



Points To Ponder

Healing, Health, & Well-being Through Acupuncture

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*With the past, I have nothing to do; nor with the future.
I live now. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson*



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Living In The Present

Healing can only occur in the present.

Learning to live in the present is one of the disciplines that fosters health and wholeness. It is a positive practice that I embrace and try to instill in others as I try to holistically care for my clients rather than merely being a technician who inserts needles to alleviate pain.

I often ponder the idea of living in the present. I know I can't always live in the present, but as I practice this concept I realize it is more about creating consciousness of the moment. This can be as simple as realizing when I am present in the moment and when I am not.

Recently I met with Bob Duggan, president of the TAI Sophia Institute where I obtained my acupuncture degree. Bob and I were talking in an office that had a wall of huge windows that looked out onto miles of beautiful woods. While talking with him, occasionally I would lose my 'train of thought' by looking out the window and getting lost in the landscape. Then I would re-focus on the conversation.

I was aware of the times that I lost presence. Because of that awareness, I could choose to return to the conversation. It's not about living in the present 100 percent of the time, but noticing when you are in and out of the present moment. Living in the present is being aware of this particular moment, enjoying it, making the most of it.

While every individual has different experiences, anxiety can be considered being out of the present. The mind wanders to other areas, often worrying or rehashing problems. One of the ways I teach people to cope is to encourage them to acknowledge their actions. "Oh, there I am worrying a lot." I advise them to focus on feeling their feet on the ground, and then feel their legs, and continue to work their way up their body, being aware of their sensations at that moment. When their minds start to wander again, and that's perfectly normal, I urge them to notice their body sensations again. You may want to practice this yourself. Notice the positive impact it has on anxiety and stress.

Practice living in the present, for your health and healing.

Fire Element

Fire is the element of summer. It is expansive, outgoing, warm and intimate. The gift of the fire element includes the lightness of being, intimate relationships, love, and partnership.

I practice five-element acupuncture. We are composed of five elements—fire, earth, metal, water and wood—that need to be moving and in balance for health and wellness.

In Chinese medicine, the bodily organs, such as the heart, liver, lungs, etc., are referred to as officials, of which there are 12. Acupuncture refers to them as officials rather than organs because they mean so much more than their physiological definitions.

One of the officials of the fire element is the heart official, which is about presence. The heart official is also called the supreme controller of the body, mind, and spirit. It's as if it sits on top of a throne, overseeing all of the other officials that are working hard to protect it. The heart is meant to be empty, still, present. It just *is*.

In Chinese medicine life is about movement. When something is stuck then disease can occur. Everyone can benefit from practicing the heart official.

Practice *noticing* when your heart feels tight or closed. When it is tight or closed, take a deep breath into that area and open back up. Take time to notice when your heart feels closed. A simple deep breath can open your heart and create a sense of wellness.



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Great Quotes...

*Having spent the better part of my
life trying either to relive the past or experience
the future before it arrives,
I have come to believe that
in between these two extremes is peace.*
—Author Unknown



*Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes
on the grass under the trees on a summer's day,
listening to the murmur of the water,
or watching clouds float across the sky,
is by no means a waste of time.*
—John Lubbock

Enjoy this Summer

If you are looking for ways to enjoy the fire element and live in the present this summer, try one of these activities.

- Spend time with friends and family outdoors in the warm sun at a cookout.
- Take moments to enjoy intimate moments with your children...they grow up fast!
- Balance the intense element of fire with a funny, light-hearted movie.
- Practice living in the present like the heart official. Live life fully; moments come and go.
- Laugh. *Really* laugh.
- Tell people you love them. Find ways to show your appreciation.



Book Nook

Taming Your Gremlin

By Rick Carson, is a great book on living in the present. It's an easy, fun read that explains how we can tame the gremlins, or thoughts, that steal our sense of presence.



Think of fire in its natural state in order to appreciate its intimacy and association with love.

Love is not about feelings – feelings come and go just as fire does. Love comes from awareness and wakefulness, seeing others as they are not how you want them to be.

A good example is the acceptance we have for our pets. I love my cat, Akabane, just as he is. I didn't get a cat to have a dog and nor do I expect him to be a dog! The first act of love is to see reality—in people and situations. That *is* love and that *is* the act of being fully present.