

Spring 2016

MEDICINAL ROOTS 相慧 MAGAZINE

Ancient Wisdom - Modern Healthcare



**SWEET IN THE MODERN
WORLD**

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BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT**

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PHOTO: Patrick Foye

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MRM encourages all article submissions addressing any topic related to the practice of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Submissions can be emailed to medicinalrootsmagazine@gmail.com

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Spring Has Sprung

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Making Medicinals

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THANK YOU

Photo Submissions

We received many inspired photos from MRM readers - thank you for your submissions! Our top picks are featured throughout the issue:

Patrick Foye, AOMA Student Intern,
Front Cover

Laura Breeden, L.Ac., *p.6,13*

Allison Blaisdell, L.Ac., *p.10, Back Cover*

Kari Webb, L.Ac., *p.17, 21*



PHOTO: Kim Graham

MRM's **7** Questions

One of our aims at MRM is the desire to inspire and connect the TCM profession. As part of this dream, we developed a set of 7 simple questions to help us feature different practitioners and influential people in the field of TCM.



DR. LORNE BROWN is the founder and clinical director of Acubalance Wellness Centre, the first Traditional Chinese Medicine clinic in British Columbia dedicated to reproductive health and fertility. Internationally known for his pioneering work as an educator and advocate for integrated fertility care, Lorne was one of the first board certified fellows of the American Board of Oriental Reproductive Medicine (FABORM). He also contributed greatly to the advancement of Reproductive Chinese Medicine in North America

by founding ProDSeminars.com and Medigogy.com. Together, these two sites constitute the largest online source for continuing education and seminars on Chinese medicine for reproductive health. (Source: Acubalance.ca)

Dr. Brown has also recently written a new book for practitioners to help guide them towards successful practice. We're pleased to feature such a dedicated industry leader in this issue of Medicinal Roots Magazine.

1. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE TCM?

I had digestive health issues and these health issues were interfering with my daily work and quality of life. I was training to be a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) and I went the conventional route first but nothing seemed to give me lasting relief. I eventually turned to Chinese medicine as a last resort and it transformed my health. Eventually I left my career as a controller for the Ocean Spray Growers and went back to train as a Dr.TCM.

2. WHO WAS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE - PERSONALLY OR PROFESSIONALLY?

My father, Randine Lewis, and my personal development library.

When I was about 12 years old my father told me to follow my passion so that work was fun. "If you love what you do", he said, then "you will put in the necessary effort on a daily basis to be successful". He also taught me that persistence is key and that success comes from showing up everyday and being ready to work, even those days when you don't feel like it. Lastly, there is no get rich

quick approach (at least not a legal approach), only the slow and steady approach, so again, find something you love to do.

Randine Lewis, author of *The Infertility Cure*, mentored me in using Chinese medicine to treat infertility. I was her first one-on-one student. We spoke or emailed almost everyday for a year when I started to treat reproductive health issues. I was fortunate and blessed to have a mentor when I was new to practice.

My personal development library consists of Jim Rohn, Napoleon Hill, John Maxwell, Success magazine, and the list goes on. My daily reading and listening to these motivational speakers has shaped my mind to think like an entrepreneur.

3. TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR NEW BOOK. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE IT AND WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

I had coached and mentored several practitioners who found my advice beneficial, and since so many acupuncturists seemed to be struggling, I was encouraged to share it with others.

My biggest challenge was making the time to write this book, since I am not a writer, and I found it difficult to sit and write. But, I love to teach so creating lectures and presenting on practice success is fun for me. I recorded three of my presentations in front of live audiences, which I then had transcribed, and these became the first draft of my book. I had at least 10 well-respected colleagues read my draft and provide advice. Then I worked with 3 good editors, as I am famous for typos. The first title was called the "Qi of Business". Which eventually transformed to the final title of my book; *Missing the Point: Why Acupuncturists Fail and What They Need to Know to Succeed*.

4. WHERE DO YOU SEE THE PRACTICE OF TCM GOING IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS?

With so many continuing educational opportunities available to us through online learning and the volume of English books available because of the

ease of self publishing, I think we will be become better practitioners and help more people in our community. With the help of the internet, word of the benefits of TCM will travel and more people will seek out practitioners of Chinese medicine for acute and chronic health conditions.

5. FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN IN THE TCM PROFESSION IN CANADA THAT IS CURRENTLY HAPPENING IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD?

I have a Yin / Yang answer. My response may seem contradictory but just like Yin-Yang these two points are also interdependent and can support us as practitioners:

1. I would like our scope of practice to include functional medicine testing. I find these helpful in supporting my pattern differential diagnosis and patients do like to have objective test to measure progress. And,

2. I would like to see us embrace the classics more and become well versed in understanding them. I think we have been trained as barefoot doctors (myself included) and as a result, we need to bring other modalities (non TCM) to help us in practice. If we (myself included) knew the medicine on a deeper and classical level we could help more people with just Chinese medicine.

6. DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS ON HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE?

The reward of healing our patients comes as a result of building a successful practice. This same interdependency exists in the foundation of our medicine: Yin and Yang. We need both clinical skills and business skills to bring forth success. When you choose to be a practitioner of Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture you are choosing to run a business. Yin and Yang are interdependent, one cannot exist without the other and when they separate there is death. Focusing only on clinical skills and not tending also to the running of your business will lead to the demise of your practice.

Just as you learned skills to be a practitioner, there are skills necessary for building and managing your business successfully.

Acknowledge and accept that you are in business. Small businesses have a high failure rate and like it or not you are in business. Being in denial only can increase your risk of failing and needing to change careers to take on part time jobs to support your self. You need to give energy to both the medical (healing) and business aspects of your practice.

Work on your entrepreneurial attitude and beliefs since your actions follow your beliefs. Success comes from your daily activity performed over your lifetime. Thoughts alone will not make you successful, daily action is required.

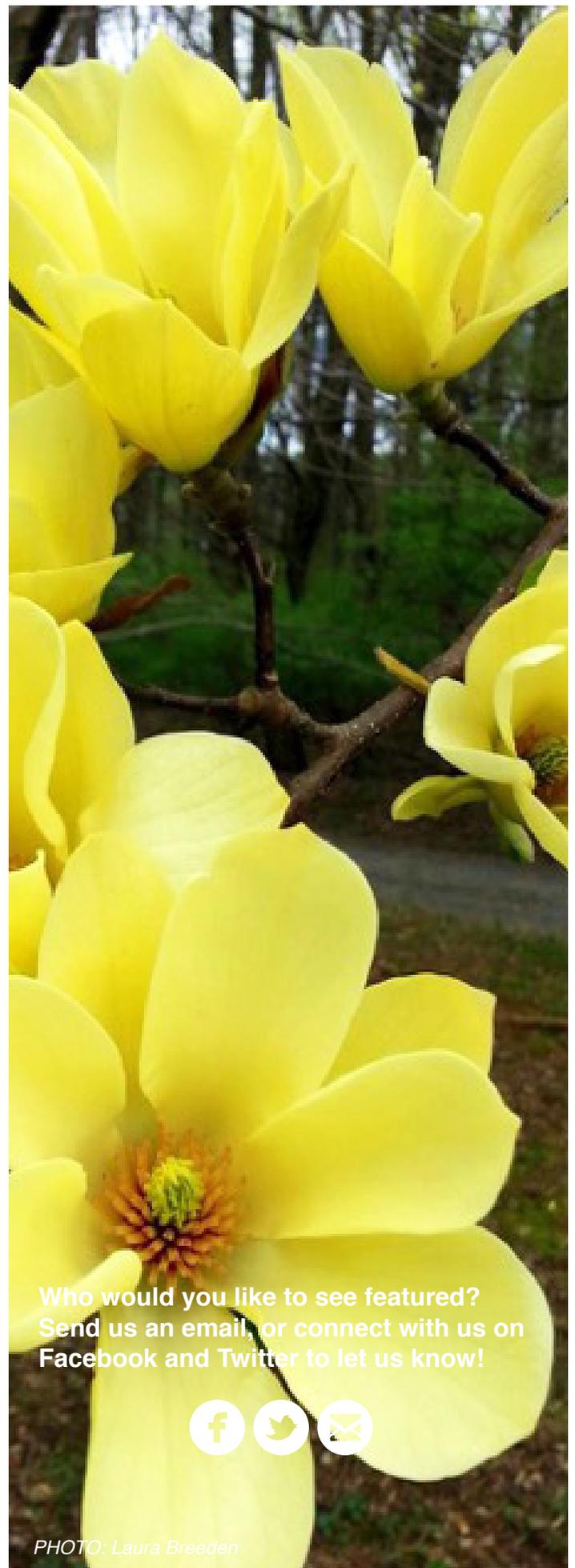
Last advice, continue to invest in yourself. The more you invest in yourself the more valuable you become to your community. You can start with reading my book. I wrote it for you: <http://missingthepointbook.com>

7. COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE: WHEN I FIND THE TIME TO BE AWAY FROM MY WORK I ...

I love Chinese medicine and personal development. When I am not at my clinic or running Pro D Seminars or organizing the Integrative Fertility I am with my family and friends. I always find time daily to reading up on Chinese medicine or listening to motivational talks just for the joy of it too.

Funny story... when I was on my honeymoon and relaxing on the beach with my wife she accused me of working on our special holiday. Confused, I asked her what made her think I was working. She pointed to my book on Chinese medicine I was reading and said I brought my work with me on our honeymoon. I laughed and said, "this is not work to me". I really enjoy reading about Chinese medicine and health. I guess I took my father's advice to heart and chose a career that I am passionate about.

- Dr. Lorne Brown B.Sc., CPA (CA),
Dr. TCM, FABORM, CHt



Who would you like to see featured?
Send us an email, or connect with us on
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PHOTO: Laura Breeden



Sweet

In the Modern World

Dr. Melissa Carr, Dr. TCM

PHOTO: Brian Goldstone

As Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners, even when our treatment focus is acupuncture and/or herbs, we are taught that better treatment outcomes are often achieved when we also address patients' diets.

The thing is, nutrition can seem complicated when trying to blend east and west concepts in modern clinical settings.

So, where is a good place to start? In my practice, I start with sugar.

Sugar is hidden in many of the everyday items we consume (sauces, condiments, and “healthy” snacks), and as a result, many of our patients are eating too much of it. TCM teaches us that anything in excess can wreak havoc on our bodies, creating imbalance. In this article and in the course I’m offering at a discount here, I explore some of the basics about sugar, so you can better educate your patients.

Our bodies are attuned to like sweet because sweet signifies a good source of energy. It has been used traditionally by many cultures, not just Traditional Chinese Medicine, to heal stomachaches, headaches, and other ailments.

In TCM, as you know, we consider (sugar) a tonic - a way to nourish a weakened body.

SUGAR'S WICKED HISTORY

When concentrated sugar first reached Europe, it was considered a valuable spice nicknamed "white gold," and consumed by nobility and the rich. Such was the wish for more of the sweet stuff, that it was part of the reason for exploration into tropical lands where they could grow more sugarcane. Because the growth, harvesting, and processing of sugarcane was laboriously difficult work, slaves were used. Our craving for more and more sugar drove us to destroy land and people, but still our appetites continued to grow.

The average Englishman ate 4 pounds of sugar per year in 1700. A century later, that number climbed to 18 pounds per year, and only about 70 years later that number grew to 47 pounds yearly. In 2004, Canadians consumed about 22 times that annually, averaging to approximately 26 teaspoons daily, or 21.4% of our total daily calorie intake. Clearly, too much.

SUGAR AND THE BRAIN

Why do we want the sweet stuff so much? As mentioned earlier, we are biologically wired to seek out sweetness.

Beyond providing a quick and easy energy boost, sugar triggers our brains' reward centre, releasing opioids, serotonin, and dopamine, not unlike heroin.

This can create a cycle of use that is difficult to break in some patients.

Beyond the brain connection, the medical problems associated with too much sugar are many. Diabetes, unhealthy weight gain, and tooth decay are commonly recognized issues, but cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, weakened immune system, and inflammatory disorders can also be sourced back to excessive sugar in the diet.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Of course, in TCM, we believe in balance. When given in small amounts, sweet foods are indicated therapeutically to nourish a weakened body, help with weight gain, strengthen digestion, slow down and neutralize the toxic effects of other foods, and calm the nervous system.

For example, according to TCM theory, we know that many fruits are sweet, as are various root vegetables like sweet potato, potato, carrot, and beet. Mildly sweet vegetables include bamboo shoot, cabbage, celery, corn, eggplant, lettuce, mushroom, pumpkin, string bean, and tomato.

Grains too can be mildly sweet, such as amaranth, barley, buckwheat, kamut, millet, oat, rice, rye, spelt, and wheat.

Protein sources like beef, chicken, egg, fish, milk, and yogurt also have some sweet element to them, as do some legumes, nuts, and seeds.

The sweet flavour is abundant in our natural world and is the reason why in TCM we recommend obtaining this sweetness from whole foods rather than the processed sugars often found lurking in the store-bought foods we consume.



PHOTO: Kim Graham

THE PROGNOSIS

The problem is that our craving for sweetness grows, like an illicit drug that sends our brain into a frenzy of wanting more and needing more to get the same effect. When we chow down on cookies, cakes, and candies, the natural sweetness of corn no longer tastes sweet. Fill the belly with bonbons, butterscotch, and brownies, and it becomes hard for a beet to satisfy. However, we can tame the sweet beast through treatment and physiological reprogramming to assist our patients to regain control so they can once again reap the benefits the sweet flavor.

To learn more check out Dr. Carr's course (Sugar and Sweeteners Nutrition Workshop) featuring content on sugar in its many forms – natural and processed – and artificial sweeteners in the link below:

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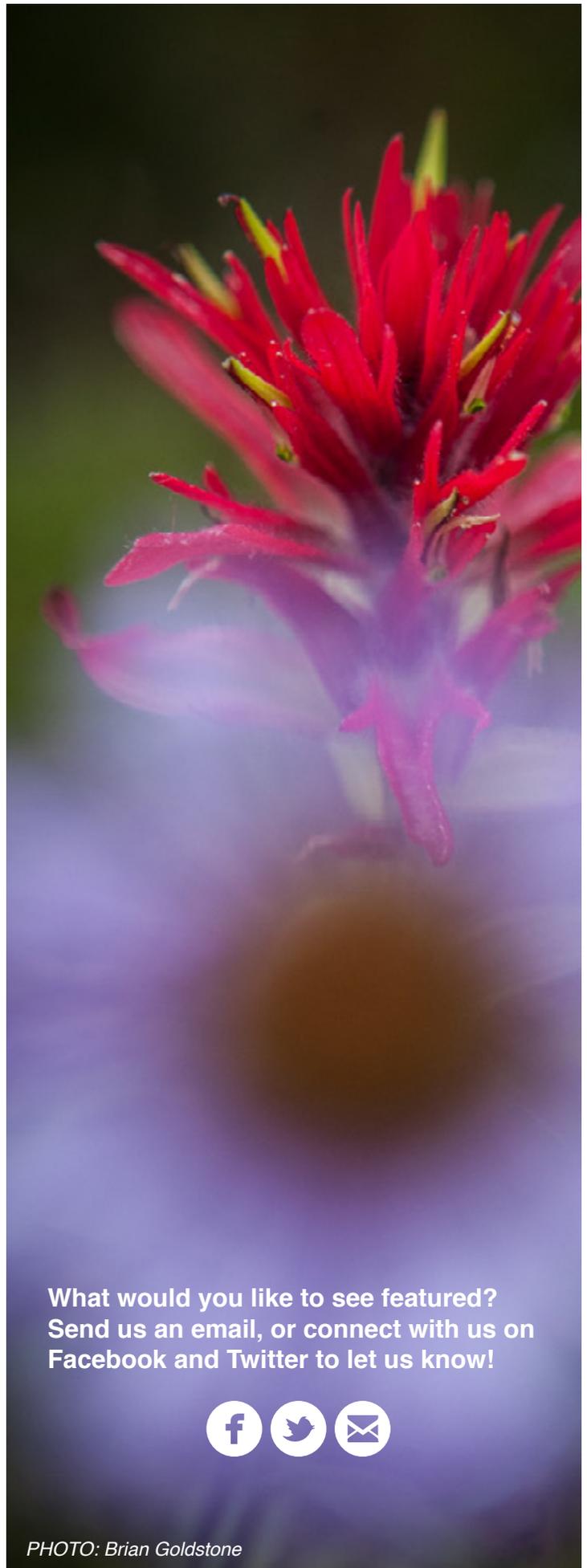
<https://clients.mindbodyonline.com/classic/ws?studioid=231139&stype=43&prodid=10205>



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Melissa Carr is a registered Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine with 15 years of clinical practice and a B.Sc. in Kinesiology. In addition to using acupuncture, Chinese herbs, supplements, biopuncture, and nutrition to treat pain, digestive issues, stress, fatigue, migraines, and more, Dr. Carr is also a natural health and nutrition consultant, lecturer, and writer.

Website: www.activetcm.com



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PHOTO: Brian Goldstone



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PHOTO: Allison Blaisdell



IN DEPTH AT COMS 2016

2 Days with Jeffrey Yuen

Dr. Kyla Drever, Dr. TCM

For those of you who are not familiar with the Canadian Oriental Medical Symposium (COMS) it is an annual TCM conference held here in Vancouver, BC every spring and is put on by Eastern Currents, a local TCM supply distributor.

Each year is the common format of short talks in the morning by several speakers followed by a more specified focus by one speaker in the afternoon. It's a successful format, one that allows practitioners to get some significant insights from a variety of different perspectives, but this year COMS decided to try something different. This year they offered intensives with 2 different speakers (Jeffrey Yuen and Suzanne Robidoux), each of which took two days to present their material giving the participants an opportunity to learn much more deeply from the presenters. This piece is a review of Dr. Jeffrey Yuen's course on Nervous System Disorders in Chinese Medicine.

If you haven't done any course work with Dr. Yuen it is quite an amazing overall experience.

If you are looking to be spoonfed TCM Diseases,

differential diagnosis and acupuncture or herbal protocols this is not the course for you. It's a course not so much of "what to do" but "how to do it". He is so full of knowledge and understanding that it is hard to keep up with all the seemingly tangential connections he makes throughout his lectures. And I say "seemingly tangential" mindfully because the connections are always there, it really is up to the proficiency of the listener to be able to travel the beautiful byways of TCM Foundations that Dr. Yuen brings to his presentations. He is heavily rooted in Classical Chinese Medicine and frequently refers back to the Classics to help clarify and justify his concepts. The intent of ¾'s of the course was to teach a framework or general strategy with which a practitioner could look at all diseases of the central and peripheral nervous systems and apply it accordingly to the patient's presentation,

constitution and the practitioner's own experience. The last afternoon was dedicated to learning about "The Art of Needling: Moving Qi with One's Hands".

Let's start with the nitty gritty of the first 1.5 days. While the information was so vast, and honestly by the end of the first day completely overwhelming, I found Dr. Yuen's teaching style clear, logical (impressive considering the organic nature of Chinese Medical thought sometimes) and consistent in message. He has this amazing talent to review the main points of what he has been talking about in such a way that it isn't remotely repetitive, but rather, adds another layer or piece of understanding to what is being absorbed. And absorb is really what you have to do. If you try to left brain his content too much you will drown, or throw your pen at the wall, depending how Qi stagnated you are. The one downfall I would say is my own. The fact that I was educated here in Canada, at a program that seriously lacked in the teaching of the Classics was evident and I know that I missed a lot as a result. I won't get into the content, it's a course worth taking and I cannot remotely do it justice, but I will say this, even though I feel like I need to study the information for a couple of months just to get the basics, I find myself using it repeatedly in clinic with the bare bones of understanding that I do have and seeing really great results.

The last afternoon was a nice contrast to the academic intensity of the previous 1.5 days.

Dr. Yuen's lecturing style was very calm, serious and collected. He remained seated for the duration, his voice was steady and, honestly, he didn't stop talking the entire lecture

period. However, when he started to talk about how to use Qi through your own body, the needle as being an extension of the hand, he became animated and much lighter.



Dr. Jeffery Yuen

He still didn't stop talking (I found it completely amazing how he never seemed to even pause to collect his thoughts) but as he went through different Nei Gong exercises to help cultivate the Qi in the hands he lit up and even cracked a few good jokes.

While it was a short period of time, I can't say that I became any more proficient in Nei Gong or Qi Gong, it gave me a physical appreciation for the flow of energy through my hands as the heat and tingling built up from simply holding a position for probably not more than 30 seconds.

He was kind, and didn't make us stand there for hours in one position and try and knock us over as is evidently wont in the tradition. Interestingly, before even getting to the exercises he took us through a detailed history of the 9 Needles, their individual uses and how the acupuncture apprentice would have to work through learning the technique of each needle before moving onto the next. In the end he did admit it often culminated in the use of intention, but I got the impression that he believes that the practitioner needs to be firmly rooted in the understanding of the physical techniques before they can be truly proficient enough to use intention alone. Once again, giving a cohesive context to information that I have taken for granted over the years.

Overall, my favourite part was his intention to create something new and to impart that framework so that it could come to fruition amongst the people using the medicine.

*He was teaching us to think,
analyze, feel and trust.*

He truly tried to elevate the attending practitioners to people who practice an art and science, for which there is no one right answer, but there can be the best answer, and in the true spirit of contradiction embedded in CCM, that best answer will vary depending on the practitioner themselves.

All of this being said, I don't know that I would recommend the course to the new graduate or anyone with less than 5 years under their belt. Maybe you are a prodigy and maybe this is right up your alley, if so, awesome, go for it. But how the strategy is applied is heavily dependant on the practitioner's experience with points and herbs, so if you don't have an intimacy with the medicine you are using, I imagine it would be very difficult to get much out of the course.

- Kyla Drever



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Kyla Drever, Dr. TCM has been practicing TCM since 2003 in Vancouver, BC. She is a self proclaimed education junkie and loves delving into the ever deepening pool of knowledge that is Chinese Medicine.

Kyla is a Director and Editor at Medicinal Roots Magazine.

Website: www.kaizenholistics.com



PHOTO: Laura Breeden

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The Bahá'í Fast and TCM

Spring cleaning the body, mind and spirit

Dr. Maryam Mahanian, Dr. TCM

PHOTO: Brian Goldstone

I can get pretty strong feedback from friends when I share with them that I am participating in the Bahá'í fast.

"What?! How can you not eat all day?" "Not even water? That can't be healthy." "Are you sure this is healthy?" "What's Bahá'í?" "I don't know how you do it!"

While I sincerely appreciate their concern for my wellbeing, I reassure them that I will be just fine. I share with them the benefits of the Bahá'í fast and why I choose to fast. The tone of the conversation usually then changes from initial worry and apprehension to genuine excitement about the Fast. Interestingly, some friends have even asked if they could participate in the Fast too!

My family and I are members of an independent world religion The Bahá'í Faith. Every year, in the month of March, adult Bahá'ís embark on a Nineteen Day Fast which concludes on the first day of spring. During the Fast, we abstain from food and drink between sunrise and sunset, roughly eleven to twelve hours per day. The concept of fasting has existed for thousands of years in virtually all world religions and cultures. The primary purpose of the Bahá'í Fast is for spiritual revival and contemplation. It allows for detachment from the physical world, increased empathy for the poor and hungry, gratitude, and material self-discipline and will power.

The following is a quote taken from the Bahá'í writings regarding the Fast:

"Fasting is essentially a period of meditation and prayer, of spiritual recu-

peration, during which the believer must strive to make the necessary readjustments in his inner life, and to refresh and reinvigorate the spiritual forces latent in his soul. Its significance and purpose are, therefore, fundamentally spiritual in character."

- Shoghi Effendi

Being a doctor of TCM, I pay particularly close attention to TCM principles of diet and lifestyle to protect my digestion, ensure my Qi and blood do not become depleted, and achieve optimum health. The Bahá'í Faith stipulates moderation in all things, much like TCM. The purpose of the Fast is not to make one ill or further depleted. For this reason, it exempts those who are, for instance, in poor health, pregnant or nursing mothers, women during their menstrual periods, the elderly, and children. Contrary to the public's perception that fasting is quite extreme, the manner in which the Bahá'í Fast is prescribed, much like TCM, is quite sensible and logical. In order to achieve optimum well-being, I attempt for balance and moderation during the Fast.

Here are a few things I consider and my advice as a practitioner to others fasting:

- Drink a warm beverage with breakfast and dinner (I prefer green tea) to warm the middle burner
- Chew food very well and don't rush your meals
- Get sufficient mental and physical rest
- Try to avoid stress.
- Don't overexert yourself with excessive exercise
- Keep warm
- Eat primarily cooked food rather than cold raw foods so that your digestion doesn't need to work harder than it needs to.

- Cut down on strong ingredients such as salt, oil, and harsh spices
- Limit damp and phlegm-producing foods such as dairy, fried foods, and sugar
- Don't overeat in the evenings
- Eat high quality foods
- I often add ginger, garlic, and onions to my dinner in order to warm the middle warmer and aid digestion
- A typical meal that I break the Fast with in the evening is a small piece of animal protein (ie chicken thigh), white rice (rice is very easy to digest), cooked vegetables, and a cup of green tea.

Those with Qi and/or blood deficiency should take extra care of themselves during the Fast being mindful to get sufficient rest and eat adequate nourishing foods before sunrise and after sunset. I recommend a modified 'ba zhen tang' type of nourishing formula leading up to the Fast for a couple weeks and then also every evening during the Fast to support healthy qi and blood.

According to Paul Pitchford in 'Healing with Whole Foods':

"The foods eaten during summer and winter are more extreme. Some people find it beneficial to fast soon after the end of these seasons to make the transition smoother into the more moderate seasons of summer and autumn. Spring fasting, for example, rids the body of the heavy, fatty, and salty foods of winter and prepares it for the activity of summer".

There has been plenty of research into the tremendous physical benefits of fasting: For example, intermittent fasting, which replicates the feast or famine diet of our ancestors, shows that periodically emptying the digestive system allows it to self-cleanse. Fasting gives the digestive system a much needed break. Fasting initiates a healing process in the body; It forces the body to divert energy from the digestive system to the immune system; It increases the efficiency of hormone regulation; It creates more efficient protein production; last but not least it increases physical and mental endurance.



IMAGE SOURCE: <http://www.goodfreephotos.com/places/wisconsin/madison/wisconsin-madison-beginning-of-sunrise.jpg.php>

Bahá'ís look forward to the Fast even though it is not entirely easy for everyone (me included). The Fast often means an empty rumbling tummy, a dry parched mouth and lips, some dips in energy at times, and feeling quite fatigued by the end of the day



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Maryam Mahanian is a registered doctor of TCM. Her private practice in North Vancouver BC focuses on infertility, pregnancy, women's health, skin disorders, and cosmetic acupuncture. When she is not seeing patients, she is trying to keep up with her energetic two children.

Website: chinesemedicineclinic.com

(especially since you have been up before dawn). But these are valuable reminders throughout the day that I am fasting and the positive reasons why. It is remarkable how simply not eating or drinking for twelve hours can powerfully shift my focus. Fasting teaches me patience, unselfishness, willpower, gratitude, empathy, discipline, and moderation. Working on developing these qualities helps me in becoming a more compassionate and focused practitioner.

I find myself more productive mid-day not worrying about food preparation and eating times. It gives me more time to reflect. A slight drop in energy at around noontime is quickly followed by heightened mental clarity and alertness. The lethargic 'spleen overload' you would normally feel after you finish lunch is replaced with increased focus. While working with patients in clinic, I feel more connected to them and more attentive - able to listen to them carefully and wholeheartedly, with greater cognitive clarity. While performing acupuncture, my Qi is surprisingly not depleted but rather more focused and directed.

As a doctor of TCM, I know that part of wellness means staying in balance with the seasons. The spring season is about renewal.

Renewal is one of the most important purposes of the Bahá'í fast.

When the nineteen days of fasting have ended, I have a feeling of accomplishment and new excitement going forward - recharged and ready for spring and the beginning of our new year. The day of the spring equinox which signals the end of the Fast is a Holy Day for Bahá'ís. This is the first day of the new year and is known as Naw-Rúz. It is a time of celebration, of starting the new year spiritually refreshed....and not to mention a time to feast!

Hopefully now that you know a little bit more about the Bahá'í fast, you may be inspired to do some spring cleaning for the body, mind, and spirit yourself. You will be glad you did.

For more information on the Bahá'í faith, go to www.bahai.org

- Maryam Mahanian

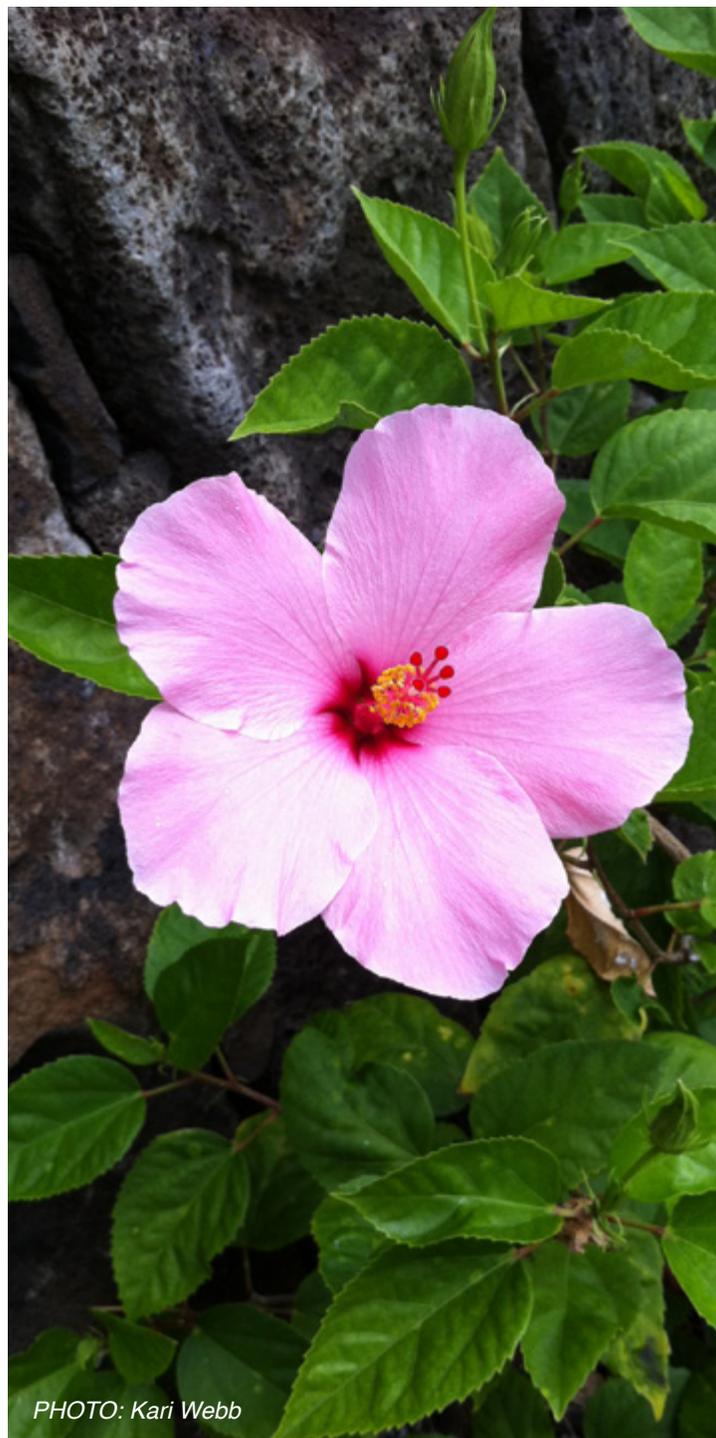


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Collaborative Care: Building the Healthcare Bridge

Dr. Kim Graham, Dr. TCM

PHOTO: Brian Goldstone

“Collaborative practice in health-care occurs when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive services by working with patients, their families, carers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings. Practice includes both clinical and non-clinical health-related work, such as diagnosis, treatment, surveillance, health communications, management and sanitation engineering.”¹

Since the onset of my career, I’ve had the privilege of working within many different multidisciplinary healthcare teams, which 14 years ago, certainly was not the norm. Today, I receive a large number of referrals in my practice from other health care providers (chiropractors, medical doctors, massage therapists, physiotherapists, etc.) for many reasons, but mostly because I learned the value of collaboration.

Today, it is commonplace for TCM professionals to be part of larger health teams/clinics and because these teams are built for collaboration and referral, this process has become much easier. For practitioners currently working in these settings, you will already be aware of the importance of referral, communication and patient/practitioner education, so what I have to share with you may not be of any news. However, even though you may think you are doing everything ‘right’, you may be surprised with some of what you read. For example, even within a health team where you are currently receiving referrals or collaborating on patient care, the referring practitioners with whom you are working may still want more education or communication from you. For others who are looking to improve their collaborative skills, or seeking direction on where to start, it is my hope that the information provided here may assist you in this endeavour.

¹Source: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/70185/1/WHO_HRH_HPN_10.3_eng.pdf?ua=1
WHO Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice

My method was simple. I sent a short questionnaire to various healthcare providers both with access to an “in-house” TCM practitioner/acupuncturist, and those without. The purpose was to explore their understanding of TCM, as well as assess their expectations and reasoning behind referral and collaboration with TCM professionals.

The following are excerpts from those questionnaires I found to be the most interesting and helpful. The overall feedback from the health professionals I reached out to, was that they were definitely interested in learning more and open to collaboration with TCM professionals to better patient outcomes. Not surprising (to me at least), was the common want of more communication and education from TCM professionals. I hope you find this interesting and useful and that it provides you with some guidance in your current and/or future collaborative efforts.

**Practitioner: DR. BRIAN FLOYD, DC
(Chiropractor)**
In practice 26 years
No access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

Minimal

Do you refer your patients / clients to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist? If not, why?

Generally yes, if the patient asks about other therapies.

What conditions / illnesses do you most refer to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

Back pain.

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

No expectations.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

Multi-disciplinary clinics.

Dr. Floyd also shared that he is currently looking for a TCM practitioner/acupuncturist to join his practice.

**Practitioner: DR. SARAH JUNG, DC
(Chiropractor)**
In practice 8 years
Access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

Some. I feel I have a general idea of conditions that can be treated with TCM, and some information of the different techniques used but there is a lot that I don't know still.

When you make a referral to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist, why do you make it? (Known benefit to patient vs. patient inquiry)

Both. If patient inquires about TCM, then I pass on the information that I know and pass on the referral. For cases that I know will benefit from TCM, I suggest the addition of TCM to the treatment plan.

What conditions / illnesses do you most refer to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

Nerve pain, adhesive capsulitis, anxiety, sleep problems, chronic pain (mostly neck and low back).

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

As we have an in house TCM practitioner, I would expect written or verbal communication prior to the initial visit regarding the condition and any treatment to this point, throughout the course of treatment I would expect a written update as to the patient's condition (improving, changes in tissue, ROM, etc.)

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

Better communication between disciplines regarding patient condition, treatment being given.

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

Understand what approach/techniques that professional uses during their treatments, be open and clear about what you will be doing and maintain communication.

Please share additional comments / anecdotal stories where working collaboratively with a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist was beneficial.

Have had success with multiple difficult/chronic cases with the collaboration with a Dr of TCM. Specifically, cases of adhesive capsulitis, lumbar disc patients, severe WAD (whiplash associated disorders) patients.

Practitioner: DR. R SAMBORSKI, MD
In practice 18 years
No access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

Enough to feel comfortable referring patients to a TCM practitioner.

When you make a referral to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist, why do you make it? (Known benefit to patient vs. patient inquiry)

Usually for treatment of musculoskeletal pain.

What conditions / illnesses do you refer most to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

Low back pain.

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

I usually receive a written report.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

I recommend TCM practitioners make a habit of visiting the offices of physicians in their community. Most physicians would probably give him/her 10 minutes of time to hear what treatments they can offer their patients. This would lead to more collaboration.

Practitioner: DR. CHINEDU IRO, Psychiatrist
In practice 20 years (14 in psychiatry)
Access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

Mostly through informal discussions with other health practitioners but also through formal information on role of alternative health as a component of holistic treatment of psychiatric conditions as documented in journals, guidelines etc.

Do you refer your patients / clients to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist? If not, why?

I generally do not personally refer patients as the actual task is usually done by the case manager or sourced directly by the client.

What conditions / illnesses do you most refer to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

Depression and anxiety related disorders.

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

No expectation of direct communication. Rather feedback is usually from the patient.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

It would make sense to formalize the therapies as available within the service in the treatment planning stage. This would highlight the benefits, type and process as well as how information is managed as we do with the psychotherapies for instance.

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

As above. To be seen as part of the available range of therapies rather than a side treatment option.

What value do you see in terms of patient care with regards to this type of collaboration?

Attention to patients' cultural and personal choice, better experiences and outcomes.

Noteworthy: This was the first example of a health-care provider highlighting that TCM practice should be seen as part of the available range of treatment options rather than an adjunct, interestingly, this was echoed in another respondents questionnaire below.



PHOTO: Kari Webb

Practitioner: **TERRENCE WROBLESKI,**
RN, Concurrent Disorders Nurse

In practice 22 years

Access to an in-house TCM practitioner

When you make a referral to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist, why do you make it? (Known benefit to patient vs. patient inquiry).

I am aware of its indications as well as positive feedback from people whom have had treatment. I also refer upon request (usually because the person has had treatment before and asks about availability at our service). Not often is there a request from a client whom has only "read or heard" about it.

What conditions / illnesses do you most refer to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

Pain management, withdrawal management (substance use disorders). Anxiety management (calming)

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

Rely on the practitioner to report, usually only if there are significant reasons to report around care. I.e. positive reactions / negative reactions. It is also helpful when the practitioner reports on related conditions or even unrelated conditions, as it is helpful to have collateral info.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

I think if they were more connected to team clients they would be a more familiar face as well as able to promote the treatments. Become a more visible team member rather than an "alternative therapy contractor".

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

Approach opportunities that make you able to promote your treatment. In-services, client questionnaires' that are circulated to other team members involved in care. Formal record sharing.

What value do you see in terms of patient care with regards to this type of collaboration?

The client would benefit knowing that they have an extended treatment team. The client may have a deeper relationship with the practitioner therefore sharing valuable information that may not be communicated through current caregivers and resource people.

Please share additional comments /anecdotal stories where working collaboratively with a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist was beneficial.

The work done within our service by the practitioner has definitely helped to deepen client compliance to treatment, as well as the rapport and trust building within an extensive community team.

The practitioner has been valuable in reporting important client related mental health and physical health status on many occasions.

The practitioner has offered valuable insights and observations based on a unique and collaborative perspective thus deepening the abilities for a mental health care provider to offer the best treatments possible.

Practitioner: **TANYA WROBLESKI,**
OT (Occupational Therapist)

In practice 16 years

Access to an in-house TCM practitioner

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners /acupuncturists be better facilitated?

I think more education around the benefits would be helpful, particularly when discussing it with clients. I often use the acupuncture group (low barrier, group setting) as a starting point for engagement with services, so it would be good to know about attendance.

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

Options for modalities are helpful, so needles versus seeds. I make a point of letting client know this, particularly if they are hesitant about needles.

Practitioner: **AMELIE MAINGUY,**
Physiotherapist

In practice – 2.5 years

Access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

I came from back east (Quebec), and didn't know about TCM it until coming out west. Since then I have learned more about it.

When you make a referral to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist, why do you make it? (Known benefit vs. patient inquiry)

Known benefit to patients, being aware that my practice can only help them until a certain point.



PHOTO: Kim Graham

What conditions / illnesses do you refer most to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

General whole body pain, anxiety, low energy, referral pain.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

Having a lists or descriptions of what TCM can treat and the different types of treatments you use.

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

Communication. Information about what has been treated and the reasons for it (education), also any opinions or ways you feel the other health care worker can help.

Practitioner: CHRISTINA LARIGAKIS,
RMT (Registered Massage Therapist)
In practice 6 years
Access to in-house TCM practitioner

How much do you know about the practice of TCM / Acupuncture?

Some Knowledge. Have been seeing a TCM for 2 years. Understand it has to do with realigning the body's energies toward balance to restore proper functioning.

What conditions / illnesses do you most refer to a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist?

When I think my patient is stressed, over-stimulated, anxious, having emotional releases in treatment, or has chronic pain

What are the expectations of each referral in terms of communication (report writing, phone calls, etc.)?

A short chat/debrief with practitioner. And I get patient feedback.

From your point of view, how could collaboration with TCM practitioners / acupuncturists be better facilitated?

More access to/education about how it is helpful. I didn't understand until I actually received treatment, so demos to practitioners would be helpful.

What advice would you give a TCM practitioner / acupuncturist wanting to collaborate with someone in your profession?

Show them how it feels, discuss how it works, discuss how the two modalities work together and how they benefit from one another

What value do you see in terms of patient care with regards to this type of collaboration?

Very beneficial. TCM provides a big picture look at the body in a perspective that is different from RMT. It gives me insight into how I should proceed with my own treatment, and also helps my patient connect more with their own body making it easier for me to access.

- Kim Graham

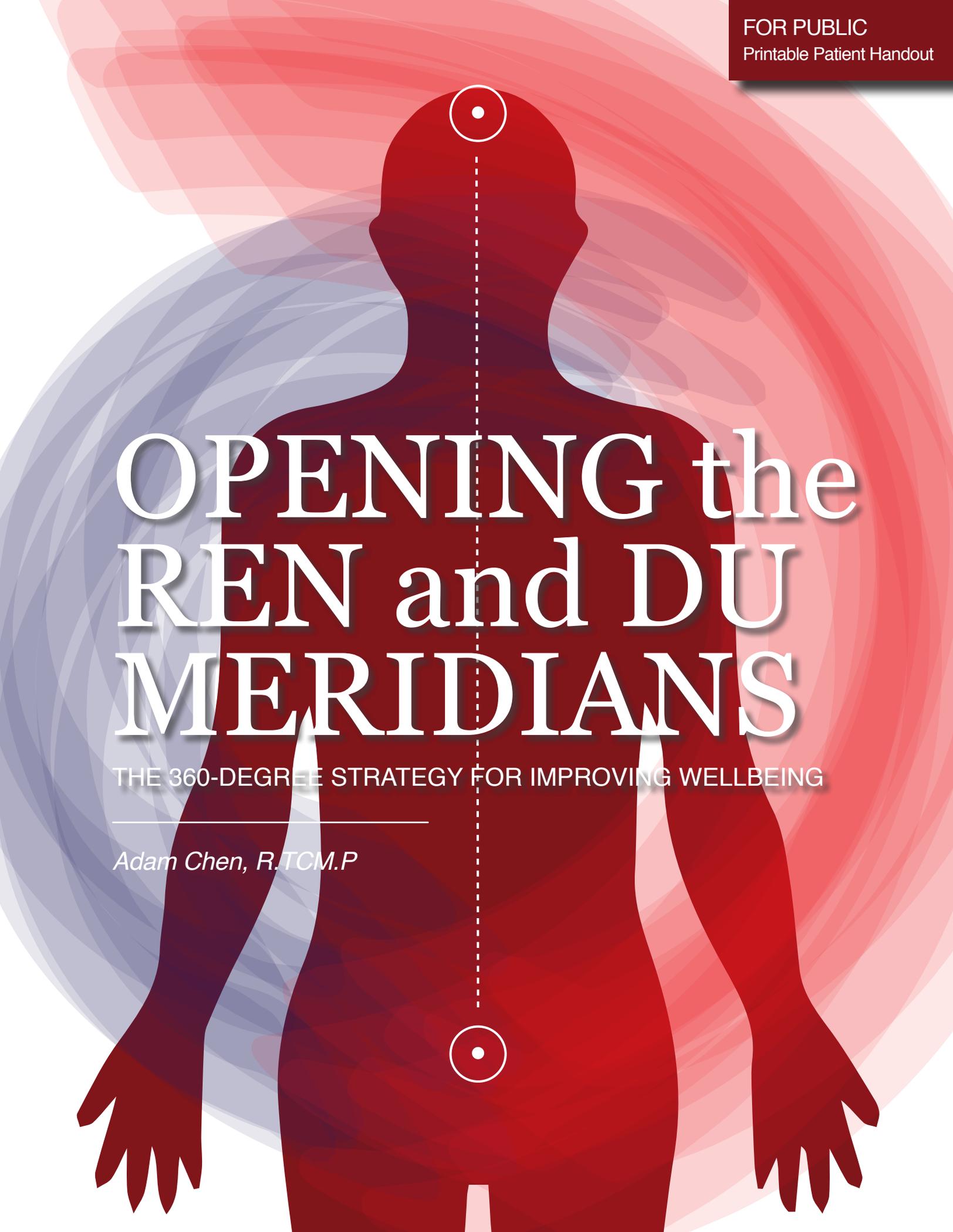


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Kim Graham is passionate about the future and practice of TCM in Canada, and as such is an active member within the TCM community.

Kim is Medicinal Roots Magazine's Director and Editor-in-Chief.

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OPENING the REN and DU MERIDIANS

THE 360-DEGREE STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING WELLBEING

Adam Chen, R.TCM.P

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE (TCM) VS. WESTERN MEDICINE

TCM and Western medicine have somewhat different ways to categorize physical functions in the human body. Western medicine divides physical functions into two categories: physiological and psychological. Blood circulation, respiration, digestion, and nerve conduction are examples of physiological functions; while consciousness, thinking, and emotional manifestations are mental and psychological functions. Different medical specialists are trained to treat specific diseases. Internists treat diseases from physiological dysfunctions. Psychiatrists and psychologists deal with mental and emotional disorders.

In TCM theory, the physical functions are grouped into five domains, namely the Heart, Lungs, Spleen, Liver and Kidneys. Physiological and psychological functions are placed inseparably into these domains. The Heart is in charge of blood circulation, and is also responsible for consciousness and cognitive functions. The Kidneys are in charge of producing and discharging urine, reproductive functions, and endocrinological functions while also suppressing the panic reaction, and fear sensations. Any physiological dysfunction would have a negative impact on one's mental and emotional wellbeing, therefore, mental and emotional stress inevitably interferes with normal physiological function.

Western medicine views that the nervous system and endocrine system are the keys to coordinate the physiological functions in human body. The central nervous system includes the brain and the spine. Chinese medicine, on the other hand, views the meridian system as the key to coordinate various physiological functions.

OPENING THE REN AND DU MERIDIANS

The meridian system is a network where vital energy (Qi) travels through to connect the whole body.

There are fourteen major meridians that coordinate the physical functions in human body. Two of the most important meridians are named the Ren and Du. They play supervisory roles to control the entire meridian system.

The Ren meridian starts from the perineum; travels upwards along the midline and abdomen towards the chest and neck; ending at Renzhong (Du 26), a point located between the tip of the nose and the upper lip. The Du meridian also starts from the perineum; distributes upwards along the spine, through the neck, head, and middle of the face to connect with the Ren meridian at the same Renzhong (Du 26) point.

In many Chinese novels, movies and in some Chinese martial arts, the saying to "Open the Ren and Du meridians" has often been treated as a mythical joke when in fact, to "Open Ren and Du meridians" is actually an important first step to improving our wellbeing, preventing disease, and to achieving longevity.



PHOTO: Adam Chen

Guanyuan (Ren 4): located four finger widths below the belly button on the midline of the body.

PRACTICAL ACUPRESSURE POINTS

There are many points on the Ren and Du meridians that could be used to improve our physical function, but here, I will introduce two:

1. Guanyuan (Ren 4): located four finger widths below the belly button on the midline of the body.
2. Baihui (Du 20): located at the top of the head, halfway between the anterior and posterior hairline, and at the midline between left and right ears.

To activate these two points, press or lightly massage them with your fingertips, one to two times daily, each for two to three minutes. Together, these points work to improve one's overall energy and stamina and are great for preventing burnout or treating fatigue and exhaustion from overwork or chronic illness.

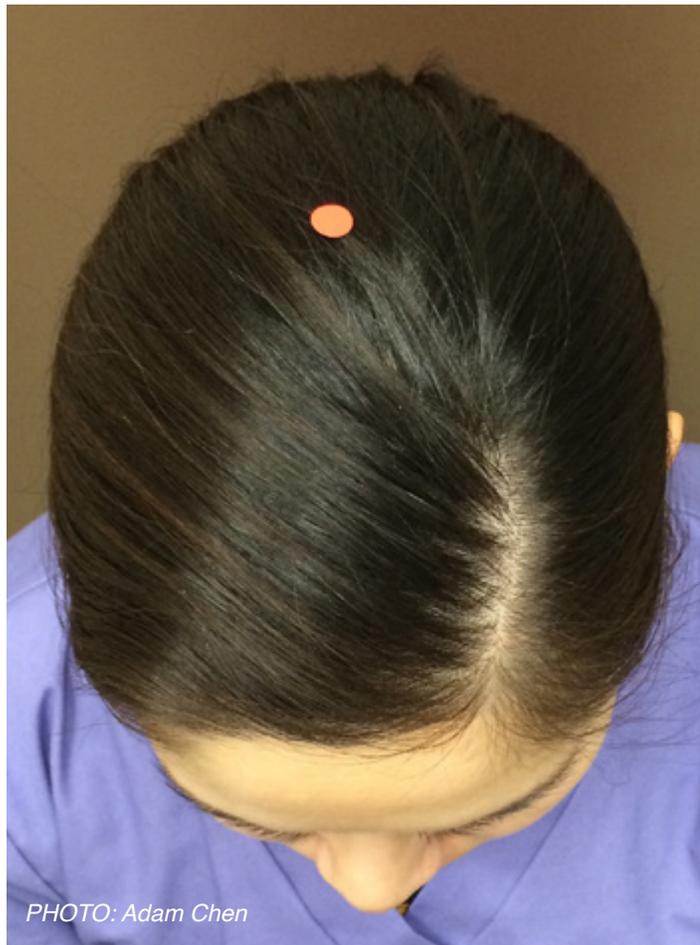


PHOTO: Adam Chen

Baihui (Du 20): located at the top of the head, halfway between the anterior and posterior hairline, and at the midline between left and right ears.

THE 360-DEGREE STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING WELLBEING

Health and wellness must be a comprehensive approach.

In future articles, I will draw from daily life, including: exercise, diet, and emotional regulation. A variety of simple and effective methods will be revealed, and could introduce you to a healthy and balanced lifestyle if practiced. Disease prevention and treatment will be presented in detail.

- Adam Chen



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Chen, R.TCM.P, founder and clinical director of three acupuncture clinics (Mount Sinai, St.John's Rehab – Sunnybrook Hospital, and AC99 Health Center), located in Toronto and Markham, Ontario.

A graduate from Heilongjiang TCM University in China, Adam has been practicing TCM for over 40 years. After coming to Canada in 1983, he earned M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees (in Genetics) from the University of Alberta, and has spoken at national and international professional conferences, as well as published numerous research papers in various peer-reviewed journals.

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SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Christine Lang, R.TCM.P

PHOTO: Christine Lang

Spring. This word has many different meanings in the English language including to suddenly move or jump upward or forward and; to originate or arise from a resilient device (a helical metal coil) that is pressed or pulled but returns to its former shape when released. It also pertains to the season between winter and summer when new life and growth begins. Like plants beginning to poke through the soil reaching toward the sun, animals and humans alike are beginning to stir after a relatively short season of hibernation in Canada this year.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine all things, including seasons, tastes, colours, organs, tissues, even emotions are attributed to one of the Five Elements.

Spring, being associated with the Wood Element is considered the season of growth, expansion and new beginnings.

It is the time of year to take on new projects or challenges and to realize one's potential after a period of self-reflection and restoration that typically occurs during winter. However, in some it can incite feelings of agitation or anxiety as we are urged by the energy of the season to move forward with change. We may feel wound or tense, somewhat akin to a coiled spring.

This winter found me closing old chapters in my life and welcoming many exciting opportunities as I begin to grow in new directions. I've started to share my knowledge and experience in Chinese Medicine teaching at Georgian College in their new Acupuncture Diploma program. Forever a student, I truly believe I am learning as much from my students as I hope they are learning from me.

Winter also allowed me the opportunity to resolve an old injury which has me feeling as if I'm finally standing on my own two feet again – literally as I underwent a long awaited ankle surgery. Like many of my patients, I feel as if I am coming out of a period of uncertainty, ready, willing and now able to welcome many new challenges life has presented. Consuming a balanced diet solidly rooted in TCM concepts is great way to support these exciting changes.

The Liver (and Gallbladder) is the organ associated with this season. It is responsible for storing blood and supporting the Heart as well as ensuring the smooth flow of Qi throughout the body. Further, the colour associated with spring is green, the flavour is sour and the direction is up and out. The Liver is also said to dominate or control the tendons. Wind, the nature of which is chaotic, is predominant during the spring and can have a negative impact on the Liver. One may notice an increase in symptoms such as dizziness, itching, or pain that moves around as well as an increase in nervousness or tension, all of which may come and go quickly.

In modern society, many of us deal with elevated levels of stress, which can result in an overstimulation of the sympathetic nervous system. We get caught in 'fight or flight' without the necessary discharge of that tense energy that has served to protect our ancestors for centuries. There is no grizzly bear chasing or mugger attacking us. This can result in Qi, or the energy of the body becoming stagnant. Much of our daily stressors are cerebral which continually compound without that necessary physical release (i.e. fighting back against the mugger or running away from the bear) to bring us back to a state of peace and calm.

This may explain why many of us struggle with shoulder, neck and upper back (along the Gallbladder channel) tension during stressful times. We must assist our Liver in performing the vital role of moving



PHOTO: Christine Lang

Green vegetables that grow out of the ground toward the Yang energy of the sun are encouraged during the spring months.

Qi and we can accomplish this with some form of exercise, especially during this season of change so get out and move! Walking, biking, stretching, tai chi or yoga are some great ways to move Qi as it not only results in increased respiration rate and cardiac function but muscle contractions as well. The benefits are even more pronounced when performed in nature where we can be surrounded by the growth and renewal of the season.

If Liver Qi is allowed to remain stagnant for a prolonged period of time, and occurs concurrently with a weakened Spleen/Stomach from overwork or irregular diets, the Liver can lash out and attack the Spleen and Stomach. This is quite common in clinic and can present with such symptoms as PMS, abdominal distention and bloating as well as alternating constipation and loose stools.

Although the flavour associated with Spring is sour, if our bodies are full of stagnant energy it may not be desirable to consume large quantities of sour food which will strengthen the Liver and may exacerbate the afore-mentioned symptoms. One should aim to balance sour food with warm, sweet foods during this spring and early summer to help tonify or strengthen the Spleen and Stomach (Earth element) to prevent the Wood overacting on it.

Green vegetables that grow out of the ground toward the Yang energy of the sun are encouraged during the spring months. Asparagus, being one of my favourite vegetables, is slightly warm, bitter and slightly pungent. Foods with a bitter taste are believed to drain and dry while those with warm, pungent flavours help to move and disperse which can be beneficial when Qi is stagnant. Grapefruit are considered cold, sweet and sour and provide a nice balance to the other warming ingredients in this recipe including garlic, ginger, cilantro and onions.

To accompany this Asparagus and Gingered Grapefruit Salad, I chose a frittata filled with eggs, bacon, onions and orange bell peppers with asiago cheese and fresh thyme. Eggs, milk products and bacon although sweet in nature, are also neutral to balance both the warm and cooler ingredients of the salad. Bell peppers are considered hot which continues to round out the profile of the entire meal. I find many patients struggle with lingering coughs come spring so I included fresh thyme in the frittata, as it is known to suppress coughing. Interestingly, it is also used as an aromatic, calmativ herb, which may assist with our heightened levels of tension during this season.

The beauty of frittatas is their versatility. They can be eaten for breakfast, lunch or dinner, baked in a casserole dish, oven safe or cast iron pan or individually in ramekins or muffin tins (think easy, pre-made breakfast sandwich). You can use whatever vegetables you have in the fridge but try to find a balance in flavours, temperatures and colours.

Listen to the wisdom of Lao Tzu, ancient Chinese philosopher and author of the Tao Te Ching or The Way of Life. He states 'Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished'. Don't rush to awaken from your winter slumber as Yang is but a seed during this season and must be protected. Just as the gardener protects young seedlings from frost, we too must keep covered. Pay special attention to ensure the upper back and neck are covered to prevent wind and cold from having a negative impact on our growth and development that is a natural part of the season. Embrace this season of growth and change by preparing your mind, body and soul. You just might be surprised to see what blossoms come summer.

- *Christine Lang*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christine Lang is a Registered Acupuncturist and TCM Practitioner in Barrie, ON a rapidly growing city just north of Toronto, Ontario that's enjoyed by outdoor enthusiasts. A self professed cookbook addict, she enjoys nothing more than sharing her love of healthy food with friends and family. Christine advocates spending time not only preparing your food but savouring the nourishment you are providing your body. With an undergraduate degree in Honours Kinesiology from the University of Waterloo, Christine's passion for health and wellness has always been paramount in not only her life but is shared with her friends, family and patients.

Asparagus and Gingered Grapefruit Salad

Ris Lacoste from Fine Cooking Issue 50

Ingredients

- 36 large or 42 medium spears asparagus (don't use pencil-thin spears)
- Salt
- 36 sections pink grapefruit (from 4 to 5 grapefruit)
- 1 cup Ginger-Lime Glaze (see recipe following)
- 1-1/4 cups Asian Vinaigrette (see recipe following)
- 3 scallions (whites only), thinly sliced at an angle
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame seeds (substitute half with black sesame seeds, if you like)



PHOTO: Christine Lang

Nutrition information (per serving): Calories (kcal): 350, Fat (kcal): 13, Fat Calories (g): 110, Saturated Fat (g): 2, Protein (g): 6, Monounsaturated Fat (g): 5, Carbohydrates (mg): 59, Polyunsaturated Fat (mg): 4, Sodium (g): 1340, Cholesterol (g): 0, Fiber (g): 7

Preparation

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Prepare an ice bath by filling a large bowl halfway with ice and adding cold water. Snap off the tough bottom part of each stem and peel the asparagus from just below the tip down to the base to eliminate any stringy toughness and to ensure even cooking. (Don't over peel; use a vegetable peeler to gently remove only the thinnest layer of skin.)
2. Parboil the asparagus until the stems just bend, about 3 min. (Lift one stem out of the water with tongs, hold the base of the stem in your hand. The tip of the asparagus should just bend over at a 45-degree angle.) Transfer the asparagus immediately to the ice bath to stop the cooking and preserve the green color. Remove the asparagus from the water as soon as it's chilled and drain it well. Refrigerate until about 15 min. before you compose the salad so that the asparagus isn't served cold.
3. About an hour before serving, put the grapefruit sections into a bowl and cover with the ginger-lime glaze. Keep refrigerated.
4. Arrange six large salad plates on your counter. Put the asparagus in a shallow container and cover it with a cup or so of the Asian vinaigrette, saving enough to dress the bottom of each salad plate. Let the asparagus soak in the dressing for a couple of minutes. Meanwhile, cover the bottom of each salad plate with some of the vinaigrette; use the back of a soup spoon to spread it evenly. Arrange a pile of six or seven asparagus spears in the center of each plate.
5. Arrange three grapefruit sections on each side of the asparagus, fanning them out. Sprinkle the sliced scallions over the asparagus and sprinkle some of the sesame seeds over the whole salad (go lightly; you may have extra).

Make Ahead Tips

Make the ginger-lime glaze and the Asian Vinaigrette for the salad several days or one week ahead. Section the grapefruit and peel and parboil the asparagus for the salad in the morning. Put the grapefruit slices in the ginger glaze one hour to 30 minutes before serving.

Ginger Glaze

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup roughly chopped or sliced and smashed fresh ginger (from about 6 oz. ginger)
- Grated zest of 4 small or 3 large limes
- 3/4 cup tarragon vinegar
- 3/4 cup sugar

Preparation

1. Combine all the ingredients in a nonreactive saucepan. Bring to a boil.
2. Remove from the heat and let sit for 5 minutes to infuse the flavors.
3. Bring back to a boil and repeat the process.
4. Bring back to a boil for a third time, let cool to room temperature, strain through a coarse sieve, cover, and refrigerate.



PHOTO: Christine Lang

Nutrition information (per serving): Size: per Tbsp, Calories (kcal): 40, Fat (kcal): 0, Fat Calories (g): 0, Saturated Fat (g): 0, Protein (g): 0, Monounsaturated Fat (g): 0, Carbohydrates (mg): 11, Polyunsaturated Fat (mg): 0, Sodium (g): 0, Cholesterol (g): 0, Fiber (g): 0

Asian Lime Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp minced fresh ginger
- 1-1/2 tsp. minced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 Tbsp dry sherry
- 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- 1/3 cup fish sauce (also called nuoc mam)
- 2 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp honey
- A few dashes hot sauce or chili sauce (optional)
- Kosher salt to taste
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 1/4 cup peanut oil

Preparation

1. Combine all the ingredients, except for the sesame oil and peanut oil, in a bowl.
2. Whisk in each oil one at a time. Taste and add a bit more salt if you like.



PHOTO: Christine Lang

Nutrition information (per serving): Calories (kcal): 40, Fat (kcal): 3.5, Fat Calories (g): 30, Saturated Fat (g): 0.5, Protein (g): 0, Monounsaturated Fat (g): 1.5, Carbohydrates (mg): 1, Polyunsaturated Fat (mg): 1, Sodium (g): 400, Cholesterol (g): 0, Fiber (g): 0

Frittata

Master frittata recipe from epicurious.com

Ingredients

- 3-4 slices thick cut, smoked bacon cut into lardon, cooked until crisp
- ½ cup of diced onions
- ½ cup orange bell pepper, diced
- ½ cup chopped mushrooms
- Few sprigs of fresh thyme
- ½ to ¾ cup asiago cheese
- Season to taste with salt and pepper (light on salt as bacon will impart salt to dish)

Preparation

1. Heat a 10-12" oven safe skillet over medium-high heat. Fry bacon until starting to crisp and add onion, bell pepper and mushrooms cooking until softened, about 5 minutes. If you've rendered a lot of bacon fat you can drain some prior to adding the vegetables.
2. Meanwhile in a bowl, mix 8 large eggs with ½ cup of milk, ¾ tsp salt and ¼ tsp pepper.
3. Pour egg mixture into skillet, stir, and cook until edges start to pull away from the pan (about 5-7 minutes). Bake at 350°F until set (16-18 minutes).



PHOTO: Christine Lang



PHOTO: Kim Graham

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Brian Kushniruk, R.Ac

GERMAN AURICULAR ACUPUNCTURE

PHOTO: Brian Goldstone

As a Traditional Chinese Medicine acupuncturist, it is most common to be exposed to the Chinese system of auricular acupuncture.

Although there is not much known about the early history of auricular acupuncture in China, we know that there was some discussion about the relationship between the ear, meridians, and the viscera in Huang Di Nei Jing (the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine). Some of the points mentioned there are still apart of the Chinese system today, but they are not considered to have a connection to the meridians.

What we now know of the Chinese system of auricular acupuncture, actually initiated from the work that began in the 1950's by the French physician Dr. Paul Nogier. After considerable experimentation and research, Nogier was able to make the first complete auricular point map in 1957, using the model of the inverted fetus on the ear. China, which still considers Paul Nogier to be the "father of auricular acupuncture", adopted this map soon after, and later modified it through their own further experimentation and treatments.

Dr. Paul Nogier, along with others including his student and colleague Dr. Frank Bahr, continued their research and further development of the ear chart (sometimes this work is collectively referred to as European Acupuncture). Later, Dr. Bahr of Germany (and others including Beate Strittmatter, MD), went forward with the development of German Auricular Medicine, while Nogier (and others who followed him), continued to develop the French system of auricular acupuncture. At present, we are left with different maps of the ear, with no significant agreement regarding point location or treatment.

AURICULAR MEDICINE

Introduced to North America in 2003 by the Vital Principle Institute, German Auricular Medicine is taught as its own complete system. It is referred to as Auricular Medicine (not simply as auricular acupuncture) as its system has its own unique method of diagnostic assessment and treatment that differs from the other systems.

Supported by extensive research involving functional MRI studies, German Auricular Medicine emphasizes the connection of mapped ear points to areas of the brain.

Through the stimulation of a point on the ear, a message is sent to the brain (which initiates a change in the brain), and the brain sends a new message to the corresponding area of the body.

FINDING ACTIVE POINTS ON THE EAR

The ear has the potential to tell the entire story of the condition of the body, brain and mind by reflecting any disturbance as an “active” area on the ear (suggesting pain, illness or other pathological changes in the system). From what we already know in the Chinese system, active points can be identified by tender areas or by visibly changed areas (i.e. change in colour, shape, etc.). The German system allows for a more complete view of active points by incorporating methods that allow for the detection of an electroconductivity change in a point on the ear, and also through the monitoring of the Vascular Autonomic Signal (VAS). A point finder (I use the Pointoselect Digital DT) is used to find an active point by measuring the difference between the electroconductivity of a point and its surrounding area. An active ear point is one that has

a different electroconductivity compared to that of its surrounding area. The Vascular Autonomic Signal (VAS) is monitored by having the practitioner place their thumb on the pulse (normally radial pulse) of the patient while scanning the patient’s ear using one of a number of devices or substances. An active ear point is found when the pulse is amplified when the device/substance passes over that point on the ear. Furthermore, during treatment, the use of the VAS combined with other methods allows the practitioner to know if the point was needed effectively and properly.



PHOTO: Brian Kushniruk

Taking the pulse with the thumb in German Auricular Medicine.

Besides allowing for other, more accurate ways to find active ear points, the German system also uses a variety of methods and devices that allows the practitioner to determine whether the active point reflects a deficiency (normally a gold point) or an excess (normally a silver point), whether the point indicates a main pathology or symptom or whether it indicates a supporting pathology or symptom. There are even methods to determine the level of importance that a particular pathology or symptom has compared to that of other discovered active points. Scanning the ear with different substances will allow the practitioner to filter the type of active points that will show up on the ear, thus allowing for a method of differentiation of active points. This complete system of diagnosis, by its nature, also allows for a very systematic and clear course of treatment, often resulting in the immediate reduction or elimination of symptoms.

TYPES OF POINTS

In German Auricular Medicine, types of points can generally be divided into the three categories; anatomical points, functional points and focus points.

Anatomical points (generally representing organs or structures of the body), as with the Chinese system, are reflected on the ear in the pattern of the inverted fetus (although they both use this idea, the actual point locations are significantly different). In the German system, as problems on one side of the body are said to be reflected on the ear of that same side, treatment is also normally done on the ear of the same side of that anatomical problem.

Functional points (generally representing systems of the body), include those that represent psychological conditions, hormone regulation, the nervous system, medical analogue points, etc. The German system has many unique points compared to that of the Chinese system, and as with the anatomical points, the points that they have in common are generally found in different locations. Most, but not all, active functional points are found on the ear of the dominant side. In the German system, as opposed to the Chinese system, the determination of the location of some points (i.e. whether it is located on the left or right ear) is made by the hand dominance of the patient. With that, the German system also has a unique and very accurate way of determining the true dominant side of a patient (and also has a method for the detection and treatment of problems that can actually interfere in the proper determination of handedness).

Focus points indicate the presence of blockages to healing, which are normally caused by inflammation, scars, toxins or abnormal psychological conditions. These chronic blockages are burdens to the system, draining energy and actually interfering with proper diagnosis and treatment of other pathological conditions. The German system incorporates a unique methodology that allows for the diagnosis of the location and level of these blockages and also allows for a treatment that can clear these blockages (it is also possible to determine the actual deficiencies, toxicities and intolerances related to these blockages). Once cleared, the pathological condition of the patient becomes clearer, and a more effective treatment of that condition can take place.

METHOD OF TREATMENT

Active points are treated using needles, electrical stimulation, seeds or LASER. Generally, with the use of thicker needles recommended in this system and with the methods available ensuring that the practitioner has chosen active points, treatments tends to be very powerful. As a result, there is a recommended limit of 8 or less needles per treatment. Gold needles can be used on gold points and silver needles can be used on silver points (or stainless steel needles can be used on any type of points). The use of a laser that is capable of different frequency settings will allow for more options in diagnosis and treatment (I often use a RJ Physiolaser in treatment). The customization of the frequency can also allow for more specific treatment as there are specific frequencies of laser light that can be used for different types of ear points (e.g. focus points, internal organs, musculoskeletal tissue, nervous tissue, psychosomatic points, etc.) as well as specific meridian frequencies that can be used for the treatment of TCM body points (as a note, the German system also maps TCM meridians and points on the ear).

As mentioned above, the course of treatment is determined by the comprehensive diagnosis which identifies active points, focal points, main and supporting symptoms, the level of importance of those points, etc.

GERMAN AURICULAR MEDICINE MEETS TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

As mentioned, German Auricular Medicine is a system of diagnosis and treatment that stands on its own. As a TCM acupuncturist (also writing an article for an audience primarily made up of people who practice TCM), I am particularly interested in how this system can aid an existing TCM practice. While in TCM, we have the pulse, tongue, various types of observation, etc. as our current diagnostic methods, the German system has the great potential to give us added dimensions of diagnosis (as well as added treatment possibilities). Furthermore, as the tools and procedures of this system allow for the direct communication with the pathological system through the discovery of active points (and also allowing for the direct treatment of that pathology through those points), it can literally allow us to hear the body of the patient tell us its problem.



PHOTO: Brian Kushniruk



PHOTO: Brian Kushniruk

Above Top: Scanning the ear with the gold end of the 3v hammer.

Above Bottom: Putting the client into the Superficial Layer using the 9v bar.

Below: Using the RJ Laser Single Probe to laser the ear.



PHOTO: Brian Kushniruk

As German Auricular Medicine is such a wide-ranging system, if you are interested in learning it and want to get the most out of your effort, I recommend that you commit to studying it in depth. For me as an acupuncturist, I am interested in learning why both systems work. While there is some effort worldwide to have the different auricular systems to come together in some way, I believe that it is essential to first have a very clear understanding of the systems before you attempt any sort of real combination. I think that there are books/systems that try to combine different auricular systems, but from my observations, I don't believe that these attempts do the German or Chinese systems justice (as they don't reflect the depths of these medicines).

With that, through the continued spirit of learning and through persistent practice, I see the possibility of having German Auricular Medicine add to our knowledge of TCM. Just as when Nogier introduced his findings to China in the 50's, I believe that through continued practice and through continued study of the new discoveries in German Auricular Medicine, we can expand our understanding and application of TCM acupuncture.

- Brian Kushniruk



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Dr. Angela Foran

Making Herbal Medicinals

My foray into herbal medicine making began by accident when I was just a kid. I had a survival book that identified which wild plants were edible. I didn't have much experience foraging beyond picking wild berries, so it was fortunate that dandelion was one of the edible plants.

I remember I was about 8 or 9 when I convinced my cousin it would be a good idea to pick the dandelion in her yard, cook it up and eat it. This particular book did not discuss preparation and being relatively inexperienced in the kitchen we fried them up. They were barely edible and I doubt there were any medicinal properties left, however that led to a love of herbal medicine and experimentation has continued to this day.

Working with herbs in their raw state involves the sense of touch, smell and taste, which creates a deeper understanding of the herbs and also makes them easier to remember. I enjoy experimenting with herbs, creating products for myself, friends and family as well as patients. Some products are relatively easy to prepare and some take a little more effort or time. I also try to educate my patients on ways they can use herbs safely at home, which gives them another tool to continuing their healing once they have left my office. Whether it is a herbal product I have made or something patients can make or purchase there are many options to get creative with.

Below Top: Calm Tea blend.

Below Bottom: Warming Tea blend.



PHOTO: Angela Foran



PHOTO: Angela Foran

TEAS

Teas are a great introduction to herbal medicine as there are many flowers or culinary herbs that are familiar to patients. I will often make up simple combinations of easy to find ingredients, which patients can make into refreshing and therapeutic teas. If patients want to source ingredients themselves many of the common Chinese culinary type herbs can be found in herbal or health food stores. Often these herbs are tastier and more user friendly than raw herb formulas or powder/granules and I find for that reason they are an easy way to get reluctant patients interested in taking herbs.

This type of tea can demystify Chinese medicine as being awful tasting and containing weird animal products.

TOPICALS

Topical treatments are especially beneficial for skin and pain conditions. I have dabbled a little in creating liniments for general pain conditions and some custom topical treatments for different skin conditions, however most of the time I will use one of the options available on the market. When I have the time and I am feeling creative I'll experiment making my own pain liniment or skin salve. Depending on the method it can be time consuming but fun!

SYRUPS AND BITTERS

Syrups are another great way to take herbs if people are concerned about the taste. I usually make mine with honey, but you could make them with an alternate sweetener as well. They are ideal for kids too as they tend to like sweeter flavours. Making a big batch of elderberry syrup with other herbs, such as ginger, cinnamon, chen pi, gan cao or other herbs can last through cold and flu season. Having a single herb such as ginger for digestion or suan zao ren for sleep would be delicious and therapeutic. There are many resources online with instructions for making syrups.

While I use syrups more for coughs and colds I tend to use bitters more as a digestive aid (or ahem, cocktails). Once again they tend to be tasty, even though they have more bitter herbs in them and are not as sweet as syrups. They do contain alcohol so they may not be suitable for everyone. While syrups are quick and easy to make bitters take a bit more time to prepare but they are equally beneficial.

TINCTURES

Tinctures are getting closer to experiencing the full flavour of Chinese medicine formulas.

They can be a great option for people that need something convenient, have difficulty swallowing or digesting.

They do take a bit of time to make, but are relatively simple depending on the method. Tinctures also have a longer shelf life compared to syrups due to the alcohol content. As with bitters and syrups there are many resources online or herbal medicine making books that provide step by step instruction.

WAN (PILLS)

My most recent creative exploration has been attempting to make familiar formulas into their traditional form, think gui zhi fu ling wan or liu wei di huang wan. I have to say it is a fun method but quite finicky since I was rolling these tiny pellets by hand. I think restrictions on food preparation would prevent me from making these for patients.

One thing to keep in mind if you do try this method make the pills small, my first attempt the pills were too big and quite difficult to swallow.

One bonus is that I tasted nothing.



PHOTO: Angela Foran

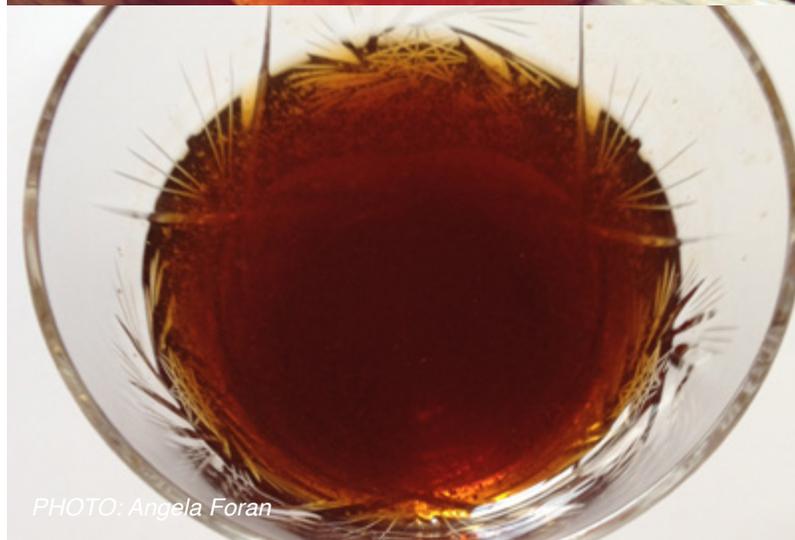


PHOTO: Angela Foran

Top: Mei Gui Hua syrup

Middle: Bitters

Bottom: Wan



PHOTO: Angela Foran

I encourage everyone to play around creating different herbal products, it is a fun learning experience, especially for students, new practitioners or those that didn't get a lot of hands on training. Please note if you are planning on creating products for sale it is important to check with local regulations regarding compounding, packaging and processing of herbs.

- *Angela Foran*

Below: Herb mix



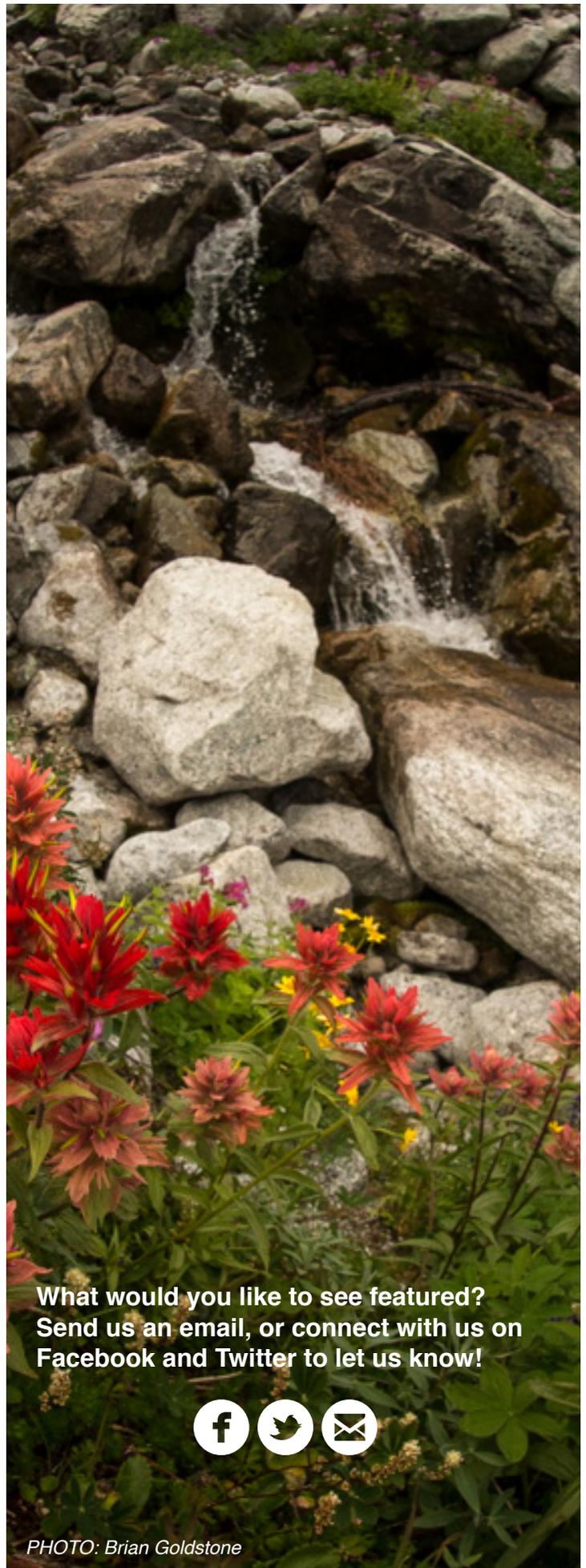
PHOTO: Angela Foran



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Angela Foran is a Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine, with a private practice in Vancouver, Canada where she focuses on digestive health, chronic conditions and mental health. She also creates herbal tinctures for patients and practitioners and teaches Western anatomy and physiology at a local Chinese medicine school.

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