die or kill themselves. They feel boring, unattractive and uninteresting . . . They don't realize that their low cycle can make them wise. Life is built up by each uninteresting moment, not just by excitement."



Why are you unhappy?
Because 99.9 per cent
Of everything you think,
And of everything you do,
Is for yourself —
And there isn't one.

— Ask The Awakened



This is a very deep teaching. “Life is built up by each uninteresting moment.” This is something that most people do not want to hear. They have grown up thinking that it is only in times of great suffering or great adventure or great spiritual realizations that our life is built, not “each uninteresting moment.”

Many spiritual seekers today believe that if they just meditate hard enough and long enough and are able to somehow kill off their ego then they will reach a state of enlightenment and all their worries and problems will be over. Then they will be able to see into the future and “step off the wheel” and then they will be able to write a best selling self-help book and go on the lecture circuit and charge lots of money to tell other people to do what they did.

What I am trying to do here is not denigrate self-help books or spiritual teachers and guides. We all need teachers and guides to help point the way. We all need inspiration from inspiring teachers.

But the work, the day-to-day work – of becoming centered and clear and grounded and spiritually open – is up to us. If we don’t do our own work then, when a teacher *does* appear, we will not be able to understand them or use what they tell us in a liberating way. We can read all the spiritual books in the world but if we don’t apply those teachings to “each uninteresting moment” it is a waste of time.

Much of the modern lifestyle is designed; it would seem, to de-sensitize us.

One of the worst ways this happens is when we watch television. Watching television, especially for long periods of time, is extremely harmful. It disrupts our *qi*, disturbs our *shen* and distorts our understanding of reality. It dumbs us down and elevates our sense of the world as a dangerous and chaotic place. It assaults our nervous system with blaring ads for things we don’t need. It tries to convince us that we will miss out on great things if we don’t watch all the new shows, including the so-called reality shows. Whose reality is this? Does it have to be yours?

Of course not. It is when we unplug the TV and begin to experience the world around us and within us, in a deep and calm manner, that we can we will find out what we have actually been missing by being hypnotized by the TV.

The Daoists make a distinction between mindful activity and mindless activity.

Tales from the Dao 道的传说



Zhuangzi says:

We become so involved in mindless activity that we lose all sense of ourselves. We feel we are drowning and losing our way and nothing seems to bring back the feeling of being safe and whole. - Chapter 2

It is this strong sense of disconnect from the source of our being – Dao – that creates so many problems in today's world. It is this great sense of dis-connect with the source of all being that is at the very root of so many of modern society's problems. The huge problem of drug and alcohol abuse – which is also a billion dollars a year business, with tentacles all over the world – exists because of this dis-connect. People want to get outside themselves, they want to feel strong and free and not have to worry about their day-to-day existence. So they turn to drugs or alcohol to give them the strength and experience that they lack in their own being, at terrible costs, not only to themselves but also to society at large.

The other end of the spectrum is this movement toward religious fundamentalism, both East and West. People are so sure that their expression of the divine is the right one and that their set of rules are the right ones and anyone who thinks different is a heathen, a sinner or an infidel. Religious extremism creates schisms and even outright wars

Laozi says that when we lose our sense of awe, disaster follows.

Zuangzi says:

Let things unfold naturally and let your mind be free. Accept what you can't control and continue to nourish your internal spirit. That is best. You must be willing to act in accordance with your own destiny. Nothing is simpler than this and nothing is more difficult. - Chapter 4 ㄣ



Solala Towler - has been involved with Daoist practices such as Taiji, Qigong and meditation over 25 years. He has published *The Empty Vessel: the Journal of Daoist Philosophy and Practice* since 1993.. Mr. Towler has written a number of

books on Daoist thought and practice, including *Cha Dao: the Way of Tea* and *the Inner Chapters of Chuang Tzu*, and leads tours to China to study Qigong and other Daoist practices in the sacred mountains of China. In addition, he has recorded four CDs of meditation, relaxation, and movement music; using Tibetan singing bowls, both Chinese and Native flute and harmonic overtone singing. You can find more information about Solala on his website: <http://www.abodetao.com>

Fibromyalgia and Dancing

by Joyce Del Rosario



Fibromyalgia - what is it?

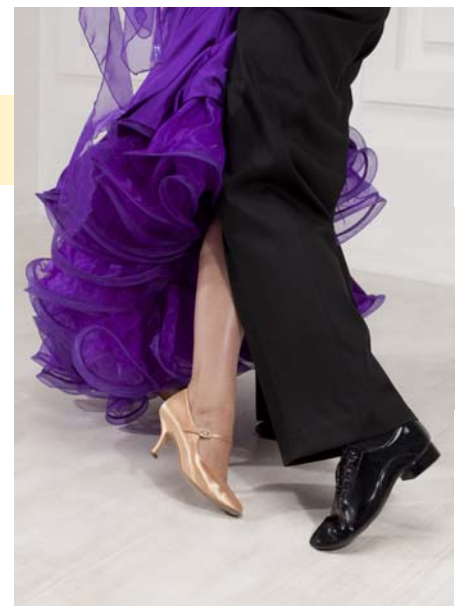


Fibromyalgia is a very common syndrome in which pain is present in joints, tendons, muscles and soft tissues of body, which persists for more than 3 months without any apparent cause like tissue damage or inflammation. In this syndrome, 11 paired tender points out of total 18 can be identified on palpation. Pain can be aggravated with poor sleeping habits, exertion, cold weather and stress.

If you are having the same problem which is affecting your daily activities and quality of life then you must visit a pain clinic as soon as possible before your symptoms are exacerbated, because there is no such treatment that can completely cure fibromyalgia that is why pain management should be your primary focus to improve the quality of your life and reduce disability.

Dance - a type of aerobic exercise

Various studies like Wigers S. et al (1996) and Busch A. et al (2007) have shown the positive effect of aerobic exercise in reducing the symptoms of fibromyalgia while improving the quality of life of patient. As we know that dancing is also a type of aerobic exercise and there are some mythologies roaming around that dancing can worsen the situation, which is why we are going to discuss the effect of different types of dancing on the life of patients of fibromyalgia.



Belly dance and fibromyalgia



To understand the usefulness of belly dance in patients with fibromyalgia, Baptista A. et al (2012) conducted a single blind control study, in which 80 patients of fibromyalgia were recruited. Half of them were placed in dance group and half were placed in control group. Dance group went through 16 weeks belly dance with 2 sessions of dance per week. Both groups were assessed after 16 and 32 weeks and the results showed that dance group showed marked improvement in pain reduction, emotional features and mental health therefore it can be used to reduce pain, improve quality of life and to improve functional capacity in FMS patients.

Biodanza—a dance of life

Biodanza literally mean **the dance of life** which is an amalgamation of movement, emotion and music. Biodanza is scientifically proven for reducing stress, improving communication skills and relationships. On the other hand it can also help patients with fibromyalgia as Carbonell B. et al (2010) conducted a controlled trial 59 women suffering from fibromyalgia in which 27 women were placed in Biodanza intervention group and 32 were placed in usual care group with a follow-up of 3 months. Results showed that Biodanza intervention for 3 months (once a week) showed improvements in pain, BMI, body fat percentage and fibromyalgia impact in women, which shows that, Biodanza dance can be helpful in making a patient's life better who is suffering from fibromyalgia.



Note: It can be concluded that dance therapy can be an effective item to include in your fibromyalgia treatment plan but it should be kept in mind not to exert yourself too much to obtain maximum results. In prior studies the dance intervention was performed once or twice a week and intensity was also moderate. If you want to start dance therapy, go to fibromyalgia treatment clinic and ask your health care professional that will guide you about this therapy after knowing your condition with a physical examination. ✍

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Part 1. The DIVERGENT OR DISTINCT MERIDIANS

by Marty Eisen Ph.D.

1. Introduction (1, 2, 3, 4)

The Distinct or Divergent Meridians derive their name from the fact that they diverge from the 12 regular Meridians. They diverge from big joints such as: the shoulders, elbows, hips and knees, except for the Liver Divergent Meridian, branching from the dorsum of the foot. Their importance is that their paths make internal linkages which are not made by the principal Meridians. Hence, they can be used to understand the actions and indications of some acupoints and the course and symptoms of some diseases.

The Yang Divergent Meridians separate from their Yang Principal Meridian, enter their related Yang Organ and their externally/internally paired Yin Organ and join their Primary Meridian in the supraclavicular fossa, neck or face.

The Yin Divergent Meridians diverge from their Yin Principal Meridians, converge with their externally/internally related Divergent Meridian in the head region and then, join the related main Yang Meridian. Hence, the twelve Divergent Meridians are divided into six pairs, according to their internal and external relations, called the Six Confluences. The pathways in the Six Confluences will be described in Section 4. Only the

Kidney, Heart and Lung Divergent Meridians enter their pertaining Yin Organ.

The Divergent Meridians do not have their own acupuncture points. They run deep into the body reaching the Organs, but not as deep as the principal Meridians.

Only Wei Qi courses through the Divergent Meridians.

2. Some Functions of the Divergent Meridians

(a) The Divergent Meridians strengthen the relationship between internally and externally paired Meridians and Zangfu. This helps explain the action of some acupuncture points.

For example, **LI 4** (Hegu) and **LI 11** (Qu Chi) are used to treat Pathogenic Heat attacking the Lung Meridian because the Large Intestine Divergent Meridian reaches the Lung.

The Stomach Divergent Meridian enters the Heart and so many Stomach acupoints can be used to treat disorders of the Spirit (Shen).

Points on the Bladder Meridian are used to treat a disharmony of the Heart and Spirit because the Bladder Divergent Meridian links with the Heart. For instance, **B 62** (Shenmai) is used for epilepsy, insomnia, palpitations and manic depression.



(b) The Divergent Meridians connect regions and Organs not interconnected by the twelve regular Meridians.

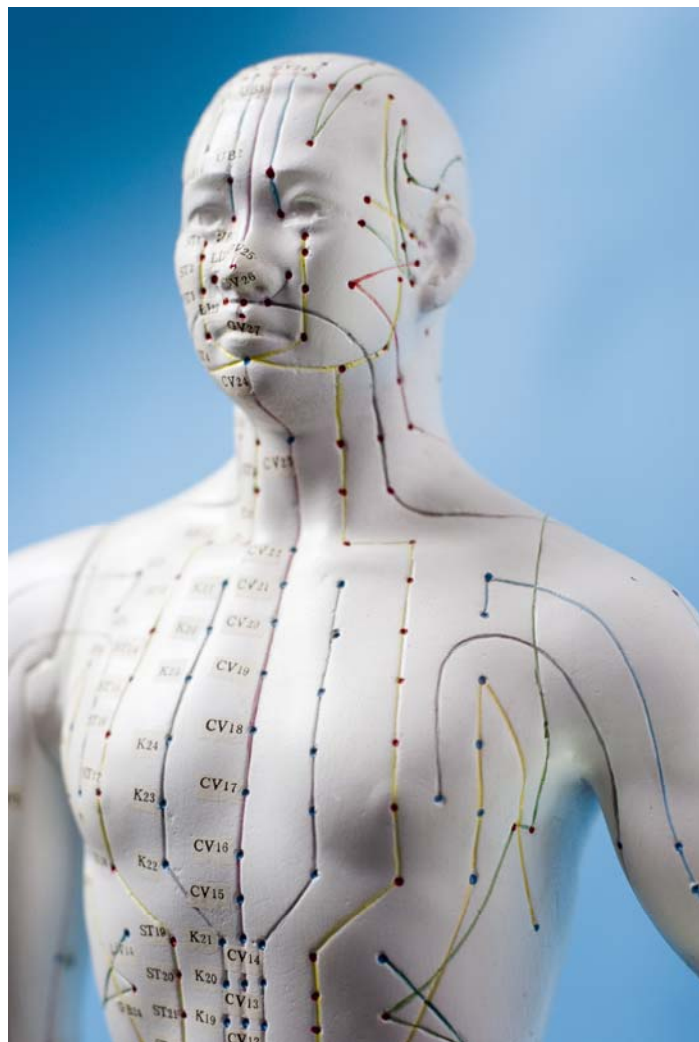
B 57 (Chengshan) and **B 58** (Feiyang) can be used for treating hemorrhoids and other rectal diseases even though the Bladder Meridian does not circulate through the rectal region, because its Divergent Meridians do.

In Chinese medicine, the Heart (**Fire**) and Kidneys (**Water**) play an important in balancing the body. The primary Meridian of the Kidney connects with the Heart, but the Heart Meridian does not connect with the Kidney. However, Bladder Divergent Meridian, related to the Kidneys, passes from the Kidneys to the Heart, strengthening the communication between these Organs.

The Liver and Gallbladders Meridians don't connect with the Heart. However, the Gallbladder Divergent Meridian travels to the Heart, which helps explain the relationships between the Liver and Gallbladder with the Heart.

(c) The Divergent Meridians help circulate Qi and Blood to the head and face.

All six principal Yang Meridians travel to the head and face. The only Yin meridians that circulate there are the Heart and Liver Meridians. However, the Yin Divergent Meridians provide pathways for the Yin Meridians to circulate Qi and



Blood to the head and face via their link with the Yang Divergent and primary Meridians.

For instance, the Lung Meridian only ascends to the throat. Nevertheless, the Lung provides Qi to the nose as a consequence of the connection between the Lung Divergent and the Large Intestine primary Meridians.

(d) The Divergent Meridians strengthen the relation between the Meridians and the Heart

The Divergent H, S, SI, B, G, Liv and Sp Meridians all pass through the Heart. The Kidney (K) Divergent Meridian ascends to the root of the tongue, meeting the Luo Connecting Channel of the Heart. Note the relation between the Heart and Kidneys in (b). A branch of the San Jiao (SJ) Muscle Channel links with the root of the tongue.



The SJ Divergent Meridian is distributed to the Pericardium of the chest. The Pericardium (P) Divergent Meridian converges with the SJ Meridian. Thus, the K, P and SJ Divergent Meridians are indirectly related to the Heart. The energy from the Lung (L) and Large Intestine (LI) Divergent Meridians do not enter the Heart.

This helps explain why symptoms involving

the Heart appear in disease syndromes of other Organs and can be treated by using acupoints on their principal Meridians. For example, cardiac and hypochondriac pain appears in Gallbladder patterns, mania and epilepsy in Bladder patterns and panic and palpitations in Stomach patterns.

This gives credence to the statement that the Heart is the King of the Five Zang and Six Fu Organs and houses the Shen, which appears in Chapter 71 of the Spiritual Pivot (Ling Shu).

(e) The Divergent Meridians help to lessen the severity of some diseases (3, 4)

Pathogenic or Perverse Factors (or Energy), called Xie (Evil) Qi, indicates any disease factor, either exterior (e.g. Wind, Damp, Cold, Heat) or interior (e.g. Phlegm, Interior Wind, Fire, Stagna-

tion of Qi). Zheng (Upright) Qi is not type of Qi but is all of the body's Qi in relation to its capacity to fight pathogenic factors. All of the pathological changes and developments of a disease are the stages in the struggle between the Upright Qi and the Pathogenic Factors.

Xie Qi can enter the principal Meridians and then try to pass up a Meridian and eventually enter its Organ. If the Zheng Qi is too weak Xie Qi enters the Organ. However, if the Zheng Qi is stronger, but not strong enough to drive the Xie Qi completely out of the Meridian, it will be diverted into the corresponding Divergent Meridian. The Xie Qi will still reach the Organ, but the produced symptoms will be less severe.

3. Qi Circulation in the Distinct Meridians (4)

Although only Wei Qi circulates in the Divergent Meridians, the circulation is not the same as the usual Wei Qi circulation pattern. Wei Qi circulates outside the main Meridians through the skin and muscles in 50 cycles in 24 hours. During the day (midnight to noon) it cycles 25 times following the Yang Meridians:

LI – S – SJ – G – SI – B – LI –

During the night (noon through midnight) it cycles 25 times following the Yin Meridians:

K – H – L – Liv – Sp – K –

The circulation of Wei Qi in the Distinct Meridians follows its own pattern. It starts in the Meridians of the legs and then through the arm Meridians and completes the following cycle in a day:

B – K – G – Liv – S – Sp – SI – H – SJ – P – LI – L – B –

It is still Wei Qi and is derived basically from the Wei Qi which circulates 50 times during a day.

When the Perverse Energy reaches an Organ via a Divergent Meridian, it is reacted upon by the Zheng Qi. However, the Distinct Meridian contains Wei Qi, which is part of the reaction, and it will reach its maximum either during the day or night, if it is a Yang or Yin Meridian, respectively. This Wei energy will reinforce the Organ's reaction. However, most symptoms are not produced by the Perverse Energy, but by the body's reaction against them. Since the strength of the Wei Qi will increase or decrease with its daily 50 cycle rhythms, so will the produced symptoms. Thus, if the predominant symptom is intermittent, the Distinct and not the Principal Meridian may be involved and this should be investigated.

4. Pathways of the Six Confluences of the Divergent Meridians (1, 2, 3, 4)

The pathways of the Distinct Meridians are not as well determined as those of the principal Meridians. Both a Yin and Yang Distinct Meridian usually depart from their Principal Meridians near so-called Access Points (4). Each Yin Divergent Meridian converges with its internally/ externally related Yang Divergent Meridian, which then rejoins its Yang Principal Meridian from which it departed. This rejoining point is called a Return Point (4). In a few combinations the Return Point is on a different, related Principal Meridian.

The Qi flow through an internally/ externally related pair of Distinct Meridians is activated by needling the Access Points bilaterally on both the Yin and Yang Principal Meridians and the Return Point bilaterally on the Yang Principal Meridian. The direction of energy flow is from inside (Yin) to outside (Yang) and from inferior (Yin) to superior (Yang). The flow from the Yin and Yang Access Points goes to the primary and coupled Organs and then to the Return Point, superiorly located on the coupled Yang Principal Meridian.

The pathways are only drawn on one side of the body in the diagrams.

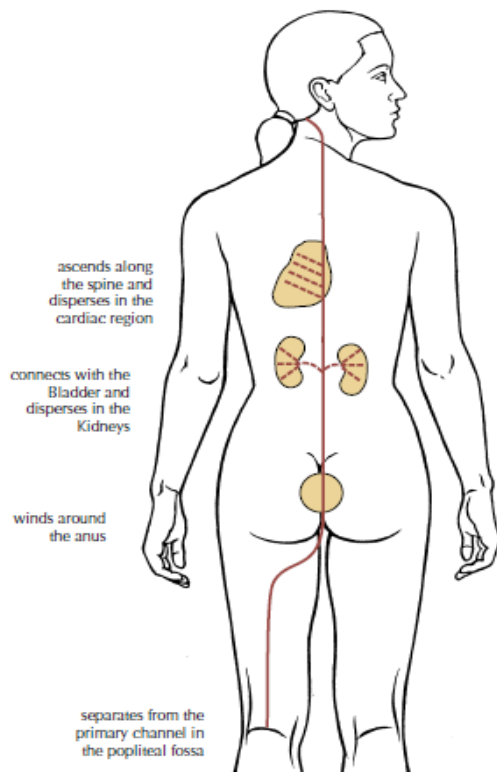


The First Confluence

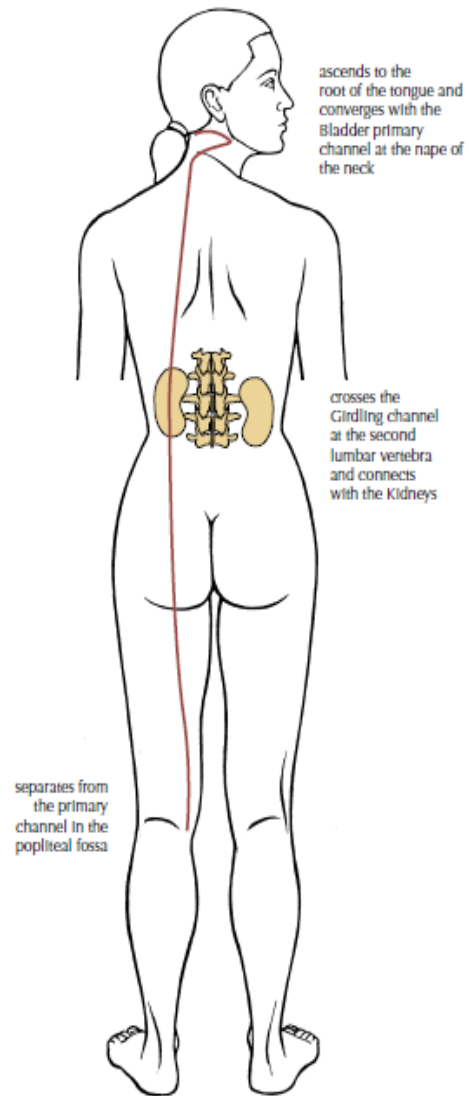
(a) The Bladder Divergent Channel

It departs from the Bladder Meridian in the popliteal fossa and runs to a point 5 cun below the sacrum. Then, it winds round to the anal region, connects with the bladder and disperses into the kidney. Following upward alongside the spine, it disperses in the cardiac region, emerges at the neck and converges with the Bladder Meridian.

Its Access Point is **B 40** (Wei Zhong or Bend Middle) and its Return Point is **B 10** (Tian Zhu or Celestial Pillar).



Bladder Divergent Channel



Kidney Divergent Channel

(b) The Kidney Divergent Channel

It departs from the Kidney Meridian in the popliteal fossa and crosses the Divergent Bladder Meridian on the thigh. Running upward, it connects with the kidney and crosses the Dai (Belt or Girdle) Meridian at about the level of the 7th thoracic vertebra. Then, it ascends to the root of the tongue and emerges at the posterior neck to join the Bladder Meridian.

Its Access Point is **K 10** (Yin Gu or Yin Valley) and its Return Point is also **B 10**.

The couplets region of influence is the kidneys, bladder, the ano-rectal region, the coccyx, descending colon and the anterior surface of sacrum and vertebral column (2).

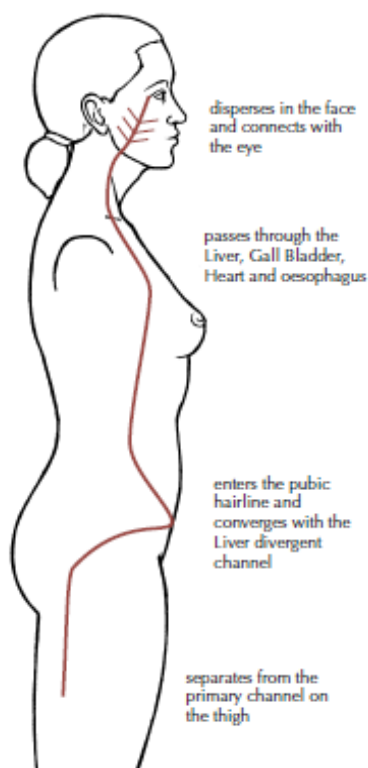
The Second Confluence

(a) Gallbladder Divergent Channel

Departing from the Gallbladder Meridian on the thigh, it crosses the hip joint, enters the lower abdomen in the pelvic region, and joins the Liver Distinct Meridian. Together, they traverse the lat-

eral aspects of the abdomen and pass between the lower ribs to connect with the gallbladder and spread through the liver. Then, the pathway passes further upwards to cross the heart and esophagus and disperse in the face. Finally, it enters the eye and rejoins the Gallbladder Meridian at the lateral canthus.

Its Access Point is **G 30** (Huan Tiao or Jumping Round) and its Return Point is **G 1** (Tong Zi Ziao or Pupil Bone Hole).



Gallbladder Divergent Channel

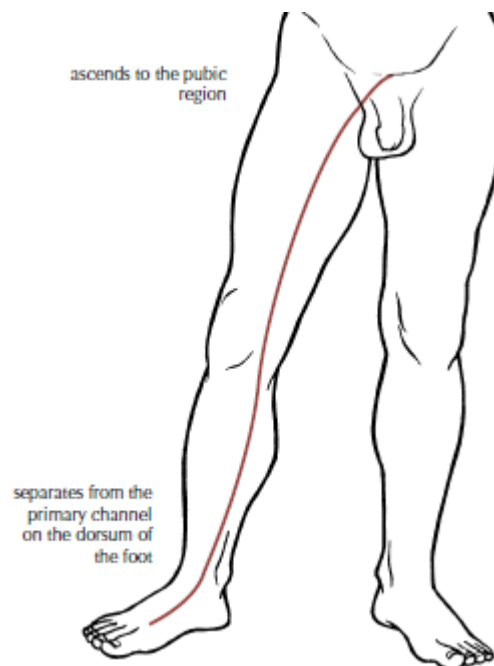
(b) Liver Divergent Channel

Separating from the Liver Meridian on the instep, it runs upward to the pubic region, where it converges with the Gallbladder Meridian. One text says the separation occurs at the inguinal ligament (2).

Its Access Point is Liv 12 (Ji Mai or Urgent Pulse), which is not near its point of departure

from its main meridian and its Return Point is **G 1** (Tong Zi Ziao or Pupil Bone Hole).

The couplets region of influence is the lateral abdominal region and hepatobiliary structures (2). ㄣ



Liver Divergent Channel



Marty Eisen, PhD, a retired scientist, who constructed mathematical models in medicine. He has studied and taught Yoga, Judo, Shotokan Karate, Aikido, Qigong, Praying Mantis Kung Fu, and Tai Chi. Dr. Eisen studied Chinese

Medicine through apprenticeships and correspondence courses. His new Amazon Kindle and hard copy books "Healthy Exercise for Seniors and Non-Athletes" describes classical Yoga, Tai Chi and Qigong to encourage practitioners to learn more about these arts. For more information about Dr. Eisen please visit <http://home.comcast.net/~carolezak>



**A Daoist Practical Journal:
Come Laugh With Me**
by Michael Rinaldini
(Shifu Li Chang Dao)
2013, ISBN 978-1484865330, pb,
147 pages.

A review
by Michelle Wood,
Editor-In-Chief,
Yang Sheng Magazine

I thoroughly enjoyed Shifu Li Chang Dao's book, and it certainly lived up to the title: it is, indeed, a marvelous journal chronicling the eighteen-year journey of Michael Rinaldini's personal progress as a Daoist priest and practitioner.

For one, I love what Christina Barea, also a Daoist Priest in the Dragon Gate lineage, said in her Forward to the book: "The most powerful part of the book lies in its sincerity. Michael is unafraid to show what every seeker inherently goes through. His words are not complicated; he expresses on paper what is true to his inner nature. He puts into practice the concept of "not two" allowing the virtue of his integrity to prevail. What you read in his book is an accurate reflection of who he is. It's a daring work to say the least."

In Michael's book, I appreciated the insights and learned the value that solitary retreats offer for the purposes of awakenings and realizations. I also obtained a deeper understanding of several meditation and qigong methods, and of Daoist alchemy. One of the most inspiring moments was his retelling of the experience when he followed the flow of universal energies and intuitively created a new qigong form!

I love that he harmoniously blends Christianity and Buddhism and Daoism. Perhaps it is one of the great secrets of the Universe that Michael discovered across the decades of his journey: the heart of all practices is in Compassion and Oneness. "It was like a veil of darkness or illusion had lifted and it was perfectly clear that all things are basically pure energy and in harmony with the Great Dao, the Great Buddha, and the Great Christ." p. 10

As a mystic who has had my own direct experiences of the underlying Truth of the Universe, I especially appreciated Michael's deep sharing of his connection to Universal Oneness, "cracking the matrix" as he calls it.

The nugget I take away from reading Shifu's book is that the goal of Not Two is very obtainable if one applies oneself with dedication and courage; one can have the explicit awareness and experience of Oneness.

Michael's book is available on Amazon.com:

<http://www.amazon.com/Daoist-Practice-Journal-Come-Laugh/dp/1484865332> 



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Mind-Body Medicine Research Updates

*Compiled by
Kevin W Chen, Ph.D.*



Meditation Programs for Psychological Stress and Well-being: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. [JAMA Intern Med.](#) 2014 Jan 6. [Epub ahead of print] By Goyal M, Singh S, Sibinga EM, et al .

Many people meditate to reduce psychological stress and stress-related health problems. To counsel people appropriately, clinicians need to know what the evidence says about the health benefits of meditation.

OBJECTIVE To determine the efficacy of meditation programs in improving stress-related outcomes (anxiety, depression, stress/distress, positive mood, mental health-related quality of life, attention, substance use, eating habits, sleep,

pain, and weight) in diverse adult clinical populations. **EVIDENCE REVIEW** We identified randomized clinical trials with active controls for placebo effects through November 2012 from MEDLINE, PsycINFO, EMBASE, PsycArticles, Scopus, CINAHL, AMED, the Cochrane Library, and hand searches. Two independent reviewers screened citations and extracted data. We graded the strength of evidence using 4 domains (risk of bias, precision, directness, and consistency) and determined the magnitude and direction of effect by calculating the relative difference between groups in change from baseline. When possible, we conducted meta-analyses using standardized mean differences to obtain aggregate estimates of effect size with 95% confidence intervals.

FINDINGS After reviewing 18 753 citations, we included 47 trials with 3515 partici-

pants. Mindfulness meditation programs had moderate evidence of improved anxiety (effect size, 0.38 [95% CI, 0.12-0.64] at 8 weeks and 0.22 [0.02-0.43] at 3-6 months), depression (0.30 [0.00-0.59] at 8 weeks and 0.23 [0.05-0.42] at 3-6 months), and pain (0.33 [0.03- 0.62]) and low evidence of improved stress/distress and mental health-related quality of life. We found low evidence of no effect or insufficient evidence of any effect of meditation programs on positive mood, attention, substance use, eating habits, sleep, and weight. We found no evidence that meditation programs were better than any active treatment (ie, drugs, exercise, and other behavioral therapies).

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE Clinicians should be aware that meditation programs can result in small to moderate reductions of multiple negative dimensions of psychological stress. Thus, clinicians should be prepared to talk with their patients about the role that a meditation program could have in addressing psychological stress. Stronger study designs are needed to determine the effects of meditation programs in improving the positive dimensions of mental health and stress-related behavior.

Sit, breathe, smile: Effects of single and weekly seated Qigong on blood pressure and quality of life in long-term care. Complement Ther Clin Pract. 2014 Feb;20(1):48-53. By Freeman SR, Hanik SA, Littlejohn ML, et al.

Long-term care (LTC) facilities house individuals with diverse combinations of cognitive and physical impairments, and the practice of Seated Qigong eliminates common exercise barriers. This study hypothesized: 1) a single session would lower blood pressure (BP) and improve quality of life (QOL) in a generalized LTC population, and 2) these responses would be attenuated with chronic (weekly) Seated Qigong practice. Ten residents (6 female; 86 ± 7 years) participated in 1X/week

Seated Qigong sessions for 10-weeks. BP and QOL were assessed pre- and post-session at baseline and following 5- and 10-weeks of Qigong. Systolic BP was significantly reduced immediately post-session after 10-weeks of Qigong ($P = 0.03$), yet unchanged at baseline and after 5-weeks (all $P > 0.05$). Diastolic BP and QOL remained unchanged ($P > 0.05$). A session of Seated Qigong elicits a hypotensive response with exposure, supporting the notion that repeated sessions may provide advantageous health benefits.

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Managing stress and anxiety through qigong exercise in healthy adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. BMC Complement Altern Med. 2014 Jan 9;14(1):8. by Wang CW, Chan CH, Ho RT, et al.



BACKGROUND: An increasing number of studies have documented the effectiveness of qigong

exercise in helping people reduce psychological stress and anxiety, but there is a scarcity of systematic reviews evaluating evidence from randomized controlled trials (RCTs) conducted among healthy subjects.

METHODS: Thirteen databases were searched for RCTs from their inception through June 2013. Effects of qigong exercise were pooled across trials. Standardized mean differences (SMDs) were calculated for the pooled effects. Heterogeneity was assessed using the I² test. The risk of bias was assessed using the Cochrane criteria.

RESULTS: Seven RCTs met the inclusion criteria. Two RCTs suggested that qigong exercise immediately relieved anxiety among healthy adults, compared to lecture attendance and struc-

tured movements only. Four RCTs suggested qigong exercise relieved anxiety (pooled SMD = -0.75; 95% CI, -1.11 to -0.40), and three RCTs suggested that qigong exercise reduced stress (pooled SMD = -0.88; 95% CI, -1.22 to -0.55) among healthy subjects following one to three months of qigong practice, compared to wait-list controls.

CONCLUSIONS: The available evidence suggests that qigong exercise reduces stress and anxiety in healthy adults. However, given the limited number of RCTs and their methodological flaws, further rigorously designed RCTs are needed.



<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6882/14/8>

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Treatment of tactile impairment in young children with autism: results with qigong massage. Int J Ther Massage Bodywork. 2013 Dec 3;6(4):12-20. by Silva L, Schalock M.

BACKGROUND: Following the inclusion of sensory abnormalities in the diagnostic criteria for autism, evidence has emerged showing that tactile abnormalities in young children with autism are severe, universally present, and directly related to delay of early self-regulation milestones required for social development. Parent

touch is the most effective means of stimulating early self-regulation, yet parents of children with autism avoid touch because their children respond abnormally to it. This suggests that tactile abnormalities pose a barrier to parent touch in autism, and that treatment of tactile abnormalities may improve developmental outcomes. We have developed a qigong massage treatment for tactile abnormalities in young children with autism. Here we evaluate whether tactile abnormalities decrease following treatment, and whether treatment results in improved self-regulatory outcomes.

METHODS: We retrospectively analyzed our qigong massage database for treatment effect on tactile abnormalities, self-regulatory delay, and parenting stress. Five-month interval data were available for 129 children with autism aged 3-6 years. Of these 129, 97 received treatment and 32 were in the wait-list control condition. There were no differences between treatment and control groups by age, gender, or severity of tactile impairment.

RESULTS: Treatment resulted in significant decreases of tactile impairment, self-regulatory delay, and parenting stress ($p < .001$ on all paired t-tests); mean decreases were 25.5%, 24.5%, and 35.8%, respectively. Results were significant compared to controls [$F(3,122) = 11.27, p < .001$]. In the pretreatment data, tactile impairment was directly related to self-regulatory delay; post-treatment, both variables decreased proportionally.

CONCLUSION: Results demonstrate that tactile impairment in young children with autism is treatable with a qigong massage protocol. The direct relationship between tactile impairment and self-regulatory delay pretreatment, and the proportional decrease of both following treatment, suggest that tactile impairment is a cause of self-regulatory delay, and that qigong massage

is a promising avenue to improve developmental outcomes in autism.



<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3838308/>

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A systematic review and meta-analysis of qigong for the fibromyalgia syndrome. Evid Based Complement Alternat Med. 2013; 635182. by Lauche R, Cramer H, Häuser W, et al.

OBJECTIVES. The fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) is a chronic condition with only few evidence-based complementary and alternative therapies available. This paper presents a systematic review and meta-analysis of the effectiveness of Qigong for fibromyalgia syndrome. **Methods.** The PubMed/MEDLINE, Cochrane Library, Embase, PsycINFO, and Cambase databases were screened in December 2012 to identify randomized controlled trials comparing Qigong to control interventions. Major outcome measures were pain and quality of life; and secondary outcomes included sleep quality, fatigue, depression, and safety. Standardized mean differences (SMD) and 95% confidence intervals were calculated.

RESULTS: Seven trials were located with a total of 395 FMS patients. Analyses revealed low quality evidence for short-term improvement of

pain, quality of life, and sleep quality and very low quality evidence for improvement of fatigue after Qigong for FMS, when compared to usual care. No evidence was found for superiority of Qigong compared to active treatments. No serious adverse events were reported. Discussion. This systematic review found that Qigong may be a useful approach for FMS patients. According to the quality of evidence, only a weak recommendation for Qigong can be made at this point. Further high quality RCTs are required for the conclusive judgment of its long-term effects.

<http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2013/635182/>

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Yoga's Impact on Inflammation, Mood, and Fatigue in Breast Cancer Survivors: A Ran-



domized Controlled Trial. J Clin Oncol. 2014 Jan 27. [Epub ahead of print] By Kiecolt-Glaser JK, Bennett JM, Andridge R, et al.

PURPOSE: To evaluate yoga's impact on inflammation, mood, and fatigue.

PATIENTS AND METHODS: A randomized controlled 3-month trial was conducted with two post-treatment assessments of 200 breast cancer survivors assigned to either 12 weeks of 90-minute twice per week hatha yoga classes or a wait-list control. The main outcome measures were lipopolysaccharide-stimulated production of proinflammatory cytokines interleukin-6 (IL-6), tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF- α), and interleukin-1 β (IL-1 β), and scores on the Multidimensional Fatigue Symptom Inventory-Short Form (MFSI-SF), the vitality scale from the Medical Outcomes Study 36-item Short Form (SF-36), and the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) scale.

RESULTS: Immediately post-treatment, fatigue was not lower ($P > .05$) but vitality was higher ($P = .01$) in the yoga group compared with the control group. At 3 months post-treatment, fatigue was lower in the yoga group ($P = .002$), vitality was higher ($P = .01$), and IL-6 ($P = .027$), TNF- α ($P = .027$), and IL-1 β ($P = .037$) were lower for yoga participants compared with the control group. Groups did not differ on depression at either time ($P > .2$). Planned secondary analyses showed that the frequency of yoga practice had stronger associations with fatigue at both post-treatment visits ($P = .019$; $P < .001$), as well as vitality ($P = .016$; $P = .0045$), but not depression ($P > .05$) than simple group assignment; more frequent practice produced larger changes. At 3 months post-treatment, increasing yoga practice also led to a decrease in IL-6 ($P = .01$) and IL-1 β ($P = .03$) production but not in TNF- α production ($P > .05$).

CONCLUSION: Chronic inflammation may fuel declines in physical function leading to frailty



and disability. If yoga dampens or limits both fatigue and inflammation, then regular practice could have substantial health benefits.

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Psychological, immunological and physiological effects of a Laughing Qigong Program (LQP) on adolescents. *Complement Ther Med.* 2013 Dec;21(6):660-8.. by Chang C, Tsai G, Hsieh CJ. et al.

OBJECTIVES: One objective of this study was to assess the effects of laughter on the psychological, immunological and physiological systems of the body. Another objective was to introduce the Laughing Qigong Program (LQP), as a method of standardization for simulated laughter interventions.

DESIGN: A randomized, prospective, experimental study of the LQP was conducted in a group of adolescents (n=67) in Taiwan. During study-hall sessions, experimental subjects (n=34) attended the LQP for eight-weeks. Simultaneously, control subjects (n=33) read or did their homework. All subjects were tested before and after the intervention on the following: Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE), Chinese Humor Scale (CHS) and Face Scale (FS) as psychological markers; saliva cortisol (CS) as an immunological marker; blood pressure (BP), heart rate (HR), and heart rate variability (HRV) as physiological markers of

the body's response to stress. Mood states (FS) were measured before/after each LQP session.

RESULTS: Mood states (p=.00) and humor (p=.004; p=.003) improved in the experimental group; no significant changes were found in the controls (p=.69; p=.60). The immunological marker of stress, cortisol levels, decreased significantly for those who participated in the LQP (p=.001), suggesting lower levels of stress after completion of the program.

CONCLUSIONS: The LQP is a non-pharmacological and cost-effective means to help adolescents mitigate stresses in their everyday life.

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The sustaining effects of Tai chi Qigong on physiological health for COPD patients: a randomized controlled trial. [Complement Ther Med.](#) 2013 Dec;21(6):585-94. By [Chan AW](#), [Lee A](#), [Lee DT](#), et al..

OBJECTIVES: To evaluate the sustaining effects of Tai chi Qigong in improving the physiological health for COPD patients at sixth month.

DESIGN: A randomized controlled trial. Subjects were in three randomly assigned groups: Tai chi Qigong group, exercise group, and control group.

SETTING: The 206 subjects were recruited from five general outpatient clinics.

INTERVENTIONS: Tai chi Qigong group completed a 3-month Tai chi Qigong program. Exercise group practiced breathing and walking as an exercise. Control group received usual care.

OUTCOME MEASURES: Primary outcomes included six-minute walking distance and lung functions. Secondary outcomes were dyspnea and fatigue levels, number of exacerbations and hospital admissions.

RESULTS: Tai chi Qigong group showed a steady improvement in exercise capacity ($P<.001$) from baseline to the sixth month. The mean walking distance increased from 298 to 349 meters (+17%). No significant changes were noted in the other two groups. Tai chi Qigong group also showed improvement in lung functions ($P<.001$). Mean forced expiratory volume in 1s increased from .89 to .99l (+11%). No significant change was noted in the exercise group. Deterioration was found in the control group, with mean volume decreased from .89 to .84l (-5.67%). Significant decreased in the number of exacerbations was observed in the Tai chi Qigong group. No changes in dyspnea and fatigue levels were noted among the three groups.

CONCLUSIONS: Tai chi Qigong has sustaining effects in improving the physiological health and is a useful and appropriate exercise for COPD patients.

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Yoga and meditation in cardiovascular disease. Clin Res Cardiol. 2014 Jan 25. [Epub ahead of print] By Manchanda SC, Madan K.

Yoga is a holistic mind-body intervention aimed at physical, mental, emotional and spiritu-



al well being. Several studies have shown that yoga and/or meditation can control risk factors for cardiovascular disease like hypertension, type II diabetes and insulin resistance, obesity, lipid profile, psychosocial stress and smoking. Some randomized studies suggest that yoga/meditation could retard or even regress early and advanced coronary atherosclerosis. A recent study suggests that transcendental meditation may be extremely useful in secondary prevention of coronary heart disease and may reduce cardiovascular events by 48% over a 5-year period. Another small study suggests that yoga may be helpful in prevention of atrial fibrillation. However, most studies have several limitations like lack of adequate controls, small sample size, inconsistencies in baseline and different methodologies, etc. and therefore large trials with improved methodologies are required to confirm these findings. However, in view of the existing knowledge and yoga being a cost-effective technique without side effects, it appears appropriate to incorporate yoga/meditation for primary and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease.

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Reorganization of the brain and heart rhythm during autogenic meditation. Front Integr Neurosci. 2014 Jan 13;7:109. By Kim DK, Rhee JH, Kang SW.



The underlying changes in heart coherence that are associated with reported EEG changes in response to meditation have been explored. We measured EEG and heart rate variability (HRV) before and during autogenic meditation. Fourteen subjects participated in the study. Heart coherence scores were significantly increased during meditation compared to the baseline. We found near significant decrease in high beta absolute power, increase in alpha relative power and significant increases in lower (alpha) and higher (above beta) band coherence during 3~min epochs of heart coherent meditation compared to 3~min epochs of heart non-coherence at baseline. The coherence and relative power increase in alpha band and absolute power decrease in high beta band could reflect relaxation state during the heart coherent meditation. The coherence increase in the higher (above beta) band could reflect cortico-cortical local integration and thereby affect cognitive reorganization, simultaneously with relaxation. Further research is still needed for a confirmation of heart coherence as a simple window for the meditative state.

<http://www.frontiersin.org/Journal/10.3389/fnint.2013.00109/full>

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A phenomenology of meditation-induced light experiences: traditional Buddhist and neurobiological perspectives. Front Psychol. 2014 Jan 3;4:973. By Lindahl JR, Kaplan CT, Winget EM, Britton WB.

The scientific study of Buddhist meditation has proceeded without much attention to Buddhist literature that details the range of psychological and physiological changes thought to occur during meditation. This paper presents reports of various meditation-induced light experiences derived from American Buddhist practitioners. The reports of light experiences are classified into two main types: discrete lightforms and patterned or diffuse lights. Similar phenomena are well documented in traditional Buddhist texts but are virtually undocumented in scientific literature on meditation. Within Buddhist traditions, these phenomena are attributed a range of interpretations. However, because it is insufficient and problematic to rely solely upon the textual sources as a means of investigating the cause or significance of these phenomena, these qualitative reports are also considered in relation to scientific research on light-related experiences in the context of sensory deprivation, perceptual isolation, and clinical disorders of the visual system. The typologies derived from these studies also rely upon reports of experiences and closely match typologies derived from the qualitative study of contemporary practitioners and typolo-



gies found in Buddhist literary traditions. Taken together, these studies also provide evidence in support of the hypothesis that certain meditative practices - especially those that deliberately decrease social, kinesthetic, and sensory stimulation and emphasize focused attention - have perceptual and cognitive outcomes similar to sensory deprivation. Given that sensory deprivation increases neuroplasticity, meditation may also have an enhanced neuroplastic potential beyond ordinary experience-dependent changes. By providing and contextualizing these reports of meditation-induced light experiences, scientists, clinicians, and meditators gain a more informed view of the range of experiences that can be elicited by contemplative practices.



<http://www.frontiersin.org/Journal/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00973/full>

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Mind over matter - what do we know about neuroplasticity in adults? *Int Psychogeriatr.* 2014 Jan 2:1-19. [Epub ahead of print] By Valkanova V, Eguia Rodriguez R, Ebmeier KP.

Background: An increasing number of studies have examined the effects of training of cognitive and other tasks on brain structure, using magnetic resonance imaging.

METHODS: Studies combining cognitive and other tasks training with longitudinal imaging designs were reviewed, with a view to identify paradigms potentially applicable to treatment of cognitive impairment.

RESULTS: We identified 36 studies, employing training as variable as juggling, working memory, meditation, learning abstract information, and aerobic exercise. There were training-related structural changes, increases in gray matter volume, decreases, increases and decreases in different regions, or no change at all. There was increased integrity in white matter following training, but other patterns of results were also reported.

CONCLUSIONS: Questions still to be answered are: Are changes due to use-dependent effects or are they specific to learning? What are the underlying neural correlates of learning, the temporal dynamics of changes, the relations between structure and function, and the upper limits of improvement? How can gains be maintained? The question whether neuroplasticity will contribute to the treatment of dementia will need to be posed again at that stage.

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Effects of Buddhism Walking Meditation on Depression, Functional Fitness, and Endothelium-Dependent Vasodilation in Depressed Elderly. *J Altern Complement Med.* 2013 Dec 28. [Epub ahead of print] By Prakhinkit S, Supapitiporn S, Tanaka H, Suksom D.

OBJECTIVES: The objectives of this study were to determine the effects of the novel Buddhism-based walking meditation (BWM) and the traditional walking exercise (TWE) on depres-




sion, functional fitness, and vascular reactivity. Design: This was a randomized exercise intervention study.

SETTINGS/LOCATION: The study was conducted in a university hospital setting. Subjects: Forty-five elderly participants aged 60-90 years with mild-to-moderate depressive symptoms were randomly allocated to the sedentary control, TWE, and BWM groups. Interventions: The BWM program was based on aerobic walking exercise incorporating the Buddhist meditations performed 3 times/week for 12 weeks.

OUTCOME MEASURES: Depression score, functional fitness, and endothelium-dependent vasodilation as measured by the flow-mediated dilation (FMD) were the outcome measures used. Results: Muscle strength, flexibility, agility, dynamic balance, and cardiorespiratory endurance increased in both exercise groups ($p < 0.05$). Depression score decreased ($p < 0.05$) only in the BWM group. FMD improved ($p < 0.05$) in both exercise groups. Significant reduction in plasma cholesterol, triglyceride, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, and C-reactive protein were found in both exercise groups, whereas low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, cortisol, and interleukin-6 concentrations decreased only in the BWM group.

CONCLUSIONS: Buddhist walking meditation was effective in reducing depression, improving functional fitness and vascular reactivity, and

appears to confer greater overall improvements than the traditional walking program. 



Kevin W Chen, Ph.D. – is an associate professor at the Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Maryland. Dr. Chen was educated in the universities of both China and the United States, and has years of

experience and training in blending eastern and western perspectives, and in the practice of life-nurturing methods. As a long-time practitioner of Qigong Yang Sheng, he is one of the few scientists in the U.S. to have both hands-on knowledge of mind-body practice, and an active research career in mind-body medicine, which is funded through grants by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and various foundations. Dr. Chen devotes his career and life to the practice of Yang Sheng, and promotion of self-healing and mind-body-spirit integration through the non-profit organization, World Institute for Self Healing (WISH) (<http://www.wishus.org>)

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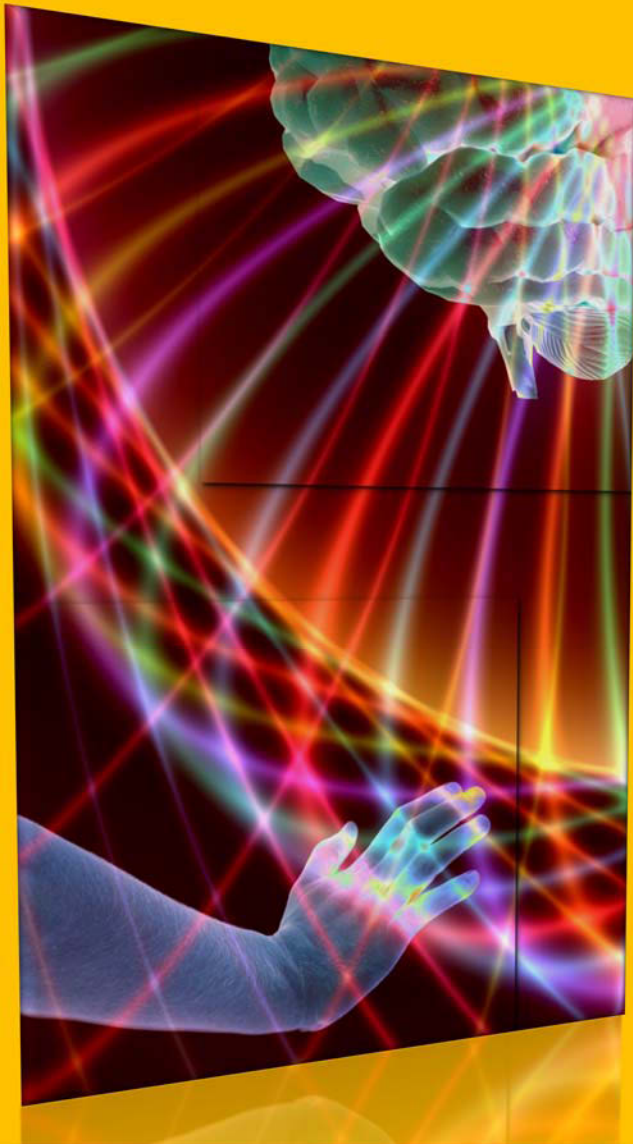
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Cultivating the Mind— Mind Matter Connections

by Sharon Montes, MD



***“I awoke at the train station.
As long as I kept my attention on the
present moment I was fine.
I became stressed when I turned my
attention to the future.”***

Paraphrase from *This American Life*, radio
interview with David MacLean, author of
The Answer to the Riddle Is Me

When I sat behind my computer screen to write this column, I thought I was going to write about winter as the time for rejuvenating the nervous system with an emphasis on quiet, meditative activities to cultivate lovely qualities of mind. Instead, we will explore a definition of “mind,” different locations of the embodied brain that connects us with mind, how mind is a reflection of energy and chemistry, and how we can use mindfulness to nourish our being.

What exactly is the “mind”? What comes to *your* mind when we talk about our *mind*? Before we can have a meaningful conversation about nurturing or cultivating our mind, we have to have some shared idea about what we think the “mind” is.

One of the best definitions of “mind” is developed by Dr Dan Siegel:

Mind is a regulatory process that can be monitored, measured, observed and modified. This definition is further clarified by adding that the mind regulates the flow of energy and information. (<http://drdansiegel.com>)

Wow! I love this. Once I found this definition, I could continue a conversation. Please notice that this definition does not clarify the location of mind or include the word brain. Let's leave the

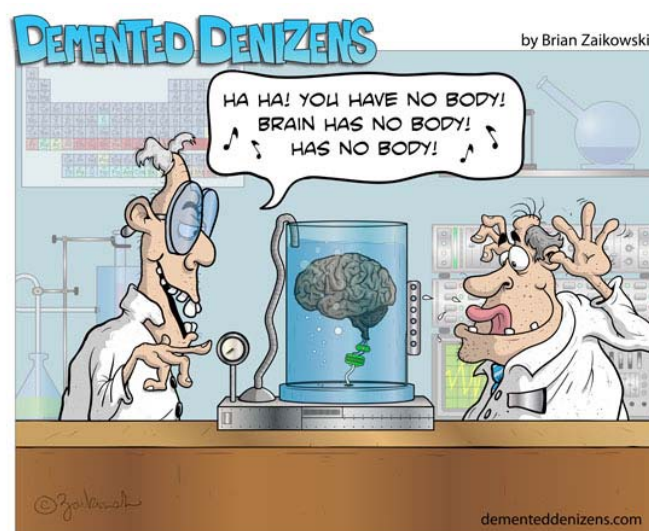
conversation about localized and non-localized mind for another time and focus on an embodied connection with mind, the brain.

Often when we think of a mind-body connection, we see the *brain* tissue inside our head. Let us expand the vision of embodied mind to include a couple other brains. Please expand your vision to include the “brains” that lives in our heart and in our belly. Research has shown that the heart-brain creates a much larger electromagnetic field than our head-based brain. This electromagnetic field has not only been measured, but has been shown to influence and be influenced to others. (One website that distills some of this research is: <http://www.heartmath.org/free-services/articles-of-the-heart/energetic-heart-is-unfolding.html>)

Moving to the belly-brain, we talk about chemistry as the property that connects and influences. Author David MacLean had a loss of “mind” and sense of self that was triggered by taking an antimalarial drug. Much of the chemistry that affects our quality of thought and emotion originates in our belly. Although in different places, the belly-brain and the head-brain both develop from the same embryonic tissue. The belly-brain actually creates a greater amount of neurotransmitters than the head-brain. In fact, 95 percent of our serotonin is produced in our belly.



<http://www.pd4pic.com/neural-pathways-fake-artistically-think-face.html>



Brain Teasers

We are finding evidence that the types of bacteria that line our intestine can predispose us towards emotional resilience or depression. What am I doing when I prescribe an antibiotic for a child? What are we doing when we offer our “mind” processed, dead food? It further emphasizes the importance of the food we offer our mind/body brain as providing the building blocks for chemistry that promotes a good quality of mind.

When I think of food I actually think of more than the physical food that I put in my mouth. One of my daily mindful practices is to pause and ask myself “What am I hungry for?”

While sometimes the answer is food – a flavor or texture - more often the answer is to be nourished by something else. It could be quiet alone time or connecting time with people I love. It could be sleep or dance. It could be time learning a new skill. It could be music or art. Frequently, I am hungry for more time outside connecting to earth and sky. Sometimes it is just pausing and letting the moment unfold being open to receiving what shows up when I align with “mind.”

Earlier this week I reached a state of overwhelm ... paper, projects, information, people. I completely lost touch with my alignment and center. Life offered much more than I could

The Dancing Doc 舞医

gracefully dance with. YIKES ... stress! I opened my office door to find my fluffy white-furred black-eyed dog, wagging her tail and holding a ball in mouth ... asking to PLAY. Immediate reset; there was the answer to my question not consciously asked.

OK now. As we look at unity showing up as the five elements. What are you hungry for?

Water – deep listening, being heard, stillness, wisdom, patience, a bath, drinking more water, more sleep

Wood – clear vision, order in thoughts and environment, movement, creativity, learn something new, bitter flavor

Fire – to touch or be touched, connection with self and others, laughter, humor, play

Earth – gratitude, giving and receiving abundance, remembering the sweetness of life, grounding connecting with the planet, singing, savoring the gifts of the senses

Metal – respect, rhythm, releasing, inspiration and awe, integrity

AND.... Nothing. This moment is complete.

Yours in the dance with 10,000 things ㄣ

Sharon Montes, M.D. – practiced and taught family medicine in medical schools for 17 years. Former medical director of University of Maryland Center for Integrative Medicine, Dr. Sharon Montes is currently living in Loveland, Colorado, joyfully dancing with 10,000 things and preparing to open a Lifestyle Medicine practice. Her email is

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Comedy Moment 开心一刻

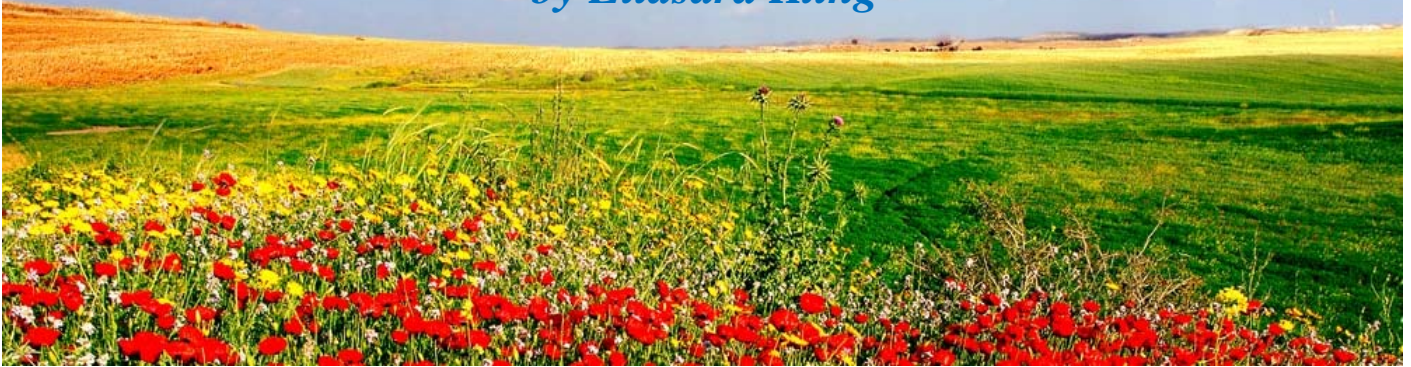


- ☞ Ever stop to think, and forget to start again?
- ☞ My life has a superb cast, but I can't figure out the plot.
- ☞ I used to be indecisive; now I'm not sure.



Spring – Renewal/Reinvention

by Ellasara Kling



In the very beginning of the *Nei Jing*, Huang Di inquires of Qi Bo how it is that people do not live (we presume healthfully) to a very old age. In essence, Qi Bo replies that people no longer know how to live properly and, therefore, deplete their energies in a wide manner of ways. This bit of conversation from the *Nei Jing* tells us that thousands of years ago people in general had already lost the means to engender a healthy, balanced life on a daily basis. As a well-known aphorism states: The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Perhaps as a Universal response to a widespread desire by modern people for lives that are more balanced, harmonious, healthy, inspiring, and natural, systems such as Qigong, Taiji (and other internal martial arts), Chinese medicine, meditation, yoga and others have become popular throughout the Western world. It is from these practices that we can learn how to engender our health, create balance, harmony, calmness, and a peaceful heart in a fast-paced world that swirls about in what can be a dizzying pattern.

It is through our daily practice of our chosen energy cultivating methods that we can become ever more harmonious with the Universal, experience balance and calm in our daily lives and maintain and increase our health. It is through the moment-to-moment choices to follow Nature, take the time to truly engage in quality practice and make these things part of our 24/7, rather than compartmentalized practices that are not integrated into our lives, that we will ultimately reap the harvest of our dreams. Utilizing the principles of our energy practice in our life is a way to renew and reinvent ourselves and our lives. Manifesting these principles at work, for example, may be a challenge, but it is one well-worth engaging in. This is a way to nurture Qi, ourselves and everyone/thing around us as part of our energy life.

FIVE ELEMENT THEORY

Spring Season A Time of New Beginnings

Winter has left and Spring arrives with new growth. We now have the opportunity to nurture the beginnings of the new reality. **The energetic**

direction of the season, as exhibited by the new growth we see, is upward and outward. This is the **beginning of Yang rising in nature.** For example, tree sap rises and signals budding. Seeds underground respond to the warmer ground and dampness. It takes a lot of energy for a seed to germinate and break through its shell and then the ground to form a sprout!

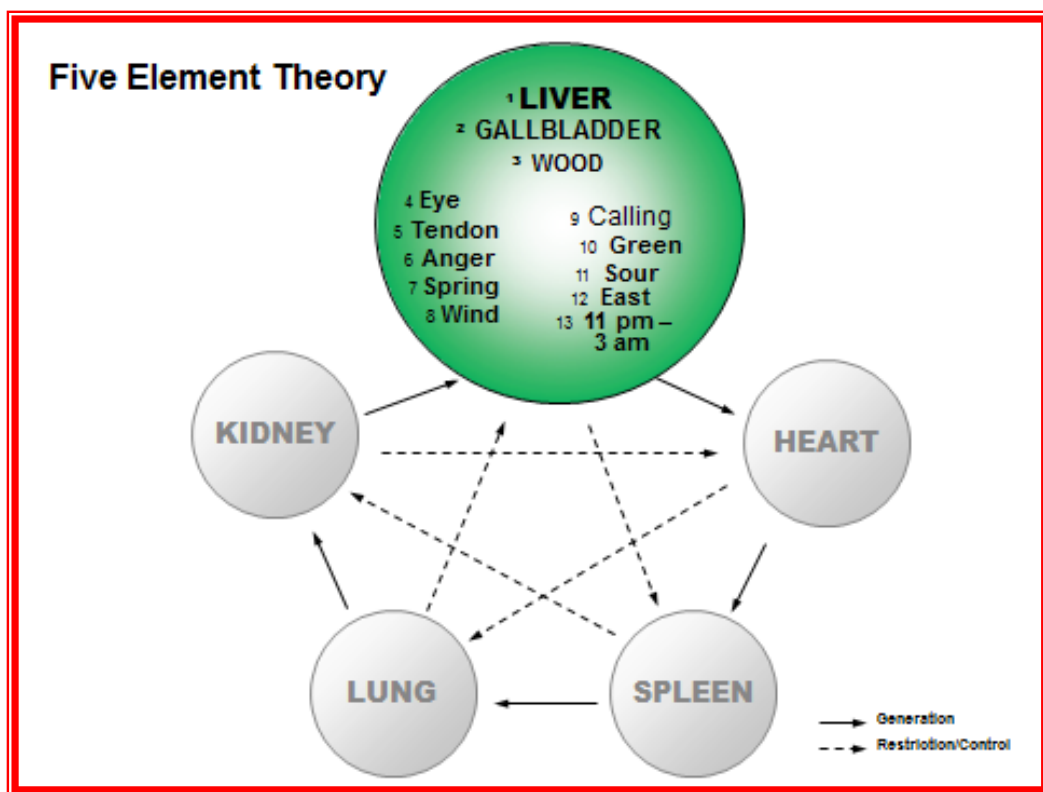
Many people think that Spring is a time to start a “detox” of some sort. Actually, if one follows the Season and nourishes themselves appropriately, the body will perform its own Spring Cleaning in a natural and easy way. This season calls us to perform more activity after our Winter rest. **The tissue of the season is the Tendons.** It is a terrific time of year to start (or do more) stretching/walking. If walking, look around and let your **eyes, the sense organ of Spring,** enjoy the budding beauty that is Spring. **Wind is the environmental factor of Spring.** It is important to “protect” oneself from the invasion of wind and dampness at all times, but especially in the Spring. The invasion of Wind can look like cramps, itchiness, tremors, pains/aches that move around the body, the common cold, and other symptoms. Remember to keep your head and chest covered.

Foods for this season are often green (the color of the Season and new growth) and have a slightly sour/bitter taste. Asparagus, sorrel, dandelion greens, and sprouts are examples of those combined qualities. Even so, too much sour should be avoided, especially if you are someone with chronic pain or anxiety. **The sour taste does**

strengthen the Liver, but too strong a Liver energy can overpower the Spleen/Stomach system. Moderation is always a good rule of thumb. Eating the Sweet taste is balancing for the Liver system. Having sweets in their natural form, such as pieces of fruit or sweet vegetables such as fennel is preferable to lots of added refined sugars.

As always, eating greasy foods and over eating is hard on the Liver/Gall Bladder and should be avoided. Too much can lead to Liver Heat. Symptoms of this include, anger, irritability, frustration, dry red eyes, headaches, and many more possibilities. Watercress, citrus fruits such as lemon or grapefruit can help relieve Liver Heat. Simple meals primarily consisting of cooked green vegetables, beans, some grains, with small amounts of meats/fish as a complement will help support health in this season.

Flowing freely and flexibility are Liver/Gall Bladder/Spring concepts. The more we do to “go with the flow” and to be flexible in our outlook, the more we can attune to this season and its sometimes surprising gifts.



Relaxation Self-Massages Flexibility

and a calm, relaxed approach to life are key to harmony with the Spring Season. Here are a few simple self-massages you can perform almost anywhere to release tension:

1. Close your eyes. Turn your head very, very slowly to the left as far as it will go without strain. Then turn your head very, very slowly to the right as far as it will go without strain. Do this 3 times in each direction. Be sure to move your head/neck very slowly – the slower the better -- and only go as far as you can without any strain. Be certain to keep your shoulders relaxed. Do not be concerned about how far you have turned your neck. Distance is not as important as the slow speed and keeping your shoulders relaxed. Remember to breathe.

2. Shrug with both of your shoulders: Sit straight in your chair and relax your shoulders. Pull your shoulders up as high as they will go towards your ears and then just let them drop. Do this 3-5 times. Remember to always only go as far as you can without any strain. Breathe in when raising your shoulders and breathe out when releasing them. Can you feel the connection to your whole torso as you do this?

3. With your mouth (lips) closed, but your teeth not touching, take the second and third finger of each hand and place them softly on your face where your jaw hinges. With very light pressure, massage this spot with small circles for 10 seconds in each direction (forward towards the front of the face and backwards towards the ears). There is no need to apply a deep pressure.

4. Starting at the top of your ears with your thumb and index fingers: Place your thumb on the back of the ear and let your index finger fall naturally on the front side. Pressing gently on the ear, “Walk” your fingers from the top of your ears to the bottom of the ear lobes by pressing your fingers against the ear and inching them downwards. Give your lobes a slight, gentle tug at the end. Do this 3 times. (If you are wearing earrings, please remove them first.)

5. Placing the base of your palms on either side of your lower jaw and allowing your hands/fingers to relax softly and naturally on your face, very gently, very softly, move your hands upwards until the base of your palms are on your cheekbones. Then move your hands out towards your ears until your thumbs touch the place where your ears connect to your face, and circle back downwards to your starting position. Your hands/fingers should be barely touching your face. Do this three times. If you wear glasses, please remove them. There is no pressure on the eyes, but the hands need to “slide” over them. The fingers are on the hairline before the hands move outwards.

RECIPES

Some Foods That Are Particularly Good For The Spring Season:

Apples, Artichoke, Bamboo shoots, Bean Curd (tofu) – use non GMO, organic, Beef Liver, Bee Pollen, Beets, Black Gram (dal), Broccoli, Broccoli Rabe, Bok Choy, Cashews, Cauliflower, Celery, Chicken, Chicken Liver, Clams, Crab, Dandelion greens, Dates, Dill, Eggs, Eggplant, Fennel, Garlic, Ginger, Green veggies in general, Green Bell Pepper, Honey, Kiwi, Lemon, Lime, Lotus, Lychee, Mulberry, Mushrooms, Nettle Tea, Oats, Parsley, Peanuts, Pepper, Peppermint, Pickles, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rye, Safflower oil, Scallion, Sesame oil, Spinach, Sprouts – all kinds, Turkey, Vinegar, Watercress, Wild Rice, Wolfberry, and more.



Asparagus Soup

Ingredients

- 2 TB grapeseed oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp white pepper - ground
- 2/3 cup celery leaves only minced (the inner leaves from the heart of the celery – no stalks)
- ½ cup scallion whites thinly sliced
- 1 small clove garlic - minced
- 1 cup water (or chicken broth or v. mild vegetable broth)
- 1 lb asparagus stalks – read below for preparation
- 3 cups almond milk – unsweetened
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 cup almond meal/flour – thickener; alternatively use cornstarch or rice flour – adjust

amounts accordingly.

Red pepper flakes

Directions

Preparing the asparagus stalks: break off the white ends of the stalks and cut the stalks into bite size pieces. Set the tips aside. If you are using thick stalks of asparagus, cut the stalks into very small pieces otherwise they will be stringy/woody when cooked.

In a heated wok or large skillet, heat the oil and add salt and pepper, celery leaves, scallion whites and garlic, sauté lightly until the leaves begin to wilt.

Add the water, stir. Add the asparagus stalks and cover. Let simmer lightly until the asparagus is about to turn bright green (don't wait until it becomes v. green or it will over cook.)

Seasonal Harmony 季节之和谐

Add the almond milk and coconut milk and stir... heat this through.

If you are using almond meal/flour, then add that now. If you are using cornstarch or rice flour, make a slurry and add it slowly to the soup, stir thoroughly so that it is well blended.

Adjust your seasonings.

Heat through, and serve.

Optional: a dash of red pepper flakes.

Asparagus clears heat, is good for blood circulation, urination, constipation, nourishes Kidney Yin, moistens the Lungs and much more. Almonds are sweet and relieve stagnant Lung Qi.

Bean Sprouts w/Scallions/Watercress/ Peanuts

Ingredients

- 2-3 TB Grapeseed oil
- 3 TB minced scallion whites
- 1 TB grated ginger
- 2 large cloves of garlic – sliced lengthwise
- 1 TB vinegar
- 12 oz bean sprouts
- 1 large bunch watercress – remove the tough stems
- 1 TB sesame oil
- 1 TB sliced scallion green
- ¼ cup toasted peanuts
- Red pepper flakes – optional

Directions

In your heated wok or large skillet, heat 2-3 TB oil (start with less), add at one time the scallion whites, ginger, garlic, sprinkle on the vinegar and sauté until fragrant.



Photos by Robert Pease Photography

Add the bean sprouts all at once and toss into the spices, just as the sprouts begin to wilt, add the watercress and toss everything through. Heat through and plate. Sprinkle with scallion greens, toasted sesame oil, and peanuts – for more pungent heat add red pepper flakes.

This dish is good for, among other things, dispelling heat and dampness, relieving sore throats. Watercress which is both sweet and pungent in flavor is good for relieving coughs.



Fresh Spring Peas w/Dill

Ingredients

Peas
Salt
Dill
Water/broth

Directions

Bring water or broth to a simmer and add fresh peas and a little salt (if using water).

When the peas are almost bright green, remove

from the liquid and toss with dill – leaves only no stalks.

This simple side dish can be an accompaniment to almost any meal.

Dill is known for spreading Qi throughout the body. Peas are used for Yin Deficiency especially Spleen Yin Deficiency, and digestion.

Tea For The Season



Celery/Ginger Tea

Ingredients

1 TB grated fresh ginger;
3 TB finely chopped celery; 3 cups water;

Directions

Put all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for a few minutes. Drink warm.

This tea is good for dispelling Liver Wind and Dampness as they are understood in TCM.

Wishing you good health! Remember to smile from the heart at all things. ☺

The information in this article is based on the theories and principles of Chinese Medicine/Five Element Theory. **Ellasara**, a practitioner of *Wu Ming Qigong*, has been studying with Master and Dr. Nan Lu for many years and has participated in special classes through TCM World Foundation and the Tao of Healing in New York City.

For comments, questions, consultations, ellasara00@gmail.com



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Yang-Sheng is an E-magazine and a network run by the non-profit World Institute for Self Healing, Inc. (WISH, a 501 (c)(3) organization registered in New Jersey), and all of our writers, editors and contributors are volunteers since we do not have a stable financial support at this moment. *Yang-Sheng* promotes philosophy and methods of self-healing, positive thinking and health preservation, which represents a new direction of future medicine and healthy living. However, we are young and our resources are very limited, especially in light of our dreams and vision. Since no one can really profit from a self-healing system except for practitioners themselves, our programs are largely run by volunteers, sponsors and donations. To help *Yang-Sheng* survive and develop your generous contribution is urgently needed. Your financial contributions will help *Yang-Sheng* and WISH to continue its course to advance a completely new medicine and to build a unique community of our own that is dedicated to a healthy, happy and harmonious life for all!

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- ... Build a more professional web site with online database and information tips to guide people daily life-nurturing and mind-body practice in different situations and healthy conditions.
- ... Publish *Yang-Sheng* magazine both online and in-print to let more people have access to the life-nurturing knowledge and to share their experiences.
- ... Initiate online support networks and database for healthcare professionals to search for mind-body medicine and Yang Sheng practices.
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Yang Sheng

A Community for Health, Happiness & Harmony

Yang-Sheng (養生 Nurturing Life) is a FREE e-magazine and a network for health care professionals - complementary medical practitioners, Qigong, Tai Chi, Yoga, Reiki and other mind-body and spirit cultivators. It promotes methods of self-healing, positive mindfulness and health preservation. Yang-Sheng merges traditional knowledge with modern scientific research and clinical evidence and combines ancient wisdom with modern experience to support health and well-being.

Your participation, contribution, sharing and feedback are truly appreciated.

We welcome new columnists to join our editorial team to work toward the same goals!

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Mission Statements

- ... To build up a virtual community for all qigong, taiji, yoga, reiki, meditation practitioners, and other spiritual cultivators. To share experience and knowledge, to support each other's practice, and to illuminate higher spirituality.
- ... To create a network and platform for those who are seeking health, happiness, longevity and harmony in life through their own effort, sharing and exploration.
- ... To promote self-healing, self-empowerment and positive mind power through feasible daily practice and effective clinical applications.