



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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It's no secret that we live in a country where working hard is a way of life for most, leaving little room for play and down-time. As a result, we are one of the most stressed cultures in the world, with the diagnosis of depression at an all-time high and stress-related illnesses continuing to climb.

The current economic situation is only adding to our already stressful lives, with many not only uncertain about the security of years worth of savings and retirement planning, but also the reality of job loss.

For many, this current economic turmoil and uncertainty is fostering illness, sadness, and anger. For others, however, this turmoil is representing opportunity. It's simply a matter of perspective, coincidentally occurring at this time of year when the official of the season (according to Traditional Chinese Medicine) is the liver.

If you think about the liver and its anatomical function, it cleanses the blood and detoxifies the body. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the liver is responsible for the smooth movement of emotions. When the liver is stagnant, we are more easily frustrated, angry, and feel disappointed.

To address the stagnation and rebalance the qi, points on the liver meridian are targeted, including the points called "Happy Calm," "Great Esteem," and "Gate of Hope."

When the liver qi is balanced, however, and in combination with the other official of the season, the gallbladder, the body is ready for organization, good planning, and decision making.

Now back to our culture and the comment on perspective.

For some, who are more aware of the officials' function in their lives or for those who are in balance, a job loss may be seen as an opportunity to take a new direction that will be more fulfilling and bring joy to their lives. In contrast for those whose officials are out of balance or stagnant, the job loss may manifest itself in anger or frustration (the emotion of the season). Additionally, anger can be a positive emotion when it's used to effectively create change. When anger or frustration linger, stagnation can occur, which can be unhealthy.

If you are struggling with anger at this time of year, it is normal as the slumber and peace of winter are being pushed down with an internal restlessness toward change.

To better explain, just think about flowers. After tulip bulbs rest dormant all winter—a state of peace—the warmer days encourage the tender green shoots to struggle their way up through the dirt (frustration and anger); once they make it through the hard soil, there will be relief and joy as the acceptance of change is good. Another parallel is as simple as the awakening of a sleeping child. When first awakened, the child is cranky and irritable; once awake, and accepting of the changed state of being, the child adjusts and the anger or irritation is calmed.

If you are feeling uneasy or angry, consider a treatment and some herbs that I can recommend to re-balance yourself, open your qi (channels of energy) and regain a healthy perspective on life. You'll feel better about accepting change, and the gall bladder will be able to help you organize your life in a direction that feels right. Who knows, you may even decide to quit a job you don't like and pursue something else, rather than being fearful of losing it or angry about being "stuck" in a job you hate.



Tips for Liver Health

- Avoid toxins like household and industrial chemicals, alcohol, cocaine, amphetamines and many prescription drugs.
- Minimize consumption of fried foods and red meat.
- Drink lots of fluid and use fresh lemon in water for cleansing.
- Fresh organic, cold-pressed olive oil is best for liver.
- Exercise and sweat regularly for liver detox.
- Milk thistle herb and olive leaf extract support and disinfect liver.

In addition to re-balancing your mind, body, spirit through an acupuncture treatment and supporting the rebalanced system with herbs, consider other services at the Towson Wellness Center to improve your life, including:

**Massage with
Betsy Gilbert**

**Coaching with
Motivational Consultant,
Mary Garland Considine**

**Art Therapy with
Tosha Davis**

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Meditation Proves Beneficial to Body, Mind, Spirit

When many of us think about meditation, images of people sitting Indian-style, holding open palms toward the ceiling, and humming come to mind.

While that may be the chosen “form” of meditation for some, the definition of meditation is so much broader than that. **Yoga, qi gong and tai qi are forms of meditation in motion.** Nature walks, mantras and prayers all other ways to free your mind, and so is acupuncture.

In Get Fit Meditation by Susannah Marriott, she says, “When scientists at University of Wisconsin scanned the brains of practicing Buddhists, they discovered that the part of the brain associated with happiness showed much more activity than that in a control group of people who didn't practice meditation on a regular basis.”

Basically, meditation is any relaxing activity that it eases tension in mind by taking focus away from worries and preoccupations. You can take hikes in the woods in complete silence, but pay attention to the wind on your skin, smells in the air, sounds, the internal sensory experience rather than thinking about life outside of those woods.

Enjoying what you have right here...right NOW present moment awareness.

She adds, “There are methods for every time of day and night, in the office, car trips and cooking. Mindful music and sensory and breath techniques sit alongside conscious cooking, detox showers and clearing clutter to SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE.” “Above all, there is the essence of meditation, just sitting in silence” good for stress and illness, pain care, chronic illness, heart disease, cancer care, mental health, emotional health.

Herbal Remedies Provide Relief to Many Symptoms and Support Immune System

In the spirit of providing complementary options for you and your family, here is some information on some of the herbs I most frequently recommend to clients. Consider adding some of these to your medicine cabinet or first aid kit to feel better and stay well.

Yunnan BaiYao - Don't leave home without it! Great to take on vacation, camping, hiking, and even good for shock. It stops bleeding, relieves pain, disperses swelling so it's great for emergency first aid to stop bleeding and prevent infection. Use internally for swelling and bruising due to acute trauma, postpartum hemorrhage, nosebleed, blood in urine or stool, bleeding ulcer. It can help seal smaller wounds that might otherwise require stitches. Clinical studies show reduced clotting time from 33% to 55%.

Hu Xiang Zhen Qi Tang - Don't leave home without it! Good for food poisoning and flu, fever, headache, loose stools or diarrhea, vomiting or nausea (including motion sickness, overeating, alcohol hangover, and acute gastritis).



Yin Chiao - Great for periods of changing weather when people suffer from sore throat, low fever, aching shoulders, neck, headache, swollen glands or dry cough. It's also good proven as a topical treatment for poison ivy.

Jia Wei Xiao Yao Wan (Free and Easy Wanderer) - Good for symptoms of irritability, anxiety, depression, headache, breast tenderness, water retention.

Zhi Bai Di Huang Wan - Good for menopausal disorder, hot flashes, night sweats, palpitations, insomnia, and anxiety.

These herbs are available only through a licensed practitioner, so Shannon is happy to help you select the best herbs for your.

Source: *Chinese Herbal Patent Medicine* by Jake Paul Fratkin.