

Summer 2018

# MEDICINAL ROOTS 相慧 MAGAZINE

*Ancient Wisdom - Modern Healthcare*



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# Establishment of the Song Imperial Pharmacy Service

This article outlines the story of China's state-controlled health service, the He Ji Ju (Universal Benefit Service), that was established in 1069. We discuss its nature, its evolution and its eventual decline through the subsequent Jin and Yuan periods.

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by Charles Buck, MSc, BSc, BAac

## INTRODUCTION

In some ways medicine had lost its way in the Tang dynasty but at the start of the Song dynasty it was revitalised with the help of state interest. For much of history medicine had been a relatively low status occupation, reserved for those did not have quite the right connections or who had failed to get the grades necessary to work in government service. Luckily the first emperors of this new dynasty had become interested in medical matters which raised the status of physicians and attracted many more scholars to medical work. It was fortunate, too, that prime minister Wang An-shi, a key architect of the Song dynasty style, was driven by a desire to help the plight of the ordinary citizen. Past Imperial regimes had tended to be concerned more with their own cloistered world than that of the peasantry but Wang An-shi realised that a stable country was one where benevolent rulers cared for the well-being of the populace.

High-level Classical style medicine served the upper echelons of society whilst ordinary people relied on

folk medicine, help from wandering 'bell doctors' and the care provided by monasteries. Also beneficial for the dissemination of medical knowledge was the introduction of printing technologies. Previously, important medical texts had been prestige projects; vast, difficult-to-read handwritten tomes deposited in imperial libraries that were off limits to most ordinary people. Printing allowed the government to mass-produce handbooks intended to spread medical knowledge much more widely and so raise the quality of healthcare throughout the empire. As the Song dynasty progressed many medical texts were published by the Imperial government and some of these were intended to disseminate more widely amongst the population an understanding of the classical approach to medicine. Alongside this the government established a network of 'people's pharmacies' intended to make affordable and regulated care available to the wider public.

Taken from my text *Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine – Roots of Modern Practice*, this article tells the story of this remarkable work.

*One of the most senior and influential ministers working between 1068 and 1076 was the renowned political and social reformer Wang An-shi who championed many of the Song dynasty economic and cultural reforms aimed at improving life for the ordinary citizen.*

These reforms included measures to improve the lot of peasants, to counter fraud, to improve education and to reduce inequality. In modern terms we could see Wang An-shi's politics as socialist in nature, the ideals he fought for were humanitarian and

egalitarian. Included amongst the many reforms he championed were innovations specifically intended to ensure that professional healthcare was no longer restricted to the ruling and wealthy classes. As we have seen, these were ideals that influenced even those at the very apex of power.

In 1069 the implementation of some of Wang's new social reforms began, one of these was the stipulation that the buying and selling of medicines would now fall under state regulation. This offered the dual benefits of improved public health as well as a new source of government revenue. In theory a new state medicines service would allow the ordinary citizen access to something approaching the level of healthcare enjoyed by the upper echelons of society and by 1076 imperial bureaucrats had set up China's first government-run pharmaceutical service in the capital (now Kai Feng in Henan province). Known as the *He Ji Ju* (Universal Benefit Service) this fell under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Medical Bureau – the *Taiyi Ju*. Officially the actual pharmacy outlets were called the Imperial Physicians Bureau for Prepared Medicines (*Taiyi Ju Shuyao Su*) but they soon became popularly known as the *Mai*

*Yao Suo* (Selling Medicine Places). The *He Ji Ju* founded its own imperial drug factory with quality standards that were officially regulated and enforced. Government-approved ready-made medicines were manufactured for general use, some were intended for mass distribution during epidemics or for preventative use when epidemics were anticipated. Previously, medicinal formulas were most often supplied fresh and ready for decoction but the *He Ji Ju* promoted the increased use of herbs that had been preserved by methods such as drying, powdering or forming into pills to ensure year-round availability. These methods of dispensing herbal medicines were cheaper and more efficient.

For its first twenty-five years the influence of the Imperial Pharmacy was mainly in the capital but at the start of the twelfth century its impact began to spread more widely. A second factory was opened in 1103 and soon there were seven retail outlets, at first most were called *Shu Yao Suo* (Prepared Medicine Shop) but in 1114 they were renamed *Yiyao Huimin Ju* (Medicines for the People's Welfare) and *Yiyao Heji Ju* (Medicines of Unified Standards). The pharmaceutical bureau became an established part of life in the capital and then gradually spread throughout the country, eventually reaching small towns, villages and border areas. In 1136 the new southern Song government, now based in Lin An (today's Hangzhou) re-established five pharmaceutical bureaus in the capital named *Taiping Huimin Ju* (Great Peace to Benefit the People).

One division of the Imperial Pharmacy Service, the *Zhangxiu Heliang Yao* (Medicines Quality Regulation Administration Committee) aimed to protect public health with various official measures. They introduced quality control systems that were designed to counter the sale of fake or poor-quality medicines and, in addition a wide range of new standardized over-the-counter medicines were made available for over-the-counter sale. This soon

became a very profitable enterprise, it developed rapidly and began to contribute significantly to government revenues.

The prepared medicines manufactured and sold by the pharmaceutical bureau were supplied in patient-friendly formats such as pills and powders. Apart from convenience for the patient the idea of powdering herb formulas gave more efficient extraction of active components so that lower quantities of expensive and rare substances could be used for the same effect. Powdered formulas could also be formed into pills and tablets by mixing with honey or starch and many of the medicine formats that we see in use today originate from the *He Ji Ju* pharmacy days. Costs were kept to a minimum by reducing the wastage that inevitably occurs with decoction methods, wastage was also reduced by the fact that pills had a longer shelf life than loose herbs. The changed format is reflected in the fact that many formulas originating in the Song dynasty end in the words *san* (散 powder) or *wan* (丸 pill), rather than *tang* (汤 decoction).

Imperial Pharmacy products were recognizable by their official seals and their authenticity was ensured by the threat of fixed punishments for anyone caught marketing counterfeit products. Expiry dates and formal policies for the destruction of old stock were introduced, officials could also be punished if lax management allowed stocks to dwindle and in this way the government set new higher regulatory standards for medical practice and dispensing. New techniques were developed to improve shelf life and prices were controlled so that better regulated and more affordable medicine was widely available. Because these ready-made medicines could be stored for long periods and their quality was reliable the service was a great success both with doctors and their patients.

The *He Ji Ju* service was especially valuable in times of crisis, such as floods and epidemics, when private pharmacies might struggle to continue to



PHOTO: Kody Dahl for Unsplash.com

provide a service. The state pharmaceutical bureau also gave ordinary people easier and cheaper access to classically inspired medicine an approach later summed up in a slogan:

*Choose a formula according to your symptoms, use the [ready-made] prescription. There is no need to go to doctors and no need to prepare and process. Seek your relief in the prepared pills or powder and the illness will be cured.*

Many aspects of the official pharmaceutical bureau were remarkable and innovative. It was a vast, very complete, and wide-ranging organization that employed numerous officials of various ranks to supervise the complex procedures of procurement of medicinals, quality control, production and sale of the products. Quality controls were in place during the purchasing process, also in relation to monitoring stock procedures ensured that any stale or degraded materials were dealt with immediately. Detailed regulations specified exact production methods and stipulated too that manufacturing processes should be carried out by properly trained staff and that quality control procedures such as the use of expiry dates be adhered to. The regulations ensured that medicines were constantly available day and night, even during floods, drought and epidemics. Employees who committed breaches of duty such as the mis-selling of medicines could be punished with lashings.

The *He Ji Ju* officials were engaged in research and development of a sort; experts were sent on search missions for new formulas and trading links were set up with distant countries leading to the introduction of new substances for the *bencao*. The bureau also assigned specific people to carry out research into improved herb processing (*pao zhi*); methods developed included; water grinding, calcining, quenching in vinegar, preparation with alcohol, ginger or honey, roasting and burning and dry frying. This, for instance, was the time when the yin-blood

nourishing medicinal *shu di huang* (cooked *Rehmannia glutinosa* root) was distinguished from *sheng di huang* (the relatively uncooked form) by cooking it with wine and digestion-aiding herbs such as *chen pi* (citrus *reticulata* peel) and *sha ren* (cardamom pods). Preparation in this way was found to make *di huang* less indigestible, to reduce its cooling properties and increase its yin-blood-nourishing effects.

Improvements were made in the technology of medicine manufacture, commonly-used formats included water pills, vinegar pills, alcohol pills, and honey pills as well as refined preparations such as *Gancao Gao* (licorice syrup) and *E Jiao* (gelatine). Some special pills, such as those used in gynecology or those intended to affect the mental state, were coated with gold or silver leaf, with the powdered *qing dai* (indigo) or the mineral *zhu sha* (cinnabar) to improve their preservation or effect.

The 'socialist' mindset behind the Imperial Pharmacy had medico-political implications. As more prepared and over-the-counter medicines became available, some aspects of classical medicine that were previously reserved for people with access to high-level physicians now became more freely available to the public.

*The ordinary person who had previously been reliant mostly on folk medicine, temple medicine and on wandering bell doctors now had more choice.*

Now, the more modestly educated local physicians had easier access to a good range of classical formulas and, because of the imperial medical publishing initiatives, the practitioner could better himself educationally. In addition, the ordinary person also had more opportunity to either to self-medicate or, more likely, to seek the advice of the pharmacy staff. This situation obviously represented a threat to the literati physicians who may also have felt a sense of the erosion of

classical medicine because they professed more expert diagnostic skill and their crucial formula tailoring arts were bypassed by the ready supply of off-the-peg medicines. This is an issue we return to in the next section.

It was not only the high level classical physicians who were made uncomfortable by the prime minister Wang An-shi's reforms, in 1076 he was ousted from his post by conspirators whose own interests were threatened by his innovations. Despite this Wang An-shi's medical reforms were such a popular success that they endured long after his demise.

### THE TAIPING HUIMIN HEJI JU FANG

In 1110 the Imperial Pharmacy, under a team headed by Chen Shi-wei, published a compendium of all the formulas that were routinely supplied by the state pharmacy – the *Taiping Huimin Heji Ju Fang*, (People's Benevolent Pharmacy of the Taiping Era). Effectively this was the standard catalogue of the range of products available and their uses - a state pharmacopia.

*The Taiping Huimin Heji Ju Fang* formulary collection soon became a popular reference text for the many new literate ordinary physicians but the elite physicians were less enthusiastic. It allowed a new profession to fill the gap between expensive medical scholar care and folk medicine. As mentioned, many saw this as a threat to their position as it facilitated cheap over-the-counter medicine prescribing that bypassed their services. It also meant that people

without a rigorous training could set up as doctors, and so the classically-trained physicians countered the rise of the *He Ji Ju* by taking every opportunity to emphasize the superiority of those who had been through arduous and expensive training in the classical doctrines at the Imperial Medical Academies.

The literati physicians argued that patients' symptoms and illnesses may appear similar but the underlying causes and individual body conditions may be very different. A formula that has successfully cured a headache in the past could not be relied upon to cure this individual's headache now and that only a scholarly physician trained in classical theory and diagnostics could provide reliable medicine. Later, the last of the "four masters" of the Song-Jin-Yuan dynasties Zhu Dan-xi parodied this error comparing the patient to someone who has dropped his sword in the middle of a lake and, intending to come back the next day to find it, marks the place it was lost by putting a notch on his boat.

As with so many grand benevolent ventures, ancient and modern, the Imperial Pharmacy idea gradually slipped from its founding idealistic principles into profiteering, fraud and corruption eventually petering out in the Yuan dynasty. The massive funds that were needed to underwrite the endeavour in the face of such fraud were ultimately rooted in the Emperor's private treasury and so, now riddled with embezzlement, the drain on resources became untenable. Ever greater quantities of stock were

### SOME TAIPING HUIMIN HEJI JU FANG FORMULAS:

*Ba Zheng San*

*Chuan-xiong Cha Tiao San*

*Er Chen Tang*

*Huo-xiang Zheng Qi San*

*Liang Ge San*

*Mu-li San*

*Ping Wei San*

*San Ao Tang*

*Shen Ling Bai-zhu San*

*Shen Su Yin*

*Shi Quan Da Bu Tang*

*Shi Xiao San*

*Si Jun-zi Tang*

*Si Wu Tang*

*Su-zi Jiang Qi Tang*

*Xiang Ru Tang*

*Xiang Su San*

*Xiao Huo Luo Dan*

*Xiao Yao San*

*Zhen Ren Yang Zang Tang*

stolen from the factories and pharmacies, rare and costly products were appropriated and fake substances were substituted so that the charitable supply of medicines to the needy dried up and state regulated medicine dwindled away.

- *Charles Buck*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles is a distinguished UK-based clinician, educator and author on classical acupuncture and Chinese medicine with diverse other interests including science, cognition and PR.

As a med school neuro-physiologist in the 1970's fate led him to explore the neurobiology research into acupuncture's mechanisms, this triggered a career shift and he began formal Classical acupuncture and CHM study in 1981. A true pioneer Charles was one of the very first to practice CHM in the UK.

A decade later he joined the faculty at a lead UK TCM college and worked variously as senior lecturer, CHM course director and Master's student supervisor. After gaining a university Masters on the scientific investigation of TCM medical models Charles served on the British Acupuncture Council's (BAcC) research committee as well as gaining experience as MSc External Examiner for various UK universities. Presenting regularly across the EU for over 3 decades, Charles has published numerous papers on our medicine and has a textbook in print on the historical development of acupuncture and Chinese medicine.

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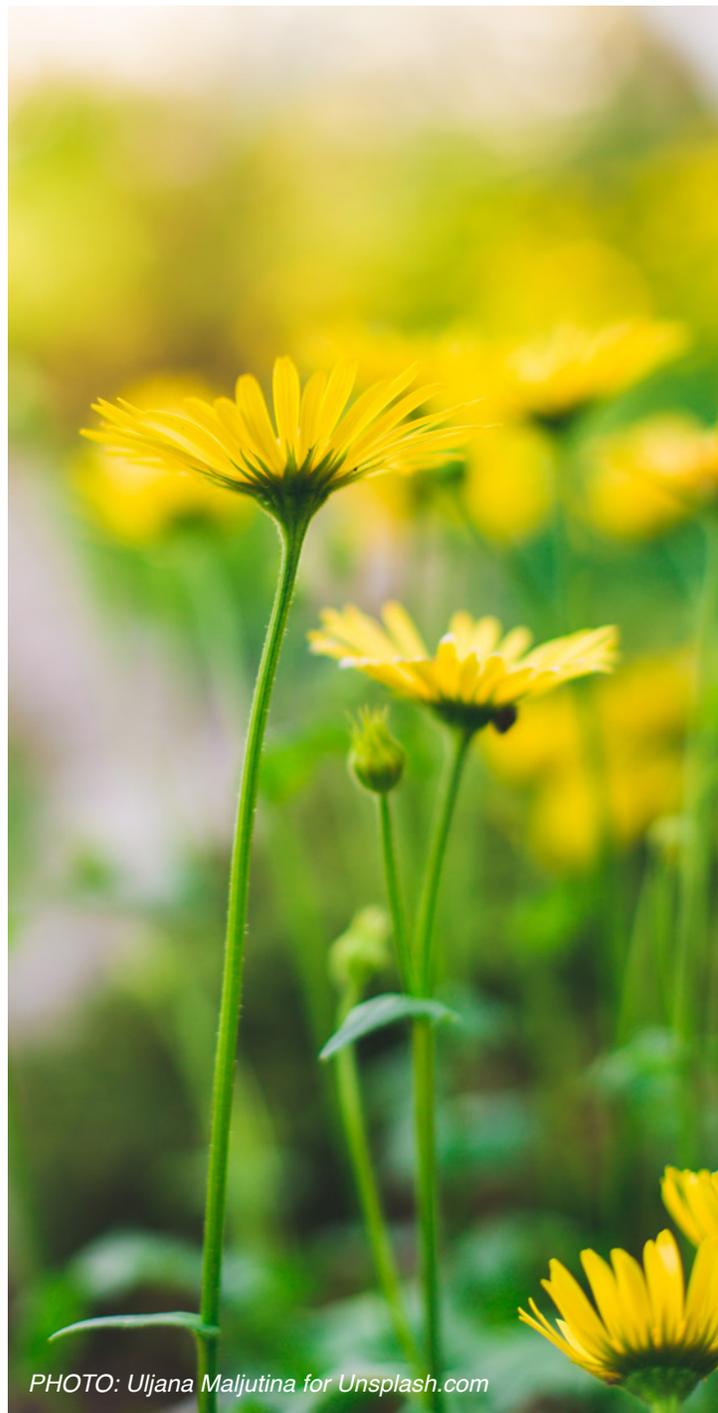


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# The Healing Powers of TCM

Forward from the author, and excerpts from the memoir *Nothing's for Nothing - Transformation Through Trauma*, by Rebekah Demirel

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*My childhood was difficult and I escaped violence and abuse, fleeing at the age of thirteen to the streets and foster care. With the help of a caring social worker, who encouraged me, I became a BC Ambulance Paramedic,*

<https://www.seattletimes.com/video/5796828203001/ignite-project-homeless-when-youre-homeless-one-persons-kindness-can-change-your-life>

*caring for people on the same Vancouver downtown east side streets where I'd been a homeless teen.*

Later, I earned a counselling degree from the Vancouver College of Counsellor Training, specializing in post-traumatic stress and shortly after that I began my studies in acupuncture and Chinese medicine in Victoria BC, graduating from the Oshio College of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine in 2005.

Acupuncture saved my health when I was worn down from working as a paramedic and after a year of acupuncture treatments at the student clinic in Victoria's old "Pink School" I had an epiphany and knew

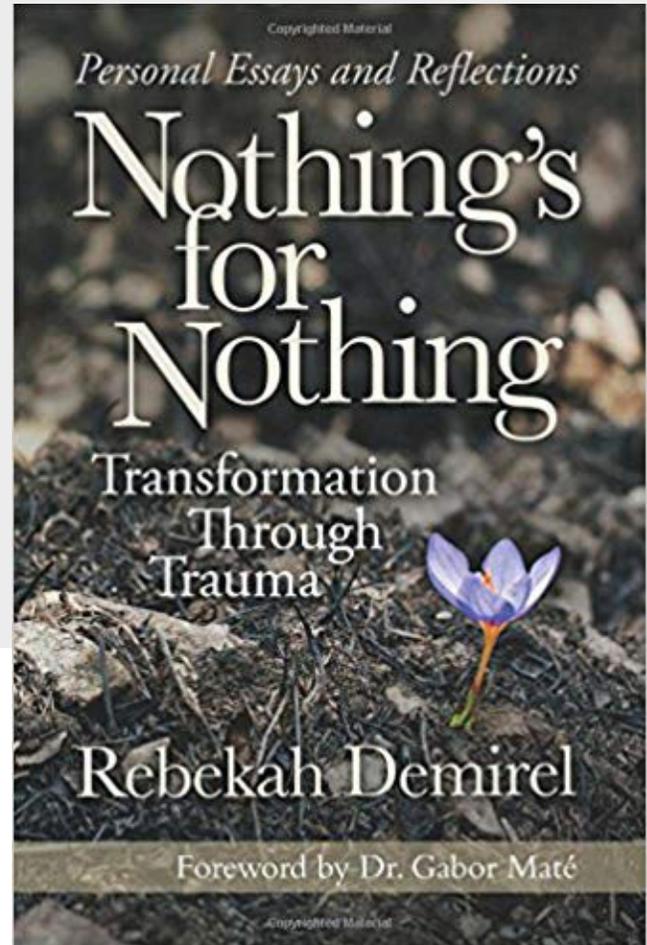
I wanted to be an acupuncturist. And even though my ambulance colleagues questioned the wisdom of this decision, I quit my ambulance job, got some student loans and went back to school to study traditional Chinese medicine. [www.lovethepoint.com](http://www.lovethepoint.com)

Since then, I've never looked back and Chinese medicine's deep grounding in nature continues to show me how to take care of myself and others. I teach qigong and meditation in workshops for social service and medical professionals and the corporate world. I show them things like how to squeeze LI 4 and get rid of a headache or stuffy nose, I lead them in the healing sounds of the five elements and I train people how to apply auricular ear seeds to help them sleep better and cope with stress. People are always amazed and grateful to learn about a few of the many ways Chinese medicine can enrich their lives.

My memoir, *Nothing's for Nothing – Transformation Through Trauma* is divided into personal anecdotes, insights and what I call "tcm musings", where I share how traditional Chinese medicine has led me on a lifelong journey of healing and discovery. In the book's foreword, Dr. Gabor Maté' generously says that I am "one of the most resilient people he has

ever met." If there is truth in this statement, and I hope to be even a tiny bit worthy of such praise, it is because of acupuncture and Chinese medicine. If I bend like bamboo, it is only because I am on a long and winding road, learning the way of the Tao and for that, I will always be grateful.

- Rebekah Demirel



Following are excerpts from Rebekah's memoir *Nothing's for Nothing - Transformation Through Trauma*, hand-selected by the author for *MRM* readers.

## Learn How to Take Care of Self (TCM)

My beautiful and wise Asian acupuncturist "Doctor Jenny" treated me every week for a year, chiding me for my delicate and rundown state of health, from so many years of ambulance work and stress.

"You are just a young woman. How do you get so tired and sick? When will you rest and eat properly?" I liked her admonitions, though. I felt mothered and she gave me clear directions: "Eat more warm food. Stop and relax when eating. Don't work too hard during periods. Sleep important. More sleep. No more stress."

I did try my best to follow Dr. Jenny's advice and I kept coming for acupuncture, taking her herbal formulas in between appointments. "This formula

my father gave me when I was thirteen and started period," she told me. "Boost blood, clear stagnation, keep uterus healthy." I took that, too, and with each passing week, I felt stronger, more like the young woman I was. My outlook on life changed and I had an epiphany.

"Doctor Jenny! I have decided to quit the ambulance service and go back to school. I want to be an acupuncturist!" I said breathlessly during one of my weekly acupuncture treatments.

Doctor Jenny didn't look up as she inserted the next needle into my leg. "Good. Learn how to take care of self."

I'm still learning. It's a lifelong process. Thank you Doctor Jenny.

## What Not to Do (TCM)

When we get sick or something is out of balance in life, we usually look for what we can do to make things better. So often, though, we'd be better served by looking close at what might have led to the imbalance in the first place and then work backwards from there. It's figuring out what not to do that will make the biggest difference.

There's an old joke: A man goes to his doctor and says, "Doctor, it hurts when I bend over." The doctor says, "Well, then don't bend over." Sure, it's a simplistic answer but maybe not so far off.

I saw a patient recently, a young man in his early 20s who had been diagnosed with gastritis, an inflammatory condition of the stomach. His doctor gave him an antacid medication to give his stomach "time to heal" and told him to lay off coffee. While the medication might be helpful in the short term, the advice to "lay off coffee" was even more helpful to stop the problem from recurring. What not to do is the first step.

Inflammatory conditions are just that: inflammation, heat to be specific. Heat comes from foods that are hot in nature, like hot peppers and other spices, and substances like coffee and alcohol. In East Asian medicine heat is Yang, hot and dominant, and is also produced when our bodies do not have enough time to rest. The stress of running on high speed all the time will sooner or later lead to dryness (Yin deficiency) and like a motor with no oil, it will burn up.

My advice for my young patient was to pay attention to what his body was telling him at this early stage. I told him to stop spicy food, late nights, eating on the run, and to cut out coffee and alcohol. Besides all that, at the root of his condition, stress had been burning in the background, so I advised him to do yoga or something calming to give his nervous system a break.

Like a wise person had once told me: "Eat slowly, no spicy, rest, sleep, no stress, breathe. Learn how to take care of self. Learn what not to do."

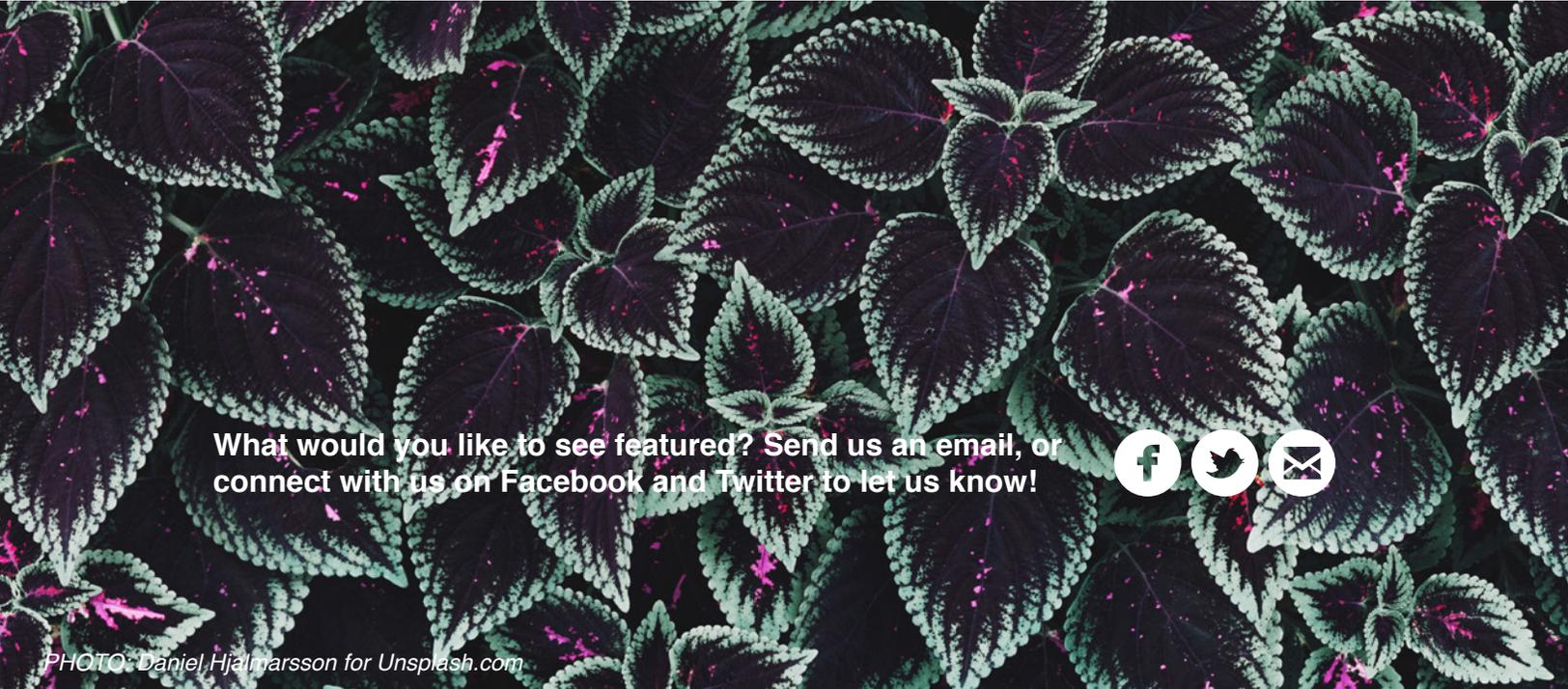
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## Addiction, Root and Branch (TCM)

A few years back I co-presented a public talk with Dr. Gabor Matè, who was speaking about his renowned book on addiction, "In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts," and at one point, he invited me to speak about how East Asian medicine viewed addiction.

I said, "The root of addiction is pain. The branch or manifestation of pain is addiction. Addiction cannot be healed by cutting the branches. Only getting to the root of pain, carefully, gently, patiently attending to it, will work to heal addiction."

In East Asian medicine, root and branch are treated at the same time. For instance, when someone has a digestive issue, we diagnose, then treat the symptoms (branches) and also treat the etiology or



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cause (roots) so that the patient not only feels better, but the disease can heal. Healing addiction requires holistic, soulful work using some or all of things like: Harm reduction, Twelve-step programs, Detox, Counseling, Treatment programs aimed at not just abstinence, but deep inner exploration to heal the roots of pain.

In his book, Dr. Matè says: “Being cut off from our own natural self-compassion is one of the greatest impairments we can suffer. Along with our ability to feel our own pain go our best hopes for healing, dignity and love. What seems nonadaptive and self-harming in the present was, at some point in our lives, an adaptation to help us endure what we then had to go through. If people are addicted to self-soothing behaviors, it’s only because in their formative years they did not receive the soothing they needed. Such understanding helps delete toxic self-judgment on the past and supports responsibility for the now, hence the need for compassionate self-inquiry.”

We have a lot to learn as a society about how to care for one another. Compassion is the first step.

*Gabor Mate with Rebekah Demirel  
Seattle, May 16, 2014*



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-BPKBnT8sk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-BPKBnT8sk)



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebekah Demirel R.Ac.,L.Ac., EAMP, MPCC is an acupuncturist and East Asian Medicine practitioner, licensed to practice in BC and Washington State. She is a NADA (National Acupuncture Detox Association) Registered Trainer, and holds a Master Practitioner of Clinical Counselling, registered with the Canadian Professional Counsellors Association, specializing in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

She is the founder of Trauma Integrations Programs at [www.traumaprograms.com](http://www.traumaprograms.com), providing training for social service and medical professionals and supporting them to be “well enough to do the work of caring for others.” She is a resolute advocate for people who are homeless and volunteers much of her time helping change public policies, so everyone can have a home. Rebekah has co-presented with Dr. Gabor Mate’ on a number of occasions, speaking on addiction and stress from a Chinese medicine perspective and she believes in the power of TCM to help people heal from their addictions.

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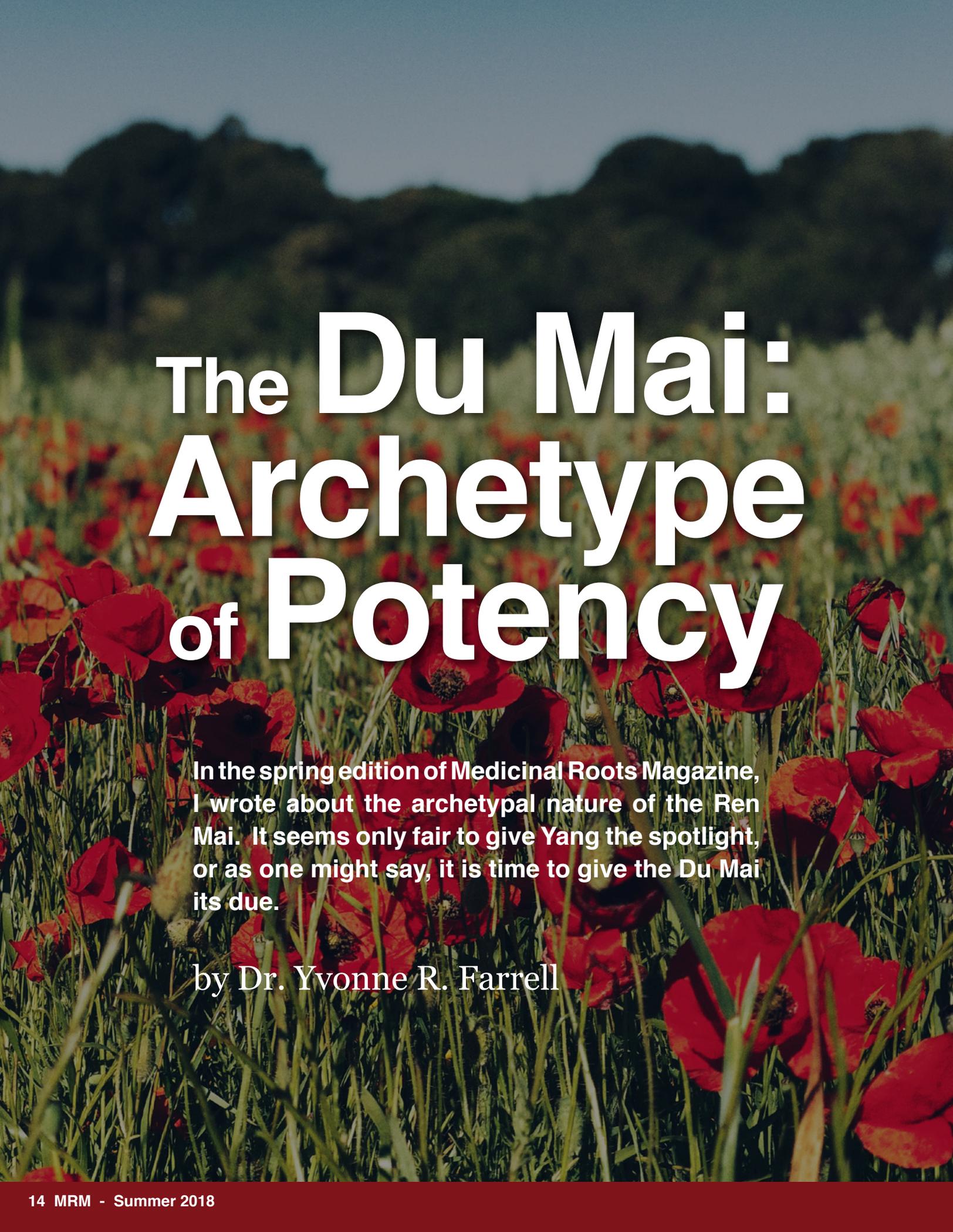
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A field of vibrant red poppies in full bloom, set against a backdrop of rolling hills and a clear sky. The flowers are the central focus, with their bright red petals and dark centers contrasting sharply with the green foliage and the soft, out-of-focus background.

# The Du Mai: Archetype of Potency

In the spring edition of Medicinal Roots Magazine, I wrote about the archetypal nature of the Ren Mai. It seems only fair to give Yang the spotlight, or as one might say, it is time to give the Du Mai its due.

by Dr. Yvonne R. Farrell

*The Du Mai is primal Yang. It is the archetype of potency. The Du Mai is the vessel that supplies the Yang needed for function or action. When someone says, “my get up and go has got up and went” they are saying that their Du Mai has failed them.*

To look at the Du Mai from an archetypal perspective, one needs look no further than the Hero's Journey. This mythic journey is a representation of what happens in our lives when the status quo is challenged. Story-telling, throughout history, is filled with epics based on this journey. Joseph Campbell wrote volumes on this subject including his belief that we are all born with this journey etched onto our psyches and deeply implanted into our curriculum. As a reference, George Lucas' Star Wars is the story of the Hero's Journey. The Journey is an essential part of growing up. It is the story of individuation.

In his book, “The Hero of a Thousand Faces”, Joseph Campbell outlines 12 steps in the journey. Feel free to do an internet search on “images of the Hero's

Journey” and you will see dozens of images that give you an overview. These 12 steps fall into 3 categories or stages:

- 1. Separation**
- 2. Initiation**
- 3. Return**

In the first stage of Separation, life is going along as usual until we are “called to adventure”. This is a call to change. We are stuck in an ordinary life that is perhaps not fulfilling the need for meaning and purpose. Or, maybe the life we are living is based on the expectations of others. It is not the life we are meant to be living. “Is this all there is?” is a question I hear all too often in my practice.

We may, out of fear or apathy, refuse the call once or twice, preferring to stay in place until we are too uncomfortable to remain or until we are incentivized to change. It may take the loss of a job or incapacitating pain to get us to move. It might take an ultimatum from a loved one. We are often not willing to embark on this journey until we perceive we have no options left.

During this time, we will call into our lives a Mentor who will help us to find the clarity needed to commit to the journey. Think now, who is your Yoda or Obi-wan Kenobi? The Mentor represents a strong, Du mai archetype that guides the Hero into the next stage. The Mentor offers a talisman to the Hero to protect him on his journey. Classically this is a sword or some kind of weapon. In Star Wars, Ben gifts Luke with a Lightsaber. This is an expression of the potency of the Du mai.



*Once the commitment is made we will use the motive force of Yang to “cross the threshold” into the belly of the whale. This is a descent into the darkness which moves us into the second stage, Initiation.*

In the Initiation stage of the journey, we will face trials and encounter enemies but we will also find friends (like Han Solo or R2D2) to help us along the way. In this stage, we will see the darkness in ourselves and face our greatest fears in the form of an ordeal. The spinal axis (Du4 to Du14), which is sustained by the Du Mai, gives us the Yang to stand upright and be courageous. It fortifies the Yang of the Heart. If we can gather our courage and face the ordeal head on, we will be rewarded with the gifts of Initiation. In Star Wars: A New Hope we see Luke Skywalker enter the Death Star to Rescue the Princess. It is a battle that he fights bravely with the support of his friends. His gift for that initiation is his ability to let go of technology and embrace the Force. This total trust of the force within is what allows him to destroy the Death Star and win the day.

*Once we have the reward or prize, we must return to ordinary life and share that gift. This stage of Return is a rebirth or resurrection of sorts with the Du Mai providing the impetus for the ascent.*

It is at this point that Luke must decide if he will join the rebels and commit to his training as a Jedi.

This archetypal journey cannot be accomplished without the motive force of Yang. The Du Mai

provides the primal spark for action all along the way. It governs the function of the brain, spinal cord and Kidney Yang. It gives us the potency for change. It bolsters willpower and courage and ignites passion for the pursuit of meaning in life. The Du Mai gives us the Yang resources for separation, individuation and exploration of the world. The author of “The War of Art”, Steven Pressfield, once wrote, “I can’t prove it, but I would bet that a school of psychology could be founded (maybe it already exists), based on the hero’s journey and nothing else. The therapist’s role in such a school would be simply to determine at which point the client stands on his or her saga—and to make the client see his or her life in those mythic terms.”

## FAILURE TO LAUNCH

DH was a 32-year-old male patient who looked more like he was 17. He was small in stature, pale and pasty in complexion, and he appeared weak in posture and demeanor. His chief complaint was depression. He did not have a lot of physical signs and symptoms except the fatigue associated with his depression. He did have a tendency towards feeling cold but he reported his digestion was fine and he denied low back pain or weakness in the knees. He said his depression was lifelong but had gotten worse in the last few years. Anti-depressants helped him manage his emotions but they did not actually improve the apathy that was holding him in place. He often spoke of the difficulty he experienced trying to get out of bed each day. He had a very close relationship with his mother and his father was not in the picture. He was, at the time of his initial visit, living with his mother. His tongue was pale, wet and swollen and his pulse was long and straight in the first level (indicative of Du Mai pathology) and the Kidney Yang pulse was weak at the root.

His first treatment included: SI-3 on the right and UB-62 on the left. SI-3 was done on the right because that is the side of pre-natal Yang. UB-62 the couple point was added for 2 reasons. UB-62, the master point of the Yang Qiao helps support our capacity to put one foot in front of the other to move forward and it enters the brain and can support the Du Mai’s ability to effect cognition and elevate mood. The patient also received moxa salt and ginger on Du-4 while Du-14 and Du-20 were added to support the spinal axis and help him to stand upright and individuate.

Over the course of the next few months, variations on the treatment were administered once weekly and his depression became less oppressive. He began to find it easier to rise each morning and negotiate the world around him with much less apathy.

This case could have just as easily been a woman with depression. It is not a male treatment, it is a treatment for potency, a treatment to increase the capacity for action. The Du Mai supports the courage needed to face our deepest fears and the will to get back on the track to pursuing our destiny.

It would be easy to feel defeated in the face of the state of the world these days. War, global warming, the energy crisis, nuclear proliferation, the death of the coral reefs, political instability, manipulation through social media, net neutrality...oy. How does one get up each day in the face of this and more? Well ladies and gents, it's do or die time. (pun intended) Put on your big girl and big boy panties and make sure your Du Mai has the support it needs. Use your super hero pose daily, practice with your lightsaber and reach out to your version of Han Solo, Chewbacca and R2D2. Get a Du Mai treatment. Oh and by the way...May the Force be with you.

- Yvonne R. Farrell



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yvonne has been practicing and teaching since 1987. She received her Masters and Doctoral degrees from Emperor's College in Santa Monica, California.

Her first book, *Psycho-Emotional Pain and the Eight Extraordinary Vessels* was published by Singing Dragon in 2016. Book Two is in the works.

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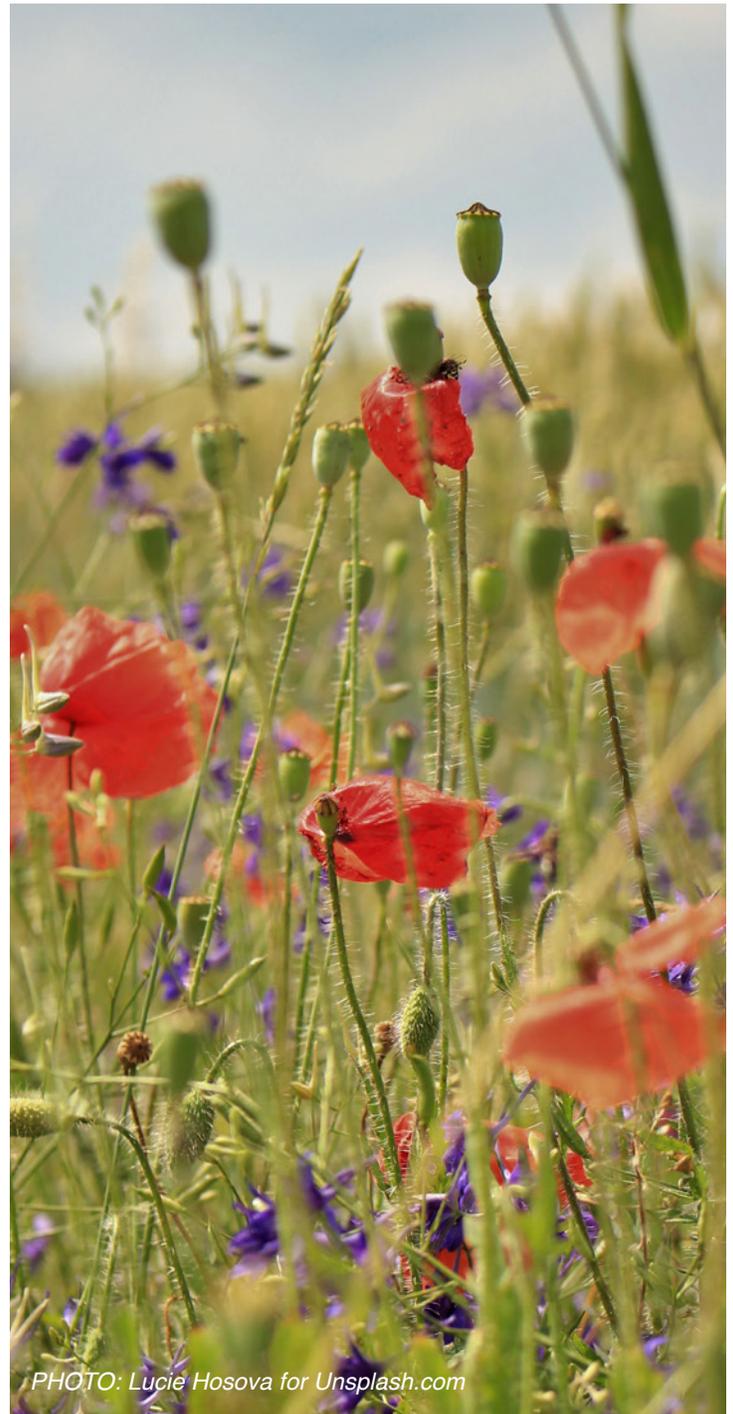


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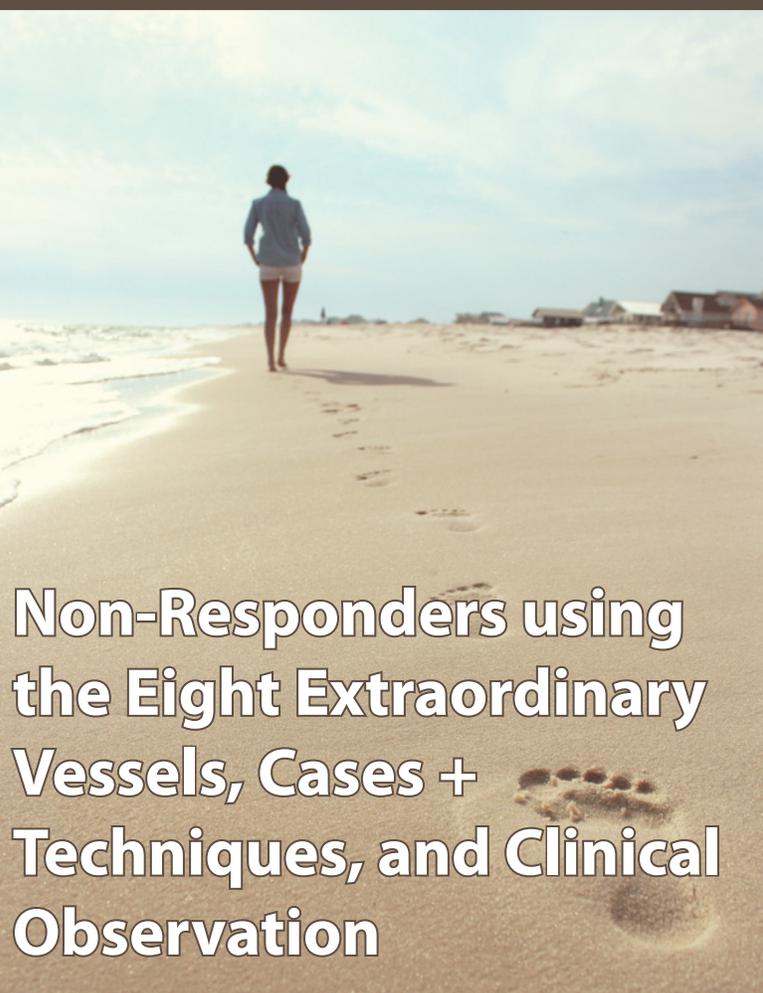
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*Jacob Larmour, TCM Student*

In the fall of 2017, a group of eight students at the International College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ICTCM) in Vancouver, BC, brandishing an odd assortment of spades, digging forks, hand cultivators and trowels, started digging up the planter boxes that lined the balconies on the southern and eastern sides of the college. It was vigorous work. Deep rooted shrubbery had been planted there in the past, and though there was scant trace above ground of this botanical legacy, the stubborn old roots told another story. After several work parties and many bags of organic debris hauled away, the 3 by 5 foot planter boxes were deemed clean enough to be put to rest for the winter.

*I first noticed the planter boxes at the ICTCM (tcmcollege.com) when I entered their Acupuncture program in April of 2017. Little use was being made of the balconies, and the planters were filled with*

*weeds, but they were strong, in good condition and there was an irrigation system in place.*

That fall, during Chinese Herbology class, inspiration struck. Wouldn't it be great to be able to see, touch and smell the herbs we were studying? I had some experience in the North American herbal tradition and knew how important it was to make an energetic connection with the herbs. What better way than to grow these plants right here at the school? At the very least, it would help us to remember their names and properties. I shared this idea with some of my fellow students who were very supportive. The Administration was also interested in creating an herb garden on campus and offered material support. And so, in the waning days of fall, before the rains set in, an enthusiastic group of students got together and, in the breaks between classes, cleared out the remains of the old plantings.

Then came the question of what to plant. Which Chinese herbs would grow in our coastal BC climate? In my researches on the Internet, I came across a workshop offered at Pacific Rim College back in

---

BELOW: Planting Dan Shen



PHOTO: Courtesy of Jacob Larmour

2015 led by Peg Schafer. Her book was mentioned: “The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm: A Cultivator’s Guide to Small-Scale Organic Herb Production” which I found online and ordered. This book was invaluable. It had detailed descriptions, propagation instructions, location and companion planting, field production, harvest & yield advice for 80 individual herbs, all based on her own experience at her farm in coastal California. She also listed which of these herbs were likely to be suitable for our Northwest climate.

I contacted Peg Schafer to find out if she could suggest any contacts here in BC, who might have some experience and local knowledge to share, and she connected me with Doug Moore of Tree of Life TCM clinic. It turned out that he had helped arrange the workshop at Pacific Rim and another one in October 2016 at Kwantlen College’s Institute for Sustainable Food Systems in Richmond, BC, with the help of its director, Kent Mullinix. From these workshops, a network of interested growers of Chinese medicinal herbs had formed. Their main goals at this point are to identify which herbs grow best in the different climatic regions of BC, to prioritise efforts to cultivate Chinese medicinal herbs that are highly endangered in the wild, to link interested practitioners to the growers network to support training and quality evaluation, and to establish a stable market for these herbs. I found myself to be

very much in alignment with these goals.

Doug suggested a number of seed sources, including Richters ([www.richters.com](http://www.richters.com)), Salt Spring Seeds ([www.saltspringseeds.com](http://www.saltspringseeds.com)), and Van Dusen Gardens ([vandusengarden.org](http://vandusengarden.org)) which are where I acquired the majority of the seed stock that we are using this year. These include: Huò Xiāng, Zhí Mǔ, Huáng Qí, Bái Zhú, Shè Gān, Hóng Huā, Dǎng Shēn, Má Huáng, Zǐ Sū Yè, Chē Qián Zǐ, Jié Gěng, Dān Shēn, Tóu Gu Cǎo, Jīng Jiè, Běi Xuán Shēn, Huáng Qín, Bān Lán Gēn and Kǔ Shēn Gēn.

One thing I learned in reading Peg Schafer’s book is that many of our common ornamental garden plants are also Chinese medicinal herbs, such as peony (Chi/Bai Shao), Honeysuckle (Jin Yin Hua), Platycodon (Jie Geng) and Forsythia (Lian Qiao). I contacted local nurseries and found some varieties that looked promising.

*The disadvantage with going this route is that many of the herbs that are available have been bred for ornamental rather than medicinal qualities.*

BELOW: Photo from east balcony



PHOTO: Courtesy of Jacob Larmour

BELOW: Photo from west balcony

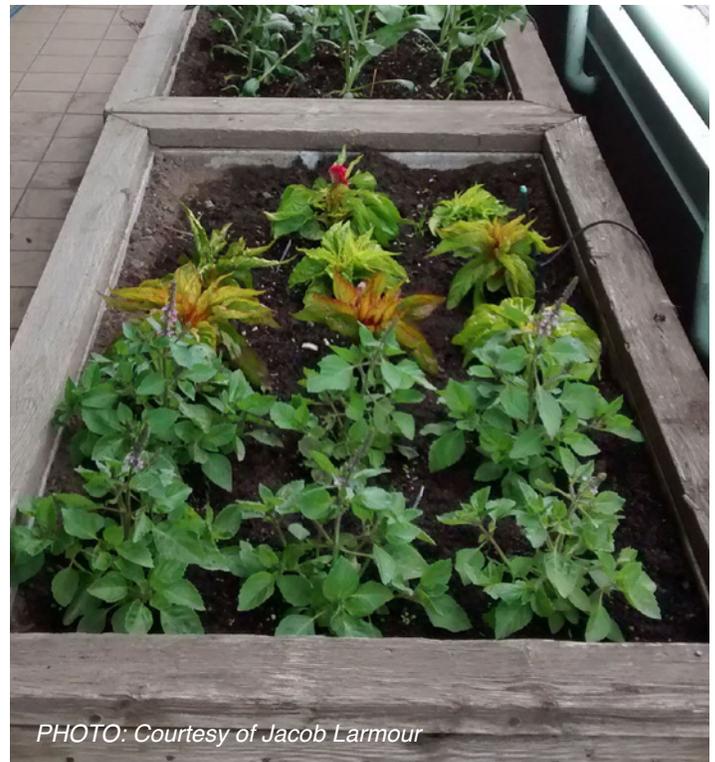


PHOTO: Courtesy of Jacob Larmour

*I decided that it was important to have some examples of these plants, and that over time we might be able to acquire varieties that were specifically bred for the medicinal properties.*

Locally I was able to acquire Chì/Bái Sháo (red & white Chinese peony), Mǔ Dān Pí (Tree Peony), Qīng Xiāng Zǐ, Jī Guān Huā (Cockscomb), Bǎi Hé (Tiger Lily) and Gǒu Qǐ Zǐ (Goji Berry).

We were able to rehabilitate the former irrigation system for the planters and keep the old soil. We amended the soil in the majority of the planters by simply adding a 32 litre bag of organic compost to each planter box. There are some herbs which prefer a sandier, well-draining soil, such as Huang Qi and Ma Huang. We added sand to their soil. Herbs that need full sun are being raised on the south facing balcony, and those that can tolerate part shade on the east facing balcony. This is very much a learning process as we are all growing these herbs for the first time.

The vision is to bring the living, healing spirit of Chinese medicinal herbs into the educational environment.

*They serve to remind us that TCM is fundamentally about being in harmony*

BELOW: *She gan*



PHOTO: Courtesy of Jacob Larmour

*with nature, both with our own and that of the natural world.*

They can inspire us to identify and appreciate the many Chinese herbs that grow in our gardens and on our streets. By exposing practitioners to the reality that these herbs can be grown here in North America, we can stimulate an interest in a home grown market. I'm excited to be learning more about Chinese herbs, both how to use them and how to grow them. I'm looking forward to making connections with other growers who are willing to share their knowledge and experience.

If you're interested in keeping up with what's happening with the garden, check out our Facebook page ICTCM Herb Garden: <https://www.facebook.com/ICTCM-Herb-Garden-423075171460929/>

- *Jacob Larmour*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacob Larmour is a current student at the ICTCM-V and a masters candidate at the International Institute of Medical Qigong. He received a Certificate in Organic Horticulture at the University of California Santa Cruz Farm & Garden program in 1993, and worked for many years as an organic vegetable grower.

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## A VANCOUVER DOCTOR JUST STARTED A PUBLIC WAR ON NATUROPATHS



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*"Does he have any idea the harm the medical establishment causes? More deaths than all alternatives combined. So screw him, blow hards like that have been mouthing off for decades if not centuries, before when they denied germs and bled their patients with leeches ignorantly. He probably hates midwives too. Don't worry buddy, nobody's after your money. The best medicine will be when allopathic and alt or natural medicine work together long and closely enough to find the best options without egotism. I remember around here when practitioners would be threatened after a lecture somewhere by a couple of shady thugs, who wanted them to be quieter or just stop, and people deliberately trying to sue practitioners for the 'medical profession. Now many hospitals pretend alternative care but*

*really only offer some mental willpower advice and are led to their usual offerings. To their credit many doctors and hospitals do have open minds and allow alternatives, because of the benefit they have seen. And, many natural health practitioners are becoming increasingly aware of mainstream medicine theory and mechanism, realize their own limitations and when emergency care is needed. There are many large databases of drug/herb interaction that MD's can also become familiar with. World medicine it's theories are still in infancy, lets not get territorial, there is much to learn for everybody."*

*- Fran Cahill*

## HERBAL SUPPLEMENT HAS SOME NEW YORKERS TALKING, INSTEAD OF COUGHING

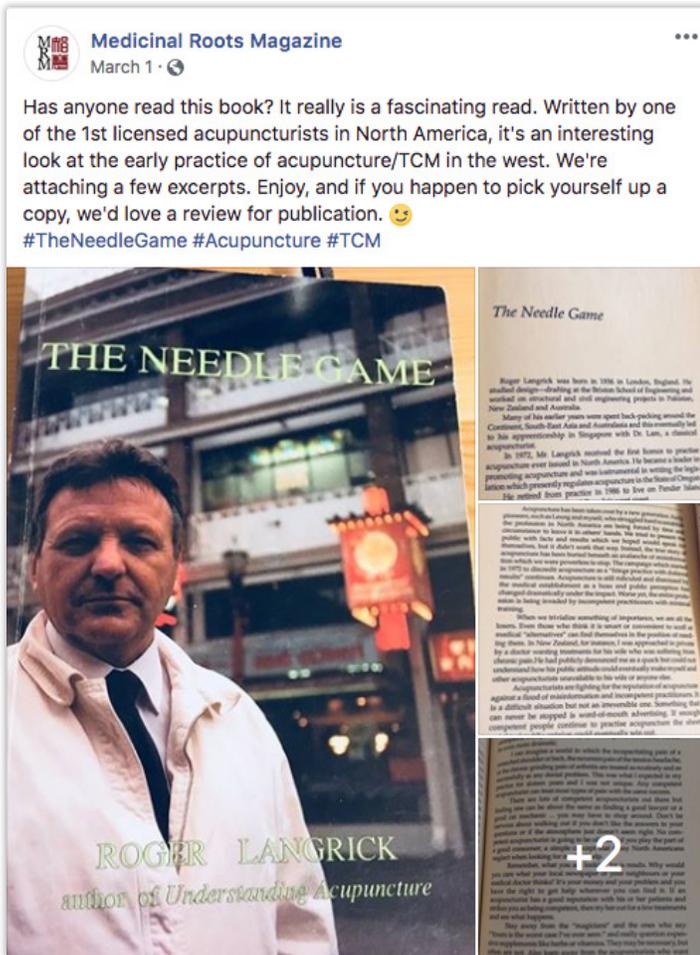


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*"I love this syrup! I have 3 bottles of Pei Pa Koa 8-))"*

*- Shura Babayan*

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"Thank you so much for sharing this. It was a perfect way to start my day before heading into clinic. It's hard to believe after all these years of referring to his texts, this is the first time I've heard his voice! What a wonderful soul. His work is a legacy and such a gift to so many of us. One of the true pioneers of helping "Westerners" understand this brilliant system of medicine. His life and passing has touched so many of us. Virtual hugs to the tcm community. Especially to those whose hearts ache from missing him. What a perfect course of his to share to honor his hun to the afterlife. Thank you MRM "

- Delphine Ducky

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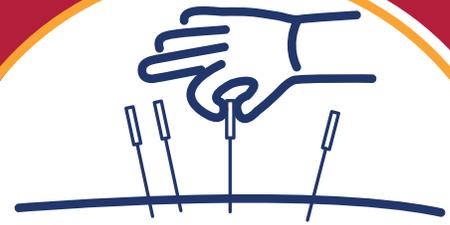
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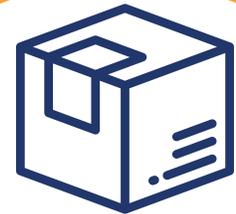
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