

Summer 2021

MEDICINAL ROOTS 相慧 MAGAZINE

Ancient Wisdom - Modern Healthcare



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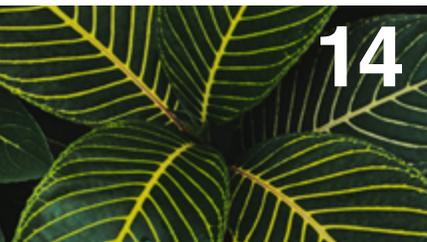


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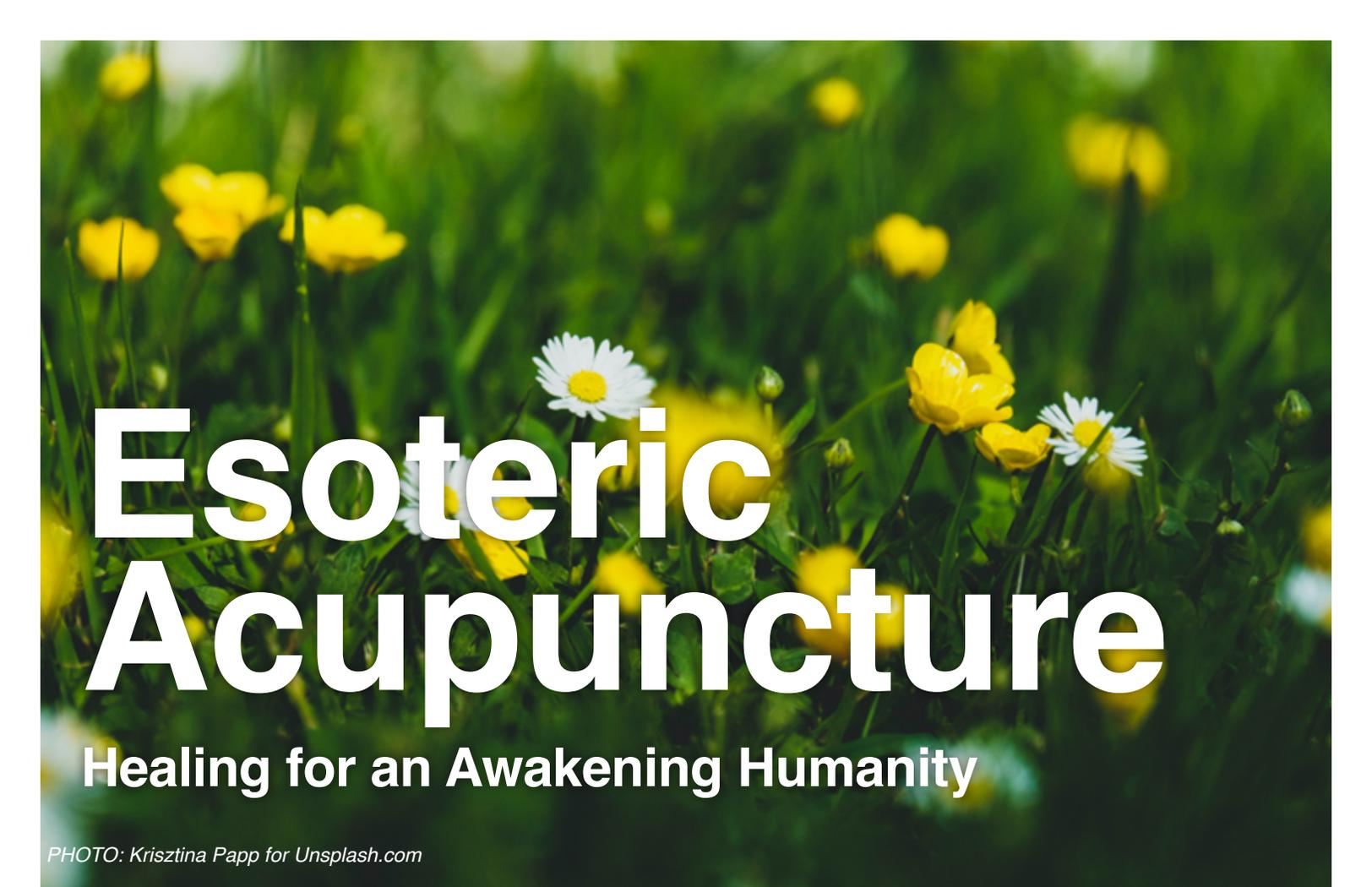
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Esoteric Acupuncture

Healing for an Awakening Humanity

PHOTO: Krisztina Papp for Unsplash.com

by **Christopher M. Di Tecco, R.Ac, R.TCMP**

I was originally drawn to Chinese medicine because it so elegantly blended the energetic theory of Qi with a holistic approach to health and wellness that went beyond the management of symptoms. I personally feel it is most effective to determine the root cause of imbalances and work to harmonize the systems of the body to bring about healing. After a few years of clinical practice, I started to yearn for tools that could bridge the microcosm of acupuncture to the macrocosm of the energetic nature of our existence and our consciousness. It just so happened, that in the summer of 2013 I found myself, seemingly almost by accident, attending Esoteric Acupuncture Level 1 training with Dr. Mikio Sankey in Toronto.

“Esoteric Acupuncture, in its truest essence, is another way of viewing life to truly

understand ourselves and is a philosophy that gives one the opportunity to understand how we are interconnected to everything and everyone else in the Universe and beyond.”

- Dr. Mikio Sankey¹

Esoteric Acupuncture is a creative healing art that focuses on consciousness expansion. The pioneer of Esoteric Acupuncture is Dr. Mikio Sankey (www.esotericacupuncture.com). Dr. Sankey has integrated many traditions and modalities including: the traditional Chinese acupuncture system, Sacred

¹Sankey, Mikio: *Sea of Fire - Cosmic Fire, Esoteric Acupuncture Volume IV*. Mountain Castle Publishing, 2006

Geometry, Hindu Chakra and Nadi systems, the Cabalistic Tree of Life, and physics from Einstein to the Field Theory, quantum mechanics and superstring theory.

The word “esoteric” can be defined as something that is “hidden” or “not readily known”.

In the practice of Esoteric Acupuncture we are aiming to pierce the physical body to activate that which is hidden². A key focus of Esoteric Acupuncture is to facilitate the journey of self-discovery. This process is often described as “finding one’s puzzle piece in life”. Who are you? Why are you here now? By unlocking your inner hidden truths, you can get one step closer to that self-realization and a more fundamental level of healing.

²Sankey, Mikio: *Esoteric Acupuncture Level 1 Lecture*, Toronto, 5 July 2013

Esoteric Acupuncture is a Heart centred practice. Love is an expansive energy and flows from the Heart. Conversely, fear is a contractive energy and is governed by the Kidney. Being in an expansive state of consciousness (including both emotionally and mentally) means you are able to receive what is available to you and are able to identify and act on the infinite potential that is at hand. The energy of fear is very constricting and closes us off from new opportunities, ideas, and even constricts the vital energy of our body to have a negative effect upon our physical health and wellbeing. Opening the Heart centre and cultivating the energy of unconditional love and compassion will counteract and balance the energy of fear.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ENERGY PRACTITIONERS?

We know that proper diagnosis, correct selection of points and proper technique in needling are significant factors for any successful treatment, including Esoteric Acupuncture. What is of equal importance is the knowledge that the consciousness of the practitioner and the client effects the



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therapeutic outcome. Embracing the idea that every human being is a multi-faceted, combination of different fields of consciousness that inherently affects others, opens us to explore the depth of our role as a practitioner. Qi is a specific form of energy and energy is a transporter of information. Quantum Physics has a theory known as the observer effect. When conducting certain experiments, it has been noted the observer has an effect on the outcome of the experiment³. Another way to describe this is that the consciousness of the participants has an effect on the outcome.

When we needle an acupuncture point, we as practitioners are opening ourselves to have a deeper, unspoken, exchange with our clients as our energy fields are connected for that moment via the acupuncture needle.

Qi, and all the information it holds, becomes part of that exchange. This means our thoughts and intentions have an influence on our clients' experience. In his lectures, Mikio Sankey often reminds his students to "walk your talk" or practice what you preach. The energetic signatures of the foods and drinks you are consuming are being passed through your hands to your clients. If you are consuming a lot of sugar, is that energy being transferred to your clients? If you are drinking alcohol or consuming drugs, is that energy being transferred to your clients? If you are in a high state of fear or anger, is that energy being transferred to your clients? As advanced energy healers we must begin to ask ourselves these questions and take responsibility for the answers we feel are true.

³Talbot, Michael: *The Holographic Universe*. HarperPerennial, 1992 p36.

THE TECHNIQUE:

Another way Esoteric Acupuncture differs from other modalities is that it focuses on the finer energetic levels above the physical, emotional, and mental levels. The majority of the acupuncture points used are on the main meridian pathways and the stimulation of the acupuncture sites are performed by needling the points very gently with ultra-fine, high quality needles. The aim is to be exceedingly gentle with needling, refraining from needle manipulation that achieves de qi, as the goal is to activate only the finest frequency of Qi related to the Shen. The difference lies in the point selection and activation. Dr. Sankey explains what he terms the New Encoding Patterns, which are grid like patterns made up of specific acupuncture points needled in a specific sequence which create sacred geometric patterns. The grids that are created with the needling and activation of the New Encoding Patterns engage with the energetic fields of the client. This unique activation of the acupuncture points creates an opportunity to access higher realms of consciousness and to unlock the information contained within the cellular memory to initiate a more fundamental form of healing.

DISCERN THE WHISPER:

One of the integral New Encoding Patterns of Esoteric Acupuncture is "Discern the Whisper". I have found this pattern to be highly effective for clients new to this form of energy work. It is easy to lose our centre and be overcome with fear, especially during these times of elevated stress and uncertainty. This pattern is a beautiful way to invite our clients (and ourselves) to stay grounded in their centre.

Discernment is a key feature in this process of self-discovery and is necessary in order to trust yourself and your decisions.



PHOTO: Dominik Vanyi for Unsplash.com

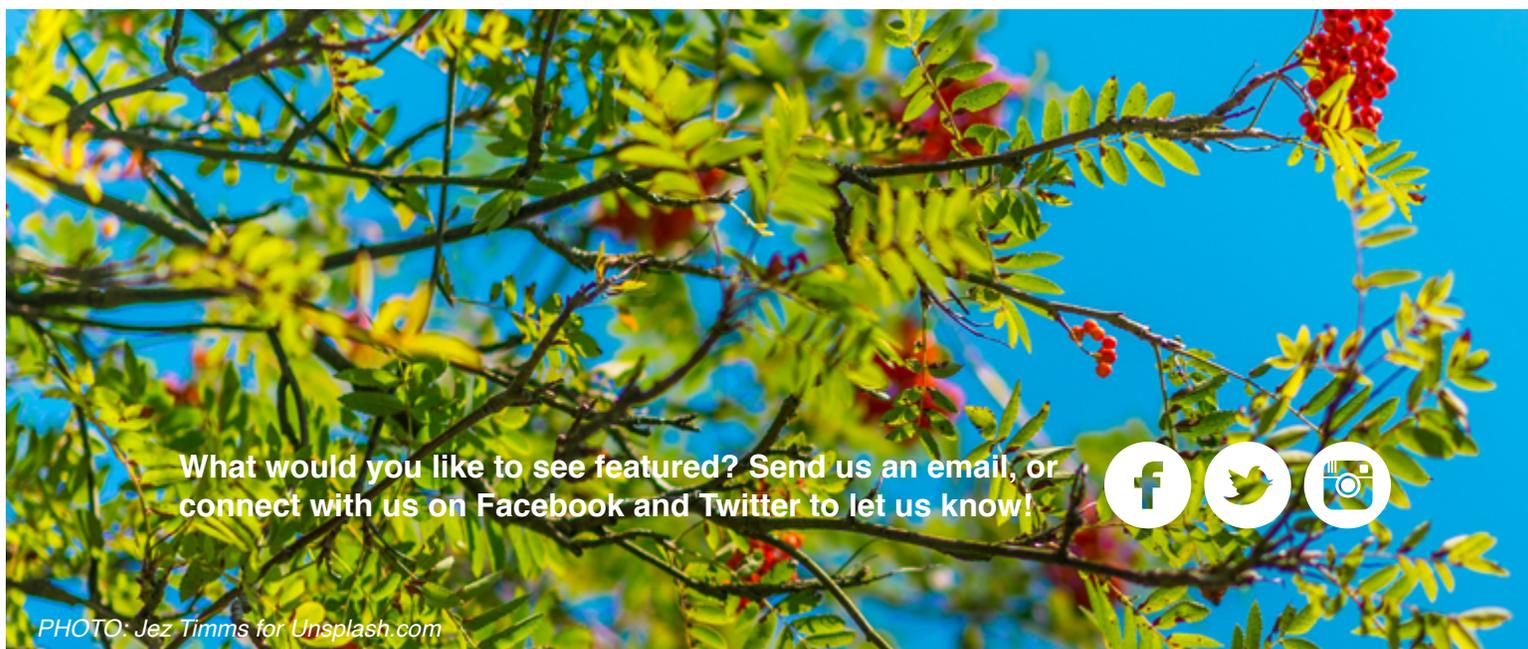
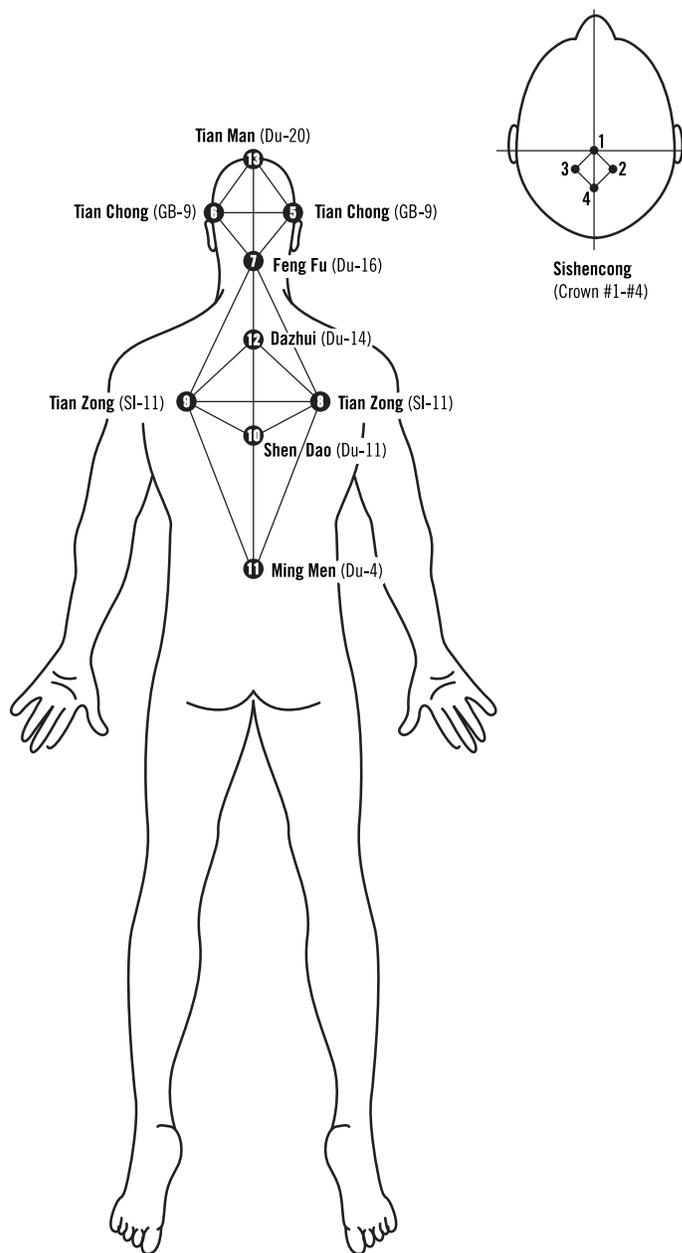
True discernment is beyond weighing the facts and making a decision. It is knowing things to be true - not just in your mind, but in your heart.

Chinese medicine views the Heart as the organ/energy system that governs the mind and spirit (Shen). The Heart is the gateway to higher consciousness and being able to tune into your Heart is an invaluable skill to aid in accessing higher consciousness and in honing one's abilities of discernment.

We all have the power within ourselves but so often we spend so much time and energy searching and pursuing for power outside of ourselves. If we search within our own centre we will be able to have access to all of the answers we are looking for if we can just learn to tune in to our Heart. Tuning in to hear the messages from our Heart requires a quiet mind because the Heart communicates in a whisper. It is a subtle and fine frequency.

The Hindu Chakra theory describes the Heart chakra as being a twelve petalled lotus concealing a jewel at the centre (The Jewel in the Lotus). For most people,

⁴ Image of the pattern "Discern The Whisper" used with permission from Sankey, Mikio: *Discern The Whisper, Esoteric Acupuncture Volume II*. Mountain Castle Publishing, 2005.



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the petals are closed, protecting the Heart centre. If one cultivates unconditional love, forgiveness and trust, an attitude of open heartedness will develop and the petals will begin to unfold.

It takes a high vibration to open the petals. The true seeker, going within, has the capacity to open the petals of the Heart. If one's focus is on the outer world and is distracted by the all the dramas of daily life and chasing after external answers, chances are, the petals will not open.

The pattern "Discern the Whisper" aims to facilitate this connection to our Heart and higher consciousness. There are 13 acupuncture points that are energized in the pattern, much like the twelve petals of the lotus surrounding the jewel in the centre equals thirteen. In Esoteric Acupuncture thirteen is a number used for "power within" and signifies super-consciousness⁵. One of the aspects of this pattern is to aid the individual in rapidly entering into their own Heart centre.

The more I practice, the more it becomes evident to me that true, deep and meaningful healing comes when a person is in tune with their Heart centre. Being in tune with the Heart is the gateway to true self knowledge and expanded consciousness. If you truly follow your Heart you will never be led astray. Esoteric Acupuncture has provided an open framework for me to understand and work with energy in a way that I feel could serve humanity as we awaken to greater possibilities and potential.

Get quiet. Go inward. Discern the whisper of your Heart.

- Christopher M. Di Tecco

⁵ Sankey, Mikio: *Esoteric Meaning of Key Numbers*. Mountain Castle Publishing 2016



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christopher M. Di Tecco, R.Ac, R.TCMP

Christopher has been a practitioner of Chinese medicine since 2006 and operates a thriving practice in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Chris has been a passionate practitioner and student of Esoteric Acupuncture since 2013 and began teaching Esoteric Acupuncture in 2019.

Chris can be reached through his website at www.chrisditecco.com



PHOTO: Matthew Henry for Unsplash.com

FSN Therapy Modern Acupuncture

by Di Wu, R.TCMP

PHOTO: Leanna Cushman for Unsplash.com

OVERVIEW

FSN stands for Fu's Subcutaneous Needling. Briefly speaking, it is an acupuncture therapy that seeks to treat pain and diseases by inserting a special FSN needle into the subcutaneous layer and manipulating it to relieve the pathological tension of the muscles. Because FSN therapy has developed its own new theories, concepts and manipulation methods, it not only has clinical therapeutic effect, but can also be used as a differential diagnosis. Because FSN is derived from traditional acupuncture whilst also integrating many modern medical concepts and knowledge, it can accurately be referred to as modern acupuncture.

FSN therapy was invented by Dr. Fu Zhonghua in 1996. Inspired by the superficial needling method in the Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic, he used subcutaneous needling to treat a tennis elbow case when the traditional acupuncture method did not work and was able to obtain satisfactory results immediately. Since then, he has continued to study this technique and has developed it into today's FSN therapy.

THEORETICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Within the context of modern acupuncture, the terms meridian and acupoints are no longer used in current FSN theory. The two theoretical pillars involved in FSN theory are subcutaneous loose connective tissue and muscle tissue. These concepts make it easy to communicate with other healthcare professions in shared terminology.

Although the FSN needle only pierces into the subcutaneous connective tissue, the distribution and function of the subcutaneous connective tissue are remarkably similar to the meridians of traditional Chinese medicine. Therefore, FSN therapy punctures superficially but treats deeply.



PHOTO: Francesco Perego for Unsplash.com

The Similarities Between Connective Tissue and Meridians

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widely distributed 2. Connection, support 3. Immunization, protection 4. Substance, information, and energy exchange 	↔	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute the whole body 2. Connect the viscera and link with the outside and inside 3. Defend against external Qi 4. Run Qi and Blood
Connective tissue	VS	Meridian

Table provided by: Di Wu

Based on many years of clinical experience, Dr. Fu put forward a unique concept of FSN medicine: tightened muscle (TM) which is one of the most fundamental theories in FSN. Within this framework, the concept of 'muscle' mainly refers to skeletal muscle. For those acupuncturists who are familiar with myofascial trigger points (MTrP), FSN Therapy believes that clinically, doctors cannot just focus on MTrP. Instead, the whole muscle, which contains MTrP, is in a state of pathological tension. Such muscles are called tightened muscles. Tightened muscles are the cause of many diseases, including some intractable diseases. FSN can quickly and effectively eliminate the pathological tension of the muscle.

MANIPULATION

Among the unique features of FSN, are the specialized needles used and the manipulation method. There is only one specific type of FSN needle and one manipulation technique (which is

called 'sweeping movement') used during an FSN treatment. This technique quickly releases tension of tightened muscles by pulling fascia layers using a large amount of stimulation. The release this provides to the tightened muscle leads to restoration of the neurovascular function, improvement of blood supply, and restoration of the body's self-healing power.

FEATURES OF FSN

In addition to the uniqueness the FSN needle and manipulation method, there are other distinct features of this therapy. In FSN therapy, practitioners insert a needle at a location where there is no pain, which is very different from other needle puncturing methods such as Ashi point acupuncture and the trigger points of dry needling. FSN therapy seeks to identify the tightened muscle (TM) and once located, the FSN needle is inserted nearby or at a distance from the TM to treat it. But no needles are inserted at the tender spots.

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PHOTO: Zhao Chen for Unsplash.com

	Acupuncture	Dry needling	FSN
insertion point	Acupoint or ashi point	Trigger point	near tightened muscle
layer	Muscle	Muscle	Subcutaneous
Patient sensation	Needling sensation	soreness, local twitching response	Minimal pain, no needling sensation, no soreness
Motion during treatment	Simple remote motion	No motion	Complete reperfusion approaches
category	TCM	Western medicine	Modern acupuncture

Table provided by: Di Wu

Because the needle is in the subcutaneous layer, the patient can change his body position during FSN treatment. As a result, another unique aspect of FSN treatment process is that the patient is able to perform activities for the TM during treatment. These are called reperfusion approaches (RA).

Since there are no large nerves or blood vessels under the skin, FSN therapy is very safe, less painful and the effect is amazingly fast.

The distinct features of FSN include:

1. Unique theory: tightened muscle (TM) theory.
2. Unique needles: FSN needle (patented trocar needle).
3. Unique needle insertion point: in the subcutaneous layer of non-diseased areas.
4. Unique operation: sweeping movement.
5. Unique auxiliary method: reperfusion approaches (RA).
6. Unique patient experience: painless (or minimal pain).
7. Unique curative effect: quick instant effect.

INDICATIONS

From the indication tree of FSN, we may see that FSN therapy can treat many painful conditions and diseases.



FSN Indications Tree diagram provided by: Di Wu

Since FSN therapy can treat any disorder related to tightened muscles, and due to the wide distribution of muscles, FSN therapy can be used to treat many diseases, even if only causally related to tightened muscles. Skeletal muscles are primarily characterized by their mechanical activity required for posture, movement and breathing, which depends on muscle fibre contractions. However, skeletal muscle is not just a component in our locomotor system. Recent evidence has identified skeletal muscle as a secretory organ (Pedersen, 2013 July)¹. From this perspective, muscles can be

¹ Muscle as a secretory organ. Bente K Pedersen. *Comprehensive Physiology*. 2013 Jul;3(3):1337-62. doi: 10.1002/cphy.c120033.

considered the largest organ of the human body in the sense that they account for 40%-50% of body weight, and they are also the body's only source of strength. Nerves and blood vessels often accompany muscles, therefore, in addition to pain, which is the most common symptom, functional damage to muscles will also produce many clinical symptoms, such as gastritis, urinary calculi, dysmenorrhea, numbness, cold syndrome, insomnia, asthma, stress urinary incontinence, constipation, and even some gland secretion disorders.

CLINICAL APPLICATION

The change of tongue coating during FSN treatment of chronic gastritis.

This is a female patient who suffers from chronic gastritis characterized by stomachache for 3 years. Her TM is the rectus abdominis muscle. The picture shows the changes of tongue coating before and 5 minutes, 8 minutes and 30 minutes after FSN treatment. The tongue coating becomes thinner in 30 minutes. Two weeks later, on the fourth visit, the greasy thick tongue coating has almost disappeared. Many FSN practitioners have also reported this phenomenon in their practice. Rectus abdominis belongs to the Stomach meridian, and FSN also confirms the theory of traditional Chinese medicine via the tongue and its coating: see the image of tongue that is closely related to the Spleen and Stomach.

The tongue is also a muscle, the only muscle that is not covered by the skin. We can observe it directly. By looking at the tongue, we can see the outside and know the inside. We cannot see the muscles covered by the skin.

By observing the changes of tongue coating before and after FSN treatment, we are able to observe the changes of other muscles caused by FSN treatment.

There are many other clinical applications of FSN, such as the treatment of urinary calculi. It not only quickly relieves pain, but also many patients can expel the stones within a few days of treatment, eliminating the need for surgery.

The indications of FSN are still expanding and its clinical application prospects and mechanism research are worthy of attention.

- Di Wu

Tongue Coating Changes Before and After FSN Treatment

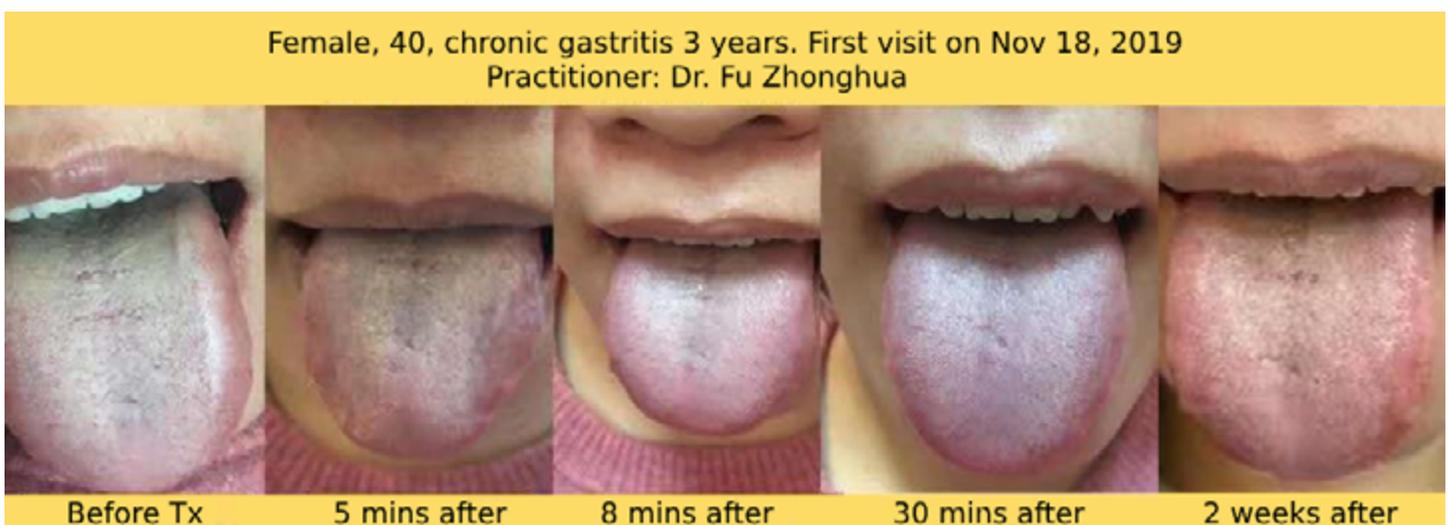


Image provided by: Di Wu



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Di Wu, R.TCMP

Registered TCM practitioner in BC, Canada. Graduated from Heilongjiang TCM University in 1994.

President of Fu's Subcutaneous Needling Association of Canada (FSNAC). Vice President of FSN Specialty Committee of World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS). Vice President of The British Columbia Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Practitioners (ATCMA). Translator of the English version of the FSN monograph "The Foundation of Fu's Subcutaneous Needling Medicine"

In 2017, Di established Fu's Subcutaneous Needling Association of Canada. He hosts FSN gatherings every month with members to share and improve FSN skills and clinical experience.

fsnac.ca

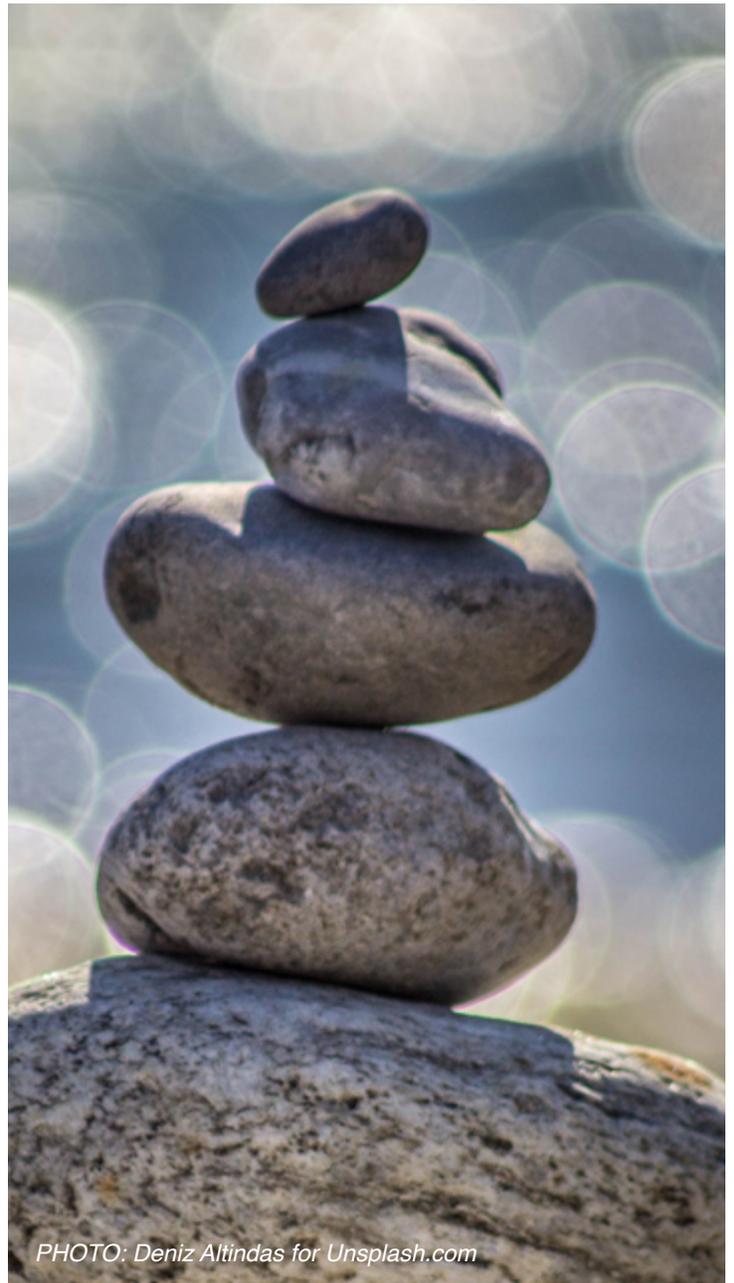


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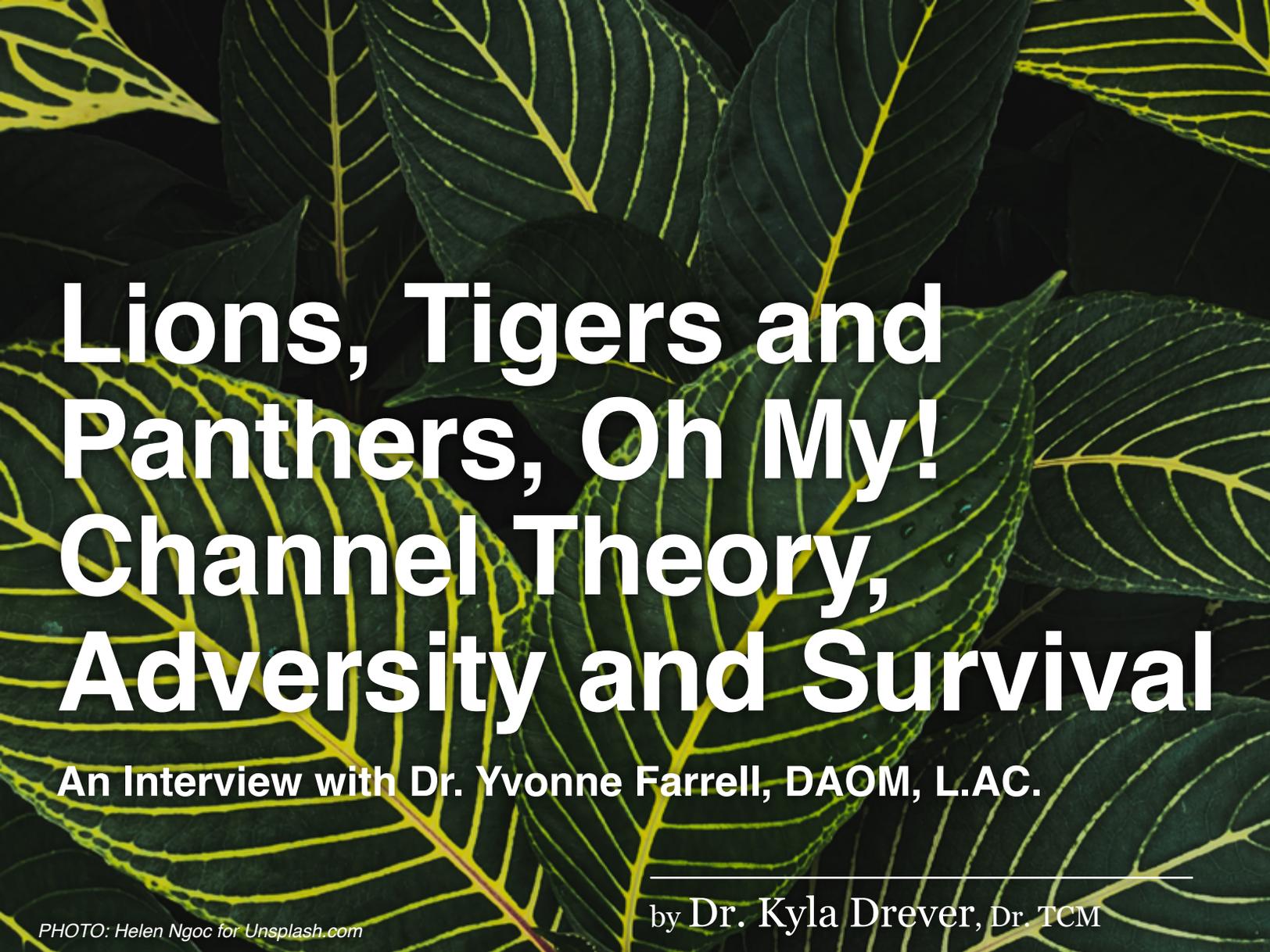
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Lions, Tigers and Panthers, Oh My! Channel Theory, Adversity and Survival

An Interview with Dr. Yvonne Farrell, DAOM, L.AC.

PHOTO: Helen Ngoc for Unsplash.com

by Dr. Kyla Drever, Dr. TCM

In the wake of the 1.5 year pandemic and the incredibly transformative and often traumatizing nature of the current global cultural, political and economic climate, the release of Dr. Yvonne Farrell's latest book *Acupuncture for Surviving Adversity: Acts of Self-Preservation* couldn't be timelier. One of our editors, Dr. Kyla Drever, Dr. TCM, had the privilege to sit down with Yvonne and talk about a variety of topics including her own journey with, and relationship to Chinese Medicine, the role of the Channel system in the world of survival and self-preservation, and what it is like to be an author.

Hello Yvonne, thank you so much for taking the time to talk to MRM today.

Hi Kyla, it's my pleasure.

Can you tell us about what brought you to Chinese medicine in the first place?

I don't think it's that impressive a story. I think my story is very much like a lot of people's stories who practice acupuncture. I got sick. I got chronic fatigue syndrome from an Epstein Barr virus infection that went undiagnosed for several years. And when it was diagnosed by a Western medical doctor, there was nothing that they could offer me in terms of treatment. Somebody suggested that I see an acupuncturist and I did. And in three weeks, I started to feel better. And in six weeks, I started

to feel more like myself. And in three months, I was fine. And so later, when I decided to go back to school, I remembered that experience. And that's what took me to acupuncture school.

What do you love most about the practice of Chinese medicine?

I am very easily bored. I have had a couple of careers before this one, and neither of them lasted for longer than nine years because I started to get bored with them. And I've been doing acupuncture, well, if you include my study of it, for nearly 30 years now. And I know I'm never going to be bored. I have a practice that gives me a sense of meaning and purpose, but I also know I'm never going to learn everything there is to learn about this medicine in the time that I have left, so there's not a chance in hell that I'm going to be bored.

And who have been your major influences in learning Chinese medicine?

I've really been very fortunate in that I've had a lot of great teachers. I've had teachers like Heiner Fruehauf, like Elisabeth Rochat de la Vallee. I love her. She was an amazing teacher. I've also taken courses and done retreats with people like Lonnie Jarrett. So, I've had a very broad experience with

teachers in Chinese medicine. But clearly, the people that have had the most influence have been Jeffrey Yuen and one of his long-time students, David Chan. Those two teachers spoke to me in a way that just made sense. I've followed Jeffrey since I was in school originally, and David, who was a teacher of mine when I was in my master's program, has now become a very dear friend, and we spend a lot of time talking about Chinese medicine and Jeffrey's perspective on it.

And how would you describe your style of practice?

I think of my practice as Channel Theory. That's my approach to Chinese medicine, Channel theory.

If you want to look at the sort of nature of my individual practice, I think it is one that recognizes the impact of stress and trauma on the body-mind connection.

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Which means I treat a lot of people with chronic illness. I don't treat a lot of people who get low back pain from lifting heavy boxes. It's more of the internal medicine where the body mind connection has been somehow disrupted.

So somatization is a big piece of your practice?

Somatization is a huge piece of what I do, and the recognition that there's no separation between the body, mind and spirit. Emotions are connected to physical symptoms which are connected to belief systems. Everything is all connected. And if there's a problem with one, everything is out of balance. That's why the Channel theory label becomes so important to me, because for me, it's not about treating a symptom, it's about regulating channel flow.

It seems like a lot of North American schools teach from the tenants of TCM, which is heavy on the Zang-Fu theory for both acupuncture and herbal formulas, while classical perspectives find channel theory to be more relevant and effective for acupuncture. What are your thoughts on the importance of Channel theory over a Zang-Fu perspective for acupuncture?

I used to think about this a lot when I first started teaching CEU courses, because I think this overlap between acupuncture and herbal theory that gets made into this version of TCM comes about because of the schooling system. I think we have four years to train somebody, we need to train them in acupuncture and in herbs, and it's best to try to find common ground between the two, and so the common ground then becomes Zang-Fu theory.

But I think acupuncture is a completely separate modality, and so it is theoretically much deeper and also much more expansive than Zang-Fu theory. Zang-Fu theory only addresses one aspect of the acupuncture system. Really, it's the Primary meridians. So, I think that the Zang-Fu theory is important from an internal medicine point of view. It's also incredibly important when you're writing formulas, but it becomes less important when you're trying to direct Qi flow, because when you get to

that stage, the channel is much more important than the organ. The system is much more important than the function of one aspect of the system. So, for example the Liver channel. The Liver channel includes the liver organ, but the liver organ is not the only aspect of the Liver channel. So, if you're focusing on the organ function, then you might be missing other things that are happening in the channel. And acupuncture facilitates the movement in the channel, which then may affect the organ function but isn't directly doing that.

When you talk about the channel as a whole and the channel system, are you referring to the ideas of the Sinews, the Luos, the Eight Extraordinary Vessels?

Yes, and I am saying that the Primary channel system is sort of a median, and that acupuncture theory is much more expansive than that. For example, we have Sinew channels; we have Cutaneous Zones that don't even have pathways on them, but that can be influenced by acupuncture; we have a Luo collateral system; we have a Primary channel system; we have a Divergent system; and we have the Eight Extraordinary Vessels.

But I'm also saying if you pick a specific channel, even if it's a Primary channel,

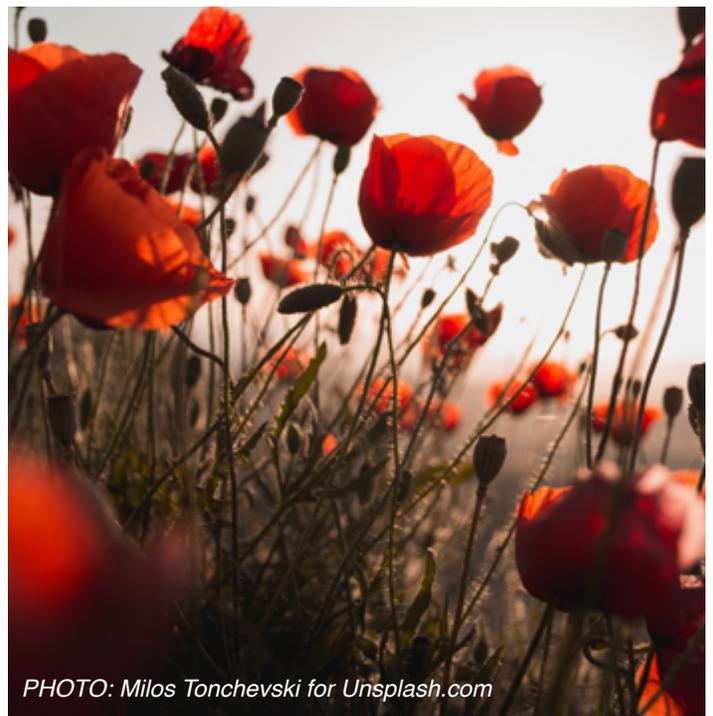


PHOTO: Milos Tonchevski for Unsplash.com

like the Stomach channel, within that channel, you can influence much more than the Stomach, because the channel has a pathway that is both exterior and interior in nature, because it has branches that go in different places. You can affect the eyes. You can affect the ears. You can affect the intestinal function. You can affect a lot more things than just the stomach organ by accessing the channel.

And when we put a needle in a Stomach point like Stomach 36, you have a list of functions that that Stomach 36 does; it drains Damp; it tonifies Spleen Qi; it strengthens the legs, it does a lot of things. What's not listed in the books on function is it courses the channel. The minute you put a needle in any point on the Stomach channel, you are opening the channel. Now you have access to a multitude of things that are well beyond what Stomach 36 is supposed to do, which means, ultimately, that you can use less needles for greater purpose, and get faster results, because if you're trying to get someone better by changing organ function, it takes a long time, but it takes an instant to regulate Qi flow.

I don't want people to think I don't believe in TCM and Zang Fu. Because I do. I just think it's very limited from an acupuncture perspective. So, I think TCM is a sort of distillation of classical acupuncture that was distilled down in order to teach it quickly and efficiently to a great number of people to serve a greater community. But it's only a small part of what acupuncture is really about.

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One of the basic thoughts of Chinese medicine is that the emotions are not separate from the physical body. However, modern TCM theory mainly relates to only the seven emotions related to the organs and the effects of imbalance on the Zang-Fu or Five Elements. Your first book, *Psyche of Emotional Pain*, takes the psyche-body relationship to a much deeper level. How did you make the connection between not just emotions but psychology and human development and the Eight Extraordinary Vessels?

The turning point for me was obviously, Jeffrey Yuen's classes, but I was pre-loaded or predisposed to the understanding of the connection of mind and body through years of studying Carl Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist.

I had psychology teachers in the past who turned me on to Jung. And I have read most of what he's written and much of what his students have written in great detail, and so I came into Chinese Medicine with that understanding of the model, that connection between body, mind, and spirit. So, when Jeffrey started talking, it was like, oh, there's an alignment here. And I suppose the biggest connector between the two was the archetypal nature. Jung talks a lot about archetypes, and the way Jeffrey talks about the Eight Extras, they're very archetypal.

And what was your inspiration to write your newest book and what do you hope readers will gain by reading it?

Well, I started to write the book before the pandemic, so I can't say that the pandemic inspired me. But what I will say is, in the last three or 4 years of my life, I have been acutely aware of how terribly patients judge themselves for surviving, meaning they make choices in order to survive in the moment, but then they beat themselves up about those choices. And that having that experience repeatedly with patients made me realize that people don't understand how survival works. They don't appreciate the importance of survival, and therefore they go about surviving unconsciously and they pay a terrible price for that in terms of chronic

illness and altered mental states. So, I just started to look at that. How do I get people to understand that the problem is not the survival or the need for survival? The problem is the unconsciousness around it, and that the judgment, the self-judgment that that provokes, is very self-destructive. And so, I started looking at how all the channel systems had a way that they helped us stay alive, and that if we could be aware of that and grateful for it, then we could move beyond survival into a state of thriving when survival was no longer the focus. But if we are unconscious, we would be stuck in survival forever, and therefore our health and our well-being would deteriorate over time.

During this survival piece of the pandemic, it's like I've developed this sense of everything has a cost. For example, in public health, you cannot make an absolute Good decision in public health, you can only make the best decision you can because there's always a cost.

But that's true in life.

Yes, but I'm finding it very defeating. It's this realization that, wow, there's nothing I can do that isn't going to have a loss or sacrifice piece to it.

But that's a very important discussion to have, because if you recognize that everything has a cost, you can see if you are conscious enough, weigh the costs and make an informed choice.

How do you deal with the loss of the cost, though?

You invest in loss. You recognize, for instance, that the grief that comes from losing a loved one is the cost of having loved deeply. Would you give up having loved deeply not to feel that loss? But you wouldn't.

People do.

And those people are unhealthy. They suffer for that because they've chosen the cost of cutting

themselves off. There's a price to pay for that. So, the minute you embody into a meat skeleton, you have to follow the rules of physics. Which means you've now embraced a life of polarity, which means your life is going to be a struggle to continually balance Yin and Yang. And there is a cost for everything. Those are the rules. If you allow your unconscious mind to avoid the cost, it will always work towards survival. And if you're working towards survival, you cannot thrive. The choice is to become as conscious as you can so that you can choose when survival is more important than thriving, and when thriving is more important than survival, which means you get to choose which loss you're going to embrace. But there's always going to be loss.

It's a tough one. That's why I wrote the book, because it's a tough one. We don't recognize how victimized we are by our lack of choice.

I think in some ways, I was very fortunate that in my early thirties, I had a teacher who told me to invest in loss, and I didn't know what that meant at the time. I really didn't. I just knew that it made me curl up on the floor in a fetal position and cry for half an hour. But what I've come to understand from, people like Pema Chodron and other Buddhists and Daoists is that when we try to avoid discomfort, to avoid suffering, to avoid misery, that we actually perpetuate it.

I tell patients all the time, if you woke up this morning, your body did what it was supposed to do. It got you here. Instead of saying, "I wish I hadn't done that, and I wish I hadn't done that, or I could have done this better", you should pat yourself on the back and say, "I made it another day. How can I use this day as purposefully as possible?" If you are wrapped up in what you did wrong to get here, then you don't move forward. You get stuck in this loop of trying not to do the wrong thing again. If we can embrace this idea that we do what we need to do to survive, but then if we have gratitude for fact that I got here, I did the best I could do on any given day to get here, that now I have a choice about

what am I going to learn from those experiences. What impact did those experiences have on me, and can I do this differently? It's about awareness.

The more awareness we have, the more we can move beyond this habituated form of survival that we're all in right now, to a more conscious thriving, conscious pursuit of destiny, conscious search for meaning and purpose.

And that's what I hope the readers get out of this book.

Within the context of the global struggle of the past one and a half years with the pandemic, and even longer in the case of the U S, with the extreme political polarization occurring over the past five to 6 years, has your perspective and use of the channel system and 8 EV's changed?

I don't think that my perspective has changed, I think my perspective has deepened, especially with this last year. It's more deeply embodied in my belief system now than it ever has been before.

Has my approach changed? I would say in some cases, maybe in many cases, it's changed where I have this deeper understanding of how the nervous system has been affected by this kind of trauma. So, before I might be more focused on someone's emotional journey but these days with the pandemic, I'm much more focused on their nervous system response to the world around them, because I'm recognizing that if I can't realign that, that getting to the other stuff is just way more challenging. I'm getting to the point where I'm trying to take people out of fight or flight.

And would you do that via the whole Channel system, or are you finding yourself focusing a particular aspect that you find more effective within the central nervous system realm?

I am using the whole Channel system when it seems appropriate. Sometimes somebody walks in and you can tell it's a Luo Collateral issue, and you need to get circulation moving again, which then affects the nervous system. But it's hard for me to separate all of this process from the Eight Extras, because those are the patients I attract and have attracted for so many years. Most of my patients are getting eight extra treatments right now, but many of them are also receiving Luo Collateral treatments because of the emotions of the last year. The Luo Collateral system very quickly creates latency in the circulation of blood in order to survive. A lot of people have Luo congestion.

Not many practitioners are able to cross over from clinician to author. I'd love to explore your experience as a writer.

I still have trouble coming to grips with the idea that I'm a writer or an author, as one might say, after having published two books and numerous articles. (Thanks Medicinal Roots Magazine). I think of myself as a storyteller, and I prefer an oral transmission. I prefer to speak the story, than write the story. So, I don't really think of myself as a writer. I feel like the books were the best way to get the word out, but that they weren't necessarily the way I prefer to do things. Writing for me is akin to going to the dentist. I'm the person who grips the handles until my hands ache. It's not the pain. I have a very high tolerance for pain. It is the input, the invasiveness of dental work that I find

incredibly distressing. And that feeling of distress is a common thing. When I sit down to write, I can talk the ears off an elephant, but ask me to write 500 words, never mind the whole book. And I struggle with every word. So, I do not find writing a pleasant task. I do it because something in my psyche has driven me to do this, not because it's a good hobby or a fun pastime, or because it's a way to make a living, because it certainly isn't, but because it is essential to my growth. I have to do it.

What has writing a book brought to your life and thinking that didn't exist before?

I can probably talk all day about this particular question, but the truth is that more than anything else, I think writing these last two books has taught me about empathy and compassion because I tend to be very stingy in my communication. When I write things down, I like to use the fewest number of words possible to say what is going on in my head. But people need more, and people are hungry for knowledge. They're hungry for experience, they're hungry for wisdom, and they think differently than I think. They've had different life experiences that I've had. They need context and I have to force myself to write something that is not just about how I think, but that can be understood by the reader, which forces me out of myself and into someone else's experience. So, I think writing them has helped me with empathy and compassion. When I wrote the first one, I was completely done with the book, and I had half a book. I had contracted for a certain number of pages. And when I got done saying everything, I had half a book. I literally had to go back and write a second half when I already felt like I said everything I could possibly say about the subject. So how do you do that? That's where



PHOTO: Envato Elements

you have to think outside of yourself. You have to think about what somebody else might need, what somebody else might want in terms of an experience. What questions somebody else might have about what it is you're talking about. You have to get outside of yourself. Both of those books went from transmitting my thoughts on what the subject matter was to labors of love because I had to think about somebody else. What do you need to understand this and to receive? That's the gift of writing those books.

Is the process of writing a book tonifying or draining for you? Would you view writing as a kind of spiritual practice?

I think there's a very easy answer to that. And the answer is Yes. It's draining, but it's also satisfying, and absolutely, it's a spiritual practice. Absolutely.

And where do you find your role model as an author, as opposed to a clinician?

Well, I'm an avid reader, I've always been an avid reader. Fiction and nonfiction, both. I just like to read. I was one of those kids who, at 10 years old, would ride my bike to the library, thank God I had a basket attached to the front, and I would check out every book they would allow me to check out, you know, 10 at a time. And I would make that trip twice a week. I read fiction, but I also read biographies. It wasn't just fiction or nonfiction. I did learn a valuable lesson once in reading nonfiction, especially nonfiction related to my profession. I began to get weary, it would take me longer to get through a book, and I'd have to read paragraphs over and over again for them to sink in.

And at some point, I went through a three-month detox where I stopped reading anything that had to do with medicine, psychology, anything like that. I just read novels. It

brought the joy of reading back for me, because reading had become a task.

I also learned when I was studying for the board that my brain could not take in any more Chinese medicine information. That's four years of knowledge, half of it is memorized. You feel like if you tip your head over, something important is going to fall out your ear. And so, I read mysteries and detective novels because those books gave me an understanding of the diagnostic process. It's critical thinking, seeing the pieces of the puzzle, putting the pieces of the puzzle together, figuring out the clues. I don't have favorite authors, but I read a lot, and I love words. There's something so powerful about a well constructed sentence, but there's something even more powerful about a poorly constructed sentence. You can see the author struggle, whereas when you get a perfectly constructed sentence, you're not thinking about the author anymore. you're thinking about an experience, whatever that sentence evokes is there, and it's real. And it's beautiful. A poorly constructed sentence makes you think, oh my, what was going on in his or her mind at that time?

And I'll tell you one more thing that is a powerful lesson that always sits in my mind when I'm writing. I learned it from the fact that Jeffrey Yuen doesn't write because he's a Daoist. It's an oral transmission. When writing, the goal is to create the best sentence possible to transmit your idea. You try to create a meaningful sentence that says what you want it to say that evokes whatever it is you're trying to evoke. But the minute you do that, it's dead, because once it's complete and you put a period at the end of it, it doesn't have a life anymore. It's static. You can't change it once it's in print. So, I write a book, I send it to the publisher, we go through the editing process. Then I get the book back and they say, okay, we're going to print this. It's like it's done now. Or maybe a better way to say it is; it's dead to me, it's going to take on a life of its own. I don't have any more say. So even though the minute you write something, your mind evolves and you're moving past it. I can tell you that people will come to me because I've been teaching

for so long and say things like, well, you said such and such and such and such and such.

And I think, did I really say that? Wow. Because I've already moved past that. But at the time, it was honestly how I felt, based on whatever level of understanding I had or knowledge or whatever. So that's dead now. By putting the ideas in print, they stop evolving. And what you hope is that the reader will take the information and continue the evolution. But you don't know that when you write it. That's the risk. That's the cost. It's the price of doing business birthing once again. Let it go. You have to let it go. And it's painful.

What would you choose as your mascot, avatar or animal? And does it relate to your Chinese zodiac line?

I have always thought of my spirit animal from the time I was very, very young, as being a Black Panther. And the reason for that is because I feel like it represents the idea that there's power in the darkness and that although it's fearsome enough to make people afraid, it is also a place that you can go to get stronger. And so, you know, this black

panther is this beautiful majestic cat when you bring it out into the light. It doesn't have the same power anymore. It doesn't have the same fear over you because it's out in the light. You can appreciate its beauty. But sometimes you have to go into the dark to get it. And for me, when I think about this in relationship to writing, I want to uncover the dark places where the panther hides. I've always wanted that because I don't want to be afraid of the cat sitting there in the darkness. So that is something that's been true for me my whole life. But then as I started to study Chinese medicine, I found out that my Chinese horoscope, the animal for my year of birth, is the monkey. And not only is it the monkey, but I happen to be a fire monkey and there's a lot of combustibility in that. To me, as a writer, there is a part of me that says this is really deep, uncomfortable stuff. Can we find a way to make this fun? Can we make a circus out of this? Can we be running around and throwing bananas at people? Or can we find some way to find some joy and mischief in it that makes it less uncomfortable? I think there's sort of a perfect complement. Now we're going to explore stuff that people don't want to talk about because it's uncomfortable and you

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have to take responsibility for your own process. But can we have a laugh while we're doing that? Which is very, very often why I tell stories about doing stupid things. An illustration. Let's have some fun. Laugh a little while we're doing this, going into the dark and finding the Panther. I mean, it's a fearsome task to go digging down into the dark corners of who you are, but if there's some hope of having a laugh while you're doing it. Yeah. That's not so bad. I find it grounding.

It stops you from taking things too seriously because that's damaging as well.

And as you take those things too seriously in this exploration you also become attached to it totally. And that attachment isn't good. Is it the Buddhist saying that says before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water after enlightenment, chop wood, carry water? You can't go down that dark hole and stay there. You have to come back and live your life. And a lot of times when you come back and live your life, you make the same mistakes. You do the same things. You get in the same trouble. You should be able to laugh at yourself when that's happening. And not be so attached to it, because that sort of takes us back to this idea of if we are so attached to that, then we will have judgment and expectations of what it means to be human. Those things are probably not so easily attainable. What it is to really be human is to be flawed, but to continue to make an effort, even with the flaws. To say, okay. I'm still in survival mode here. I'm still frightened by what's happening in the world but I'm not going to run around like a chicken with its head cut off today. I'm going to do one kind thing. And that's going to make me feel like I can make a difference. Just one little thing should make you feel more human, to make you feel like what you do matters. And the more you feel that, the less you have that self-judgment about surviving, which is a really good thing.

So many thanks to Yvonne for taking the time out of her busy schedule to talk to us and for sharing her wisdom through her contributions to MRM over the years.

- Kyla Drever

If you would like to read Yvonne's articles on the archetypal nature of the 8 Extra Ordinary Vessels you can find them in the Past Issues section of Medicinal Roots Magazine.

[Ren mai – Spring 2018](#)

[Du mai – Summer 2018](#)

[Yang Wei mai– Fall 2018](#)

[Yin Wei mai– Winter 2019](#)

[Yang Qiao mai– Spring 2019](#)

[Yin Qiao mai – Summer 2019](#)

[Chong and Dai mai – Spring 2021](#)

Yvonne has written 2 books:

Psycho-Emotional Pain and the Eight Extraordinary Vessels, Singing Dragon, 2016

Acupuncture for Surviving Adversity: Acts of Self-Preservation, Singing Dragon, 2016



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Kyla Drever, Dr. TCM

Kyla 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.



PHOTO: Envato Elements



Dan Garcia
Executive Director, CARB-TCMPA

Looking Ahead

Pan-Canadian Exams and the Accreditation Program

PHOTO: Patrick Fore for Unsplash.com

I recently completed my first year with CARB-TCMPA and have been reflecting on what we have accomplished—and not accomplished—over the past year.

We overcame challenges due to the continued dedication and support of our volunteer Board members and groups of subject matter experts. Despite the progress, there is still plenty of work for us as we continue administering the Pan-Canadian Exams and moving other projects forward.

There were 232 candidates registered for the April 2021 administration of the Pan-Canadian Exams. As part of delivering computer-based tests, we expect that a small portion of candidates may experience some technical glitch when they are preparing to start their exam. Most candidates do not experience any issues and launch their exams on time without issue.

The small number of issues that did arise were often related to technical computer issues—internet connectivity; candidates forgetting their password; and issues with candidates' microphone or camera settings. There were also some instances where candidates were reading aloud (which is not permitted at test centres or while being proctored online); the candidate's face not being within the camera's range; and candidates being late for their exam. We strongly encourage all candidates to ensure that they test out their exam-day computer in advance of their exam to help minimize exam-day delays and avoidable stress.

Due to the ongoing pandemic conditions, the October 2021 administration will be delivered through online proctoring.

TCM Herbalist and TCM Practitioner candidates will write their exams over the first week of October, and Acupuncturists will write their exam over the last week of October. Like our past two administrations, seats at test centres will be reserved for candidates with an approved accommodation.

We published the first draft of the TCM education accreditation standards earlier this year as part of our national consultations. A feedback survey was released, and we invited all members of the TCM community, including students, practitioners, educators, and other interested parties, to share their perspectives on the first draft. Over 500 respondents provided their input on the draft standards, and we also received a few letters from different groups and individuals that offered very helpful, detailed feedback. Thank you to everyone who participated in this process.

Overall, there was great support for the value of national accreditation and third-party oversight in TCM and acupuncture education. We are incorporating the feedback we received into the second draft of the standards. Once the second draft is ready and has been approved for the next round of consultations, we will provide them to educators across the country. We will be soliciting feedback on the revised standards and accompanying information.

We extracted helpful themes from the feedback survey. As a result, we have added information on our site about the purpose of the accreditation program, the process we are using to develop the standards, the rationale for language choices in the standards, who will be using the standards, and what type of support will be made available to participating schools. I encourage anyone who wants to learn more about this project to visit our website, carb-tcmpa.org, and read through the latest information.

As we begin the process of returning to some sense of pre-pandemic normalcy, I look forward to the opportunities that lay ahead. One of our keys to success is collaborating with other members of the TCM community. Although there have been moments where we may not agree, I understand and appreciate that we are all striving for a similar outcome: to foster a thriving TCM and acupuncture profession in Canada. Together, we can make this vision a reality.

- Dan García, Executive Director, CARB-TCMPA



ABOUT CARB- TCMPA

The Canadian Alliance of Regulatory Bodies of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (CARB-TCMPA) is the national forum and voice of provincial regulatory authorities that are established by their respective provincial legislation. Through collaborative activities, CARB-TCMPA promotes quality practice and labour mobility across Canada. For more information about CARB-TCMPA, visit: carb-tcmpa.org



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Join a Professional Association

Update from the ATCMA

by Suzanne Williams
Executive Director, ATCMA

PHOTO: Envato Elements

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS – BRINGING VALUE AND BALANCE TO THE CHINESE MEDICINE AND ACUPUNCTURE INDUSTRY

As an Acupuncturist or Chinese Medicine practitioner (or both), your days are focused on treatments and the business of running your practice. However, the life of a practitioner goes far beyond the day-to-day of patients and admin. You must ensure you're following regulations and in compliance with the law, particularly when it comes to licensing and liability. You spend time marketing your business to grow your practice (at least I hope you do!). You take professional development courses to earn required continuing education credits, and to expand your knowledge and opportunities.

Who helps you navigate the rules and laws? Where do you get information and guidance on professional practice? How do you make sure you

get enough CEUs to maintain your license without breaking the bank? How do you keep your insurance expenses down? Who promotes the medicine in your community to support your individual marketing efforts? If you are already a member of a professional industry association, hopefully you said “my association does all of this”. If you are not yet a member of your local association, wouldn't you like help with all of this and more? You can access this type of support by joining an association that represents the professionals in your area.

You may already belong to a technique-based association, and you're thinking that your association does not really get involved in the business of practice, but rather focuses on an area of technical expertise. No problem! Technique-base associations unite practitioners who have passion for a specific subject. They offer mentorship or education, and they promote their specific modality. These types of associations are highly valuable, but they have

a different purpose from a broader professional association.

Here's what a large, well-rounded professional association can do for you:

ADVOCATE FOR THE PROFESSION

If you practice in a region that regulated Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine, you are likely very well aware that the purpose of a regulatory authority is to protect the public. Period. This doesn't mean that regulators do not care about the professionals they register and regulate – quite the contrary! They care that registrants practice safely and with integrity. They want practitioners to develop themselves professionally. They have mechanisms to ensure professional and ethical behaviour. However, it isn't their job to promote the profession. While they endeavour to educate the public about safe and ethical practice, they aren't marketers. That's your job on an individual level, and the job of a professional association at the industry level.

If you live in an unregulated region, your professional association may actually take on both roles of public protection and providing a platform for professional development and promotion of the profession.

Advocacy extends well beyond marketing. A strong association also amplifies the collective voice of its membership. It understands the regulatory environment well and has open, respectful, regular communication with its regulatory body to ensure the voice of its membership is heard clearly and taken seriously. In some cases, professional associations engage in formal lobbying efforts with their professional regulating body or various levels of government. Pressure works, but only if the force is strong enough - a large, unified member base is essential to effective leverage with regulators and politicians. That isn't to say that every member of an association must (or will) agree with every position the Association takes. Joining an association and voting for its Board of Directors ensures your vote counts and gives you the right to agree or dissent, but most importantly it ensures you have a voice at all.

Whether or not you process insurance claims in your practice, I suspect that you have patients who have extended health coverage for acupuncture. If you live in Canada, you may also have patients who are in your care because of a motor vehicle or workplace accident, and they are covered by auto or employers' insurance. Do you know how insurers determine the rate of coverage for acupuncture services? If you're sensing a theme here, I'm sure you guessed that they base it on input and negotiations with the regional association.

PUT MONEY IN YOUR POCKET

Insurance discounts! Free or low cost CEUs! Tax deductible association dues! If you are an independent contractor or businesses owner, every dollar saved goes into your pocket or is circulated back into your business. Even if you are an employee, the cost of



PHOTO: Aaron Burden for Unsplash.com

licensing, insurance and continuing education puts a dent in your bank account. The fee to join most Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine associations in North America is low compared to our counterparts in both allied and conventional health professions. In the case of the BC ATCMA, by the time you deduct the insurance discount and the equivalent cost of just six free CEUs from our membership fee, the annual cost to you is \$0. It is literally free. If you take more than 6 hours of CEUs with us, you actually earn money back. If that's not an incentive to join, I don't know what is!

OFFER NAVIGATIONAL SUPPORT

The essential value of an association lies in the resourcefulness of its employees and directors, and the hive-mind of its members. Its employees and board members help members navigate rules and regulations and understand the issues that affect the TCM and acupuncture profession.

If you have ever been faced with questions related to business practices, marketing, competition, scope, safety, professionalism or ethics, your association should be able to answer them, or help you find someone who can.

Membership in an association gives you automatic access to hundreds of practitioners who can share perspectives and experience that may help you solve professional dilemmas.

Associations are an informational resource, answering questions before you even ask them. They inform and educate members about upcoming changes to regulations, policies or industry issues that affect clinical practice. If there was ever a time for associations to show their value, it was in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Government policies were a moving target and regulations surrounding the ability of clinics to stay open were non-existent or unclear. Many local associations took on the role of go-betweens, communicating practitioners' concerns to regulators and quickly translating the essence of pandemic-based regulations into real-life clinical practice. Imagine having to navigate that alone, without an Association for guidance or fellow members to brainstorm and offer mutual support?

In British Columbia, the role of associations is set to expand. The framework for the regulation of healthcare professions is undergoing modernization, including the amalgamation of regulatory colleges in the province. The voice of Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture will naturally be dampened once our regulatory body, the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTCMA), is amalgamated into a larger unified College. The BC Ministry of Health has indicated that associations will take on many elements that were formally part of individual College mandates (e.g. profession-specific continuing education and other requirements or standards). The model for implementation has yet



Suzanne Williams,
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Suzanne is the Executive Director of the ATCMA and an active practicing Registered Acupuncturist in Vancouver, BC. She graduated from ICTCMV and Langara College's Balance System of Acupuncture Certificate Program and is currently working towards her R.TCM.P designation. Suzanne studied and worked in Taiwan, Hong Kong and mainland China for over 12 years and speaks and reads Mandarin Chinese. She draws on her career in business market research and consulting in China and Canada to advocate for the BC TCM and Acupuncture profession and grow the range of benefits for the ATCMA membership.

to be determined, but it is clear that an engaged and active membership will be needed for our Association to fill this role.

AND MORE...

A strong association also seeks out other member benefits that promote financial prosperity and professional growth. This includes: discounts on services that members need like phone plans, extended health insurance or CEUs that the association doesn't provide; funding or supporting research in our field; business practice support through marketing materials and promotion of members' services; and networking events and opportunities.

A strong association works hard behind the scenes to advocate for your profession, gives you value for money and helps keeps you current in your professional development and regulatory compliance.

The larger the membership the louder the voice! The louder our collective voice the more we can advocate for our profession, leverage our position and magnify our message. Find your local association and join today!

- Suzanne Williams, Executive Director, ATCMA

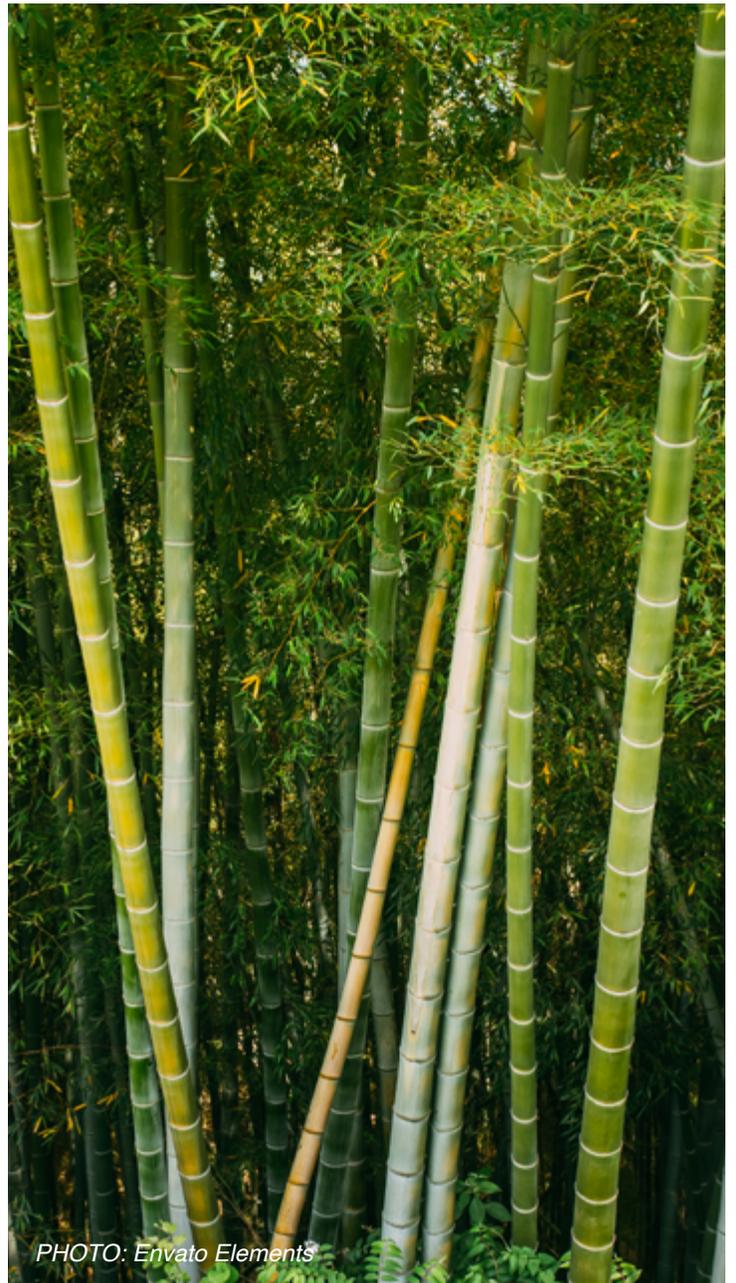


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What Did You Do Before Practicing or Studying TCM?

An overwhelming response from MRM readers to this question posed on social media provides insight into the previous lives of TCM practitioners.

PHOTO: Envato Elements



Click the icons to follow MRM on Instagram and Facebook, and engage with your TCM community



LYNETTE CHOO

Prior to my TCM journey, I was an organic vegetable farmer and baker in Quebec's Eastern Townships, taught English in South Korea, and worked at an organic juicery. Studying TCM and especially herbs seemed like a natural next step!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM INSTAGRAM PAGE



drphilgarrison Was an undergraduate Psych major, bass player and 1:1 aide in a neuro-diverse classroom before I began my master's degree in TCM.

5d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine @drphilgarrison whoa! That's quite the resume! Thanks for sharing 🙌



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM
INSTAGRAM PAGE CONTINUED

wildorcatherapy_cowichanvalley I took the 'Criminal Justice' program straight out of high school, but quickly realized that it wasn't for me. I spent the following years working in Whistler as a guest service agent, and from there went backpacking around the world on work visas, working lots of odd jobs from bartending to fruit-picking and tree planting. During my travels I found a book on Chinese Medicine, and it fueled my interest in becoming a practitioner. When I got home to Victoria I went to one of the TCM schools and had a treatment from a 3rd year student. It was so amazing that I enrolled for the following September and never looked back! (I still have the book that initially inspired me!) Best decision I ever made! ❤️

medicinalrootsmagazine
@wildorcatherapy_cowichanvalley
great story!! Thanks for sharing 🍌
5d Reply

truenorth_aw Nursing
5d 2 likes Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@truenorth_aw ❤️
5d Reply

cicutoacu I did bookkeeping and payroll.
5d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine @cicutoacu
🍌🍌 wow!
5d 1 like Reply

kylierodger.chinesemedicine Website + graphic design and marketing! P.S. Loving this question and reading the answers!!!
4d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@kylierodger.chinesemedicine 🙌
thanks for playing along!!

tcm_pocketguide advertising consultant & copy writer. yep, i switched ✍️ for 📍
5d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@tcm_pocketguide and we're so glad that you did!! 🙌🙌
5d 1 like Reply

— View 1 more reply

saratarawellness I worked in Computer Networking, Sara worked in Forestry. 🌲
4d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@saratarawellness what a winning combination 😊

wildcraftedacupuncture I was an organic farmer and greenhouse manager pre-grad school!
5d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@wildcraftedacupuncture amazing! What a skill set!
5d 1 like Reply

jessstrachan Shiatsu 🙌
5d 1 like Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine
@jessstrachan an excellent choice, also!
5d Reply

tcmtribe Was a nurse, quit, got a a divorce, moved across country, did yoga everyday and worked at the studio, cleaned mansions as a side gig to make rent for 1 year and volunteered at a community clinic.. Went to school for TCMP... and the journey began 🙌
5d 2 likes Reply

medicinalrootsmagazine @tcmtribe
wow! That's quite the journey! Thanks for sharing 🌈



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM
INSTAGRAM PAGE CONTINUED

acupunctureannie Before becoming an acupuncturist, I was (and still am) a children's book editor. The stories we tell children and the stories we tell ourselves about our health both have big impact.

5d 2 likes Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@acupunctureannie holy cow!
Excellent 😊



jenniferlavoro_lac I was an Art/Art History major for my undergrad degree before moving to Los Angeles and working in digital photography & entertainment studio production fields. I ended up going back to school in LA for my masters in TCM...a big change but worth it!

5d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@jenniferlavoro_lac love it!

5d 1 like Reply



studioseiza I was an Arts teacher in the Dutch equivalent of high school, for 14 years. When I started my TCM education, I switched to working for a library, developing and starting courses for people to practice their (Dutch) language and learn the basics of their pc/internet so they can be self-sufficient. This job left me some energy to put into studying. Last fall I graduated and now I'm in the process of making things happen as a Qigongteacher and practitioner, because I love what I do!

5d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@studioseiza 🍌🍌🍌 fantastic!



dr.katrine_hegillman Studied Nutrition

5d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@dr.katrine_hegillman that's must be complimentary to your practice now!

5d Reply



mad_alien.biz Jewelry designer 🧶 and PT nanny 🧒

3d 1 like Reply



brittneimarguerita Gerontology/Recreation therapy 💕

3d 1 like Reply

spinzneedles_sd I was in the Navy for 24 years as a combat Corpsman. Thought acupuncture was BS until I reluctantly tried it after everything else to treat my PTSD and insomnia after a deployment to Iraq. The results were almost immediate. After that I knew it was my mission in life to obtain this knowledge and treat fellow veterans and first responders and not feel the burden of relying on toxic pharmaceuticals and become dependent on them like I once had. It saved my life and opened my eyes.

5d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@spinzneedles_sd wow. Thanks for sharing your journey with us 🙏



healthharmonybrighton HR and personnel

4d 1 like Reply



medicinalrootsmagazine
@healthharmonybrighton 😊

4d Reply



dr.katrine_hegillman Studied Nutrition

5d 1 like Reply



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM FACEBOOK PAGE



Wendy Brown
I'm a second-generation CM practitioner, only career. 31yrs.

3d Like Reply Message 2

Heather Kenny

Well, this is my 7th career...!... I was an xray tech straight out of high school, just as I was finishing school, I co-owned a cottage resort and had 4 children, I've had a dogsled team, restored 25 acres of native Tallgrass Prairie, managed an arts & culture association and an agricultural commodity association, spent more than a few years in international development, along the way, the kids grew up, health changes happened, and a divorce happened, and if anyone is doing any math here, all this was before my very early 40's. This profession never stops amazing me, every single day the pure art form of TCM never disappoints, the balance of simplicity and complex solutions, the onion-like layering of people and emotions, the connections made to disease and ill health.



Julie Elaine Dorval
Emergency Nurse

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Author
Medicinal Roots Magazine
Julie Elaine Dorval

Like · Reply · Commented on by Kimberley Schneberk



Peer Brouwers
software programmer

Jen Bowers

I was a sexual health educator. Now I do fertility and trauma work. Same idea, different format.

15h Like Reply 2



Kimberley Schneberk
Jen Bowers



Beverly Osachoff · 4d
I sold industrial packaging machinery. Before that, I was a junior high school band director (itinerant at 8 schools).

Wow Reply 5



Dr. Kim TCM · 4d
Beverly Osachoff amazing!!

Like Reply



Beverly Osachoff · 4d
Dr. Kim jr high...where do you think my white hair came from?

Haha Reply 1



Berte Marr · 4d
Working in the Ministry of Health. Bylaws to become legislated. Then I quit my job to begin my full time TCM practice.

Like Reply 3



Dr. Kim TCM · 4d
Berte Marr

Kristin Shropshire-Wong

Prior to studying Chinese medicine, I worked as a nutritionist, supplements manager, and buyer for a large health food store.

If helpful, my classmates had the following careers: massage therapist, physician (one Canadian and one Columbian), IT specialist, professional wrestler, engineer, aesthetics salesperson, and traditional naturopath. I imagine I may be forgetting a few, but these stand out in my memory.

4d Like Reply 2



Kimberley Schneberk
Kristin Shropshire-Wong thanks for sharing!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM FACEBOOK PAGE CONTINUED



Fay Meling Pao

Was about to enter law school and focus on health law, and then a chronic sports injury eventually led me to acupuncture which made me re-evaluate my whole life - and I soon found myself in the middle of 1/4 life crisis 😊

The acupuncture treatments were so effective that I did a 180 and decided to study Chinese medicine in the basement of my acupuncturist / teacher's house (which doubled as a clinic and TCM school)

Dr Zhang's wife would decoct herbs for patients in the kitchen while he treated during the day in his former dining room full of patients separated only by bedsheets as curtain dividers. In the evenings there were always strong herbal aromas while we learned about the various acupuncture points and also the nature of the herbs. I eventually switched to a more formal institution to complete my studies. It was a fantastic intro to TCM and I am so thankful for finding this path.

1d **Wow** Reply 3 🍌 😮



Fay Meling Pao

There were a few mature students in my first year at Michener - a female engineer in her fifties who worked on the Canada-Arm for the Canadian space agency, a guitarist/musician in his forties, and a former investment banker in her forties. People from all different backgrounds and interests - common theme was that acupuncture and Chinese medicine saved them.

1d **Wow** Reply 2 🍌 😮



Laurel Irons · 4d

Not exactly an answer to the question but.. My great grandfather on my Japanese side had a high ranking position with Bayer when they were first getting established in Japan, apparently he had a big role bringing the first pharmaceuticals into the country. I only learned this after I had finished TCM school and was working as an acupuncturist. He brought western medicine to the east and now I'm working with eastern medicine in the west

🗨️ **Like** Reply 2 🍌



Dr. Kim TCM · 4d

Laurel Irons that's a great story! 😊

🗨️ **Like** Reply 1 🍌



Reply as Dr. Kim TCM



Weifong Oz · 3d

I was on the road for 20 years as a lighting tech, wardrobe manager, personal assistant, and massage therapist for rock and pop bands, touring the world



Weifong Oz · 3d

My last tour was between year 3 and 4 of TCM school

🗨️ **Like** Reply 1 🍌



Kayla Lynn Storkson · 3d

Weifong Oz You have something in common with my partner. He was a pyrotechnician on tour with rock bands before he started TCM school. 😊

🗨️ **Like** Reply 2 🍌



Dr. Kim TCM · 18h

Great stories! Thanks for sharing 😊



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM
FACEBOOK PAGE CONTINUED



Jason Tutt **Admin** · 18h

Welder. My eye sight was going downhill from the repeated arc flashes. Glad I got out of it.



Wow Reply

1 🙄



Dr. Kim TCM · 18h

Jason Tutt WHAAAT? For real? WOW - I had no idea!



Brad Matthews **Moderator** · 22h

Tree planter. 15 years and about 2 million trees planted. Loved that job. Hard AF, but great people and a true gypsy lifestyle.



Like Reply

1 👍



Dr. Kim TCM · 22h

Brad Matthews 🍌

Like Reply



Laurel Irons · 14h

Brad Matthews hats off to you, I did it for one season (and the next year i was pregnant with my daughter or I would have gone back). One of the hardest but most instantly gratifying jobs i ever had.



Clayton Willoughby · 12h

I read a book in high school and said to myself "Well that makes sense to me" I went to ICTCM right after graduation and they told me to go get two years of something, so I took a nursing course. Two years later I came back. Most of my decisions in life have been made by gut instinct like that - marriage, job, etc. Either I'm just very agreeable, or I've just lucked into the right decisions.



Dani Cullimore

Oh, I love reading these replies - I wish more acupuncturists would post their stories 😊 ! I was working as a medical anthropologist -my graduate research looked at (generally speaking) experiences related to menstruation/ menstrual suppression. I dropped out of a PhD at NYU after completing a Master's at York. (fast forward) My last career position before Acu school was helping to develop a wearable/brain-sensing meditation product called Muse. My "hook" into this career shift was inspired by a handful of transformative experiences w/ receiving acu while helping to build infrastructure at a desert-art festival (Burning Man). Thumb sprain/grief. 3 treatments. I was hooked. A few months later I decided to study and shift my direction.

27m

Like Reply

1 👍



Kimberley Schneberk

Dani Cullimore amazing!!!



Sarah Jenkins 🇺🇸 · 34m

Clothing designer. Had just finished school and knew it wasn't for me anymore. Seeing a TCM doctor for my own health issues (epilepsy) which REALLY helped me, + backpacking around Asia, really inspired me to study Chinese medicine. I was also lucky enough to work as a clerk on an acute neuroscience/neurosurgery unit for about 5 years, that was an amazing experience and exposure to that side of medicine.



Heather Fischbuch · 19h

30 year massage and 20 year aromatherapy including distilling essential oils and growing or foraging for truck loads of medicinal plants. Progression and it feels like connecting the dots to get here today.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MRM FACEBOOK PAGE CONTINUED

Barbara Poczyniak

I worked in the travel industry, with my own business that focused on high end honeymoons. I liked it but did not love it. After dealing with years of mysterious issues such as migraines and other chronic pain I found much needed relief from acupuncture. I was actually told about qi gong by my MD, and practicing this was another step in the TCM direction. It never occurred to me that I could actually work in the field until my 30s when I was in search of a career change and also making some serious health shifts. Then, all the pieces started to fall into place and I realized what I should be doing instead 😊



Al Kwan

So far none of my son and daughter following my foot steps. They have higher education i.e. Master Degree of Engineers. Good jobs in the US with big company headquarters. Good playing secure Jobs. When I asked my patients. They Said they would to learn my knowledge and techniques. One of my patients suffered severe Sciatica pain whom work as engineeris in Waterloo with blackberry corp. I fixed his sciatica. What he told me. I wished it have a Job like you to make people happy again... Hope One day my son and daughter will following my foot steps. Luckily my Nephew also an excellent TCM acupunturist have two locations doing extremely well. That makes us proud of him. He is passionate a d eager to learn .. good future

2h **Care** Reply

2 🍻

Anna Gao

All these comments are heart warming and empowering to read! My career sort of started backwards. I wanted to become an acupuncturist when I came to Canada 10.5 years ago but to do so I could only enrol a public college and massage therapy was the closest to it that was available to me. While pursuing 3 years of massage therapy education I worked as a clinical assistant and manager in fertility acupuncture clinic owned by my aunt. Seeing how effective acupuncture was further strengthened my belief that it's my calling. It was a really hard 7 years not being able to do what I wanted due to immigration restriction. Fast forward now I'm working as RMT, R.Ac, graduating as TCMP soon and writing my R.TCMP boards this October, and almost getting my citizenship!



Anna Gao

The wait all of these years is so so worth it when one of my very own patients (that I treated! Not by watching all these years!) conceived naturally after a few years of not being able to after a short cycle of treatment. My true life long commitment has just begun - I cannot wait to see what's in store for me and to help those in need ❤️



PHOTO: Joyce G for Unsplash.com

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