

Tending the Wind – Chapter 1
Introduction to Holistic Veterinary Medicine
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Holistic health care is becoming more popular as people experience the benefits of methods like acupuncture and homeopathy for themselves. And these days, more people are realizing the same benefits for their animal friends. Veterinary acupuncture is now offered by many conventional practices, and is available as a postgraduate course for veterinarians at several locations nationwide. Other modalities are starting to receive similar attention by the veterinary community as doctors see the benefits in their own patients, and as clients become more aware of and request holistic options. Those new to the holistic scene come across an almost dizzying array of information in books and on websites, some more accurate and impartial, and others less so. A number of “how-to” books are also available, but they often lack a detailed explanation of the theories behind the recommended treatments. This text is offered as an introduction to holistic medicine for both the general public and veterinary professionals with particular focus on the theories behind the practice. Understanding basic theory is essential to effective treatment, and to the comfort level of those clients and doctors exploring holistic care.

Some readers will already be well versed in holistic terminology, but for those who have been curious but haven’t yet taken the first steps, we should begin at the beginning. What exactly does *holistic* mean? And why are there so many other terms used to describe the same category of therapies?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word *holistic* as: “Of or relating to *holism* [the theory that living matter or reality is made up of organic or unified wholes that are greater than the simple sum of their parts]; emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts; concerned with wholes rather than analysis or separation into parts (as in *holistic medicine*).” Remembering this definition will help us stay on track as we discuss holistic veterinary medicine. Quite often people think it refers to a certain modality or type of medication, but it’s actually a frame of mind rather than a particular tactic.

The healing modalities commonly practiced by holistic veterinarians are those which utilize this mindset. Chinese medicine, homeopathy, and others all begin with the understanding that we and our animal friends are more than the sum of our parts. Health involves the harmonious interplay of not only organic systems and structures, but also other aspects of a being (mental/emotional health, social interaction, physical activity, eating habits, etc.) that all affect and are affected by each other. Each part reflects information about the whole in its own way. Conversely, disease involves more than just a malfunction in one organ, and so the whole being must be treated. If one part is treated without treating the whole, disease will simply return in another way. Holistic methods like acupuncture and homeopathy seek to identify and treat the whole pattern of disharmony in a patient, resulting in resolution of multiple imbalances at once. This approach may not be necessary for a simple one-time ailment (e.g. kennel cough), but is invaluable for recurrent, complex, or chronic problems. Conventional medicine can certainly be part of a holistic approach, but is not itself based on the holistic paradigm (e.g. which antibiotic to use does not depend on the patient’s personality traits, sleeping habits, or prior “unrelated” issues). In treating broad patterns of disharmony, holistic medicine would also tend to prevent potential illness that may have been generated by those patterns if left untreated. As with any medicine, holistic therapies work better when treatment is begun sooner than later, and are dependent for their success on a good diet, appropriate exercise, and a loving home environment.

The term *alternative* is also used to describe methods like acupuncture, but it simply refers to the idea that these methods exist “outside traditional or established institutions or systems.” (The established institution in our case refers to Western conventional medicine.) This term is actually rather unfortunate, since it fails to convey the

established longevity of these methods (acupuncture is at least 3,000 years old), or the fact that they can be used effectively alongside conventional medicine.

To remedy this, another term has come into favor: *complementary* (not complimentary), which refers to “something that completes, makes up a whole, or brings to perfection.” Methods like acupuncture can serve to enhance, or complete, conventional tactics. An example is the use of herbs and acupuncture after knee surgery to enhance recovery. A common acronym used these days in the profession is CAVM: Complementary and Alternative Veterinary Medicine. Its human counterpart is simply CAM.

One last general term to know is *naturopathy*: “A system of therapy that relies on natural remedies, such as sunlight supplemented with diet and massage to treat illness.” By definition, any veterinarian who uses herbs, glandulars, and the like is employing naturopathic techniques. It simply refers to the natural origin of the chosen treatment.

Whatever term one chooses, it’s important to remember that no single method is the sole key to treatment. Alternative and conventional medicine are complementary parts of a greater holistic approach to healing. Patients can benefit from all medical options at different times, in combination or alone, depending on the situation. Furthermore, each method is continually changing and adapting, along with the people who study and practice them.

The remainder of this work will discuss some of the most commonly used holistic and alternative veterinary methods, and a few other related concepts. The modalities and theories presented here naturally reflect the experience and understanding of the author, which like those of any practitioner, are constantly growing and changing. This text simply reflects a moment in that progression. The reader is encouraged to take what is useful at this moment in his or her own progression, assimilate it, metabolize it, transform it into new experience, and perhaps save the rest for another moment. Nothing is set in stone, and true understanding is aided by a healthy distance from too much information. People need sufficient time and space for personal reflection and creative inspiration. As the poet Charles Wright says, “*One has to learn to leave things alone. It’s best to keep unwritten as much as possible. Poetry is just the shadow of the dog. It helps us to know the dog is around, but it’s not the dog. The dog is elsewhere, and constantly on the move.*”

Tending the Wind – Chapter 2
Quality and Individuality
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Before discussing holistic veterinary methods, let's talk a little bit about holistic veterinarians – the people you'll be working with – because it's important to find one who not only knows their stuff, but with whom you feel comfortable. Medicine is only part of the healing process; the other part is the interplay between you, your pet, and your veterinarian.

All veterinarians, regardless of the methods they use, have received conventional training from a four-year accredited veterinary medical school. Some schools offer elective introductory courses in alternative medicine, but formal training requires attending additional courses after becoming a DVM. A few veterinary acupuncture courses are affiliated with schools, but most alternative programs are independent. Many, but not all, offer certification at the end of the course (and more letters after one's name). If you don't see the letters, it doesn't necessarily mean your veterinarian hasn't completed training in a particular area. It may simply mean those programs did not include a certification process.

Because veterinarians pursuing alternative training are already versed in anatomy and physiology, and have ample experience working with clients and patients, the courses are condensed and highly concentrated compared to many human alternative medical programs. Courses are designed for the working veterinarian who can't leave clients and patients for extended periods, and the focus is on essential theory and practical application. These courses also introduce students to the historical development and classical literature of the modality being taught. As with any educational program though, self-motivation beyond the classroom is the ultimate guide to learning. The wealth of classical and modern literature available for study as well as continuing education courses provide ample opportunities.

Many states allow human alternative practitioners to work on animals under the supervision of a veterinarian. This is especially helpful in areas where there just aren't enough vets offering alternative options. The ideal situation, however, is still to seek a veterinarian who has the additional training. The differences between animals and humans are significant. Animals have different disease processes, different behavior patterns and social challenges, different nutritional needs, and different lifestyles. The variance in anatomy and physiology between different animal species (and even between different breeds) is critical to proper evaluation and treatment.

Having found a veterinarian trained in alternative methods, how will you know they do good work, or that they'll be the right match for your pet? Anyone who's sought alternative care for themselves (and conventional care for that matter) knows it can take a few tries before you find someone who feels right. Degrees and certifications indicate training, but they don't necessarily guarantee quality. Plus, a veterinarian may offer alternative options but not have a truly holistic mindset. It helps to know what percentage of their practice is alternative; a vet whose practice is 80% alternative is going to have more experience than if it's 20%. A recommendation from a friend is certainly a good sign, and it helps to call and ask questions, but eventually you won't know until you go – particularly regarding bedside manner. For those changing to a different holistic veterinarian (after moving to a new city, for example) it's important to keep an open mind; your new vet most likely won't do things the same way you're old one did – which brings me to the issue of individuality.

Not everyone does things the same way, which is usually encouraged in our society; but when it comes to medical care, the push is to standardize rather than individualize. If a veterinarian doesn't follow the "standard of care," there's the potential for a lawsuit. People understandably want the sense of security and familiarity provided by standards, but for alternative methods to work optimally, such standardization is neither possible nor

desirable. By their very nature, these methods rely on the individuality of both patient and practitioner.

Let's take the situation of two 50-lb dogs diagnosed with hypothyroidism. The conventional treatment for both dogs, regardless of their individual traits, is the same basic drug and dosage regimen. Treated with Chinese herbs, acupuncture, or homeopathy, however, each dog would receive a different herbal formula, point selection, or homeopathic remedy based on their individual physical traits, history, personality, and lifestyle. Treatment is chosen for the whole unique being; the thyroid issue is only one part of that whole. This variance based on the individual patient makes it hard to conduct double-blind studies, but most people seeking alternative care expect it as essential and beneficial. What throws some clients off is that treatment also depends on the individuality of their holistic veterinarian. They want their new vet to use the same acupuncture points their old one did, but I suggest that the uniqueness of the practitioner is also an important aspect of holistic treatment.

You, your veterinarian, and your animal friend are all part of a whole circle of healing. This circle, at its best, creates an atmosphere of mutual empowerment, which is the basis of the most profound health. The ancient Daoist philosophers had a term for this – *zìrán* – whose meaning is variously translated as *spontaneously so*, *naturally so*, *self-so-ing*, *self-deriving*. It is the tendency of our true selves to emerge naturally and in harmony with our environment when there is no pressure to fit a mold or match an expectation. This is an ongoing process in each moment, and is the guiding principle of true health. When we allow ourselves to discover our unique path in a genuinely caring manner without judgment, we assist others to do the same in the most effective way: both by intent and by example. There will always be differences between one practitioner and another, but these differences can be a source of innovation rather than consternation.

In summary, here are some essential things to look for in a holistic veterinarian: training, experience, enthusiasm, a gentle and caring manner, a holistic mindset, and an attitude engendering empowerment for both you and your animal friend. In this way, even the most difficult illness can be an opportunity for healing.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 3
Homeopathy – Part 1
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Homeopathy is a method of treatment using minute doses of a substance that in larger doses produces symptoms in healthy individuals similar to those suffered by the patient. In other words, symptoms that a substance can cause using large doses in the healthy, it can also cure using small doses in the sick – summarized by the phrase *like cures like*. (*Homeo* means like, or similar. *Pathy* means feeling, suffering, perception, or system of treatment.) As a formalized medical system, it began with the work of a German physician, Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843 A.D.) but the concept of treating like with like dates back to Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.), the great Greek physician considered the father of Western medicine. Hahnemann expanded on this concept with his methods of discovering the symptom portraits of substances by testing them on healthy individuals, and with his research into the optimum dosage form to treat the sick.

Hahnemann sought a gentler, more humane and longer acting means of treatment than what was offered in his day (mustard baths, harsh emetics, violent laxatives, hot irons, and massive blood-letting). He studied Hippocrates' ideas of treating the whole individual rather than just certain parts or symptoms, supporting the body's self-healing capacity with proper diet and rest, understanding what traits predispose one to disease, and using like to treat like.

In his first experiment, Hahnemann took large doses of Cinchona (Peruvian Bark), which was known as a treatment for malaria. He experienced symptoms very similar to those of malaria patients, and surmised that a substance which is able to cause a certain constellation of symptoms in a healthy person will heal similar symptoms in an ill person. Experiments with other substances supported this concept. (Self-experimentation is a great teacher.) Over time, he and other volunteers amassed symptom pictures for a wide variety of mineral, plant, and animal substances; they recorded their symptoms in great detail, including physical, emotional and mental changes. This method of discovering the symptom picture of a substance became known as a *proving*, from the German word *prüfung*, meaning a test, trial, examination, or investigation. From these symptom portraits, he could then choose the matching remedy, or *simillimum*, for his patients.

The question then became, how small should the treatment dosage be to heal the sick without causing side effects? Dosage trials with patients resulted in the practice of *potentization* – serial dilution and succussion (vigorous and methodical shaking) of a dissolved substance – to create homeopathic remedies. In many cases, the potentizations used by homeopaths are so dilute as to theoretically contain none of the original substance. Hahnemann believed that potentization releases the dynamic subtle energies of a substance, which then interact with the patient's *vital force** – a non-physical, instinctive force within the body that animates and regulates the physical form for use by one's conscious spirit. His theory was that disease is the result of a "mistunement" of the vital force by a "morbific agent" (pathogen) or other outside influence. Symptoms are only a sign of the diseased state of the vital force, which must be treated at its own level with the dynamized remedy. Like many of his time Hahnemann was interested in magnetism, and compared the action of the dynamized remedy on the vital force to the power of a magnet to magnetize iron...a resonant influence on a susceptible material. He was aware that blood contains iron, and believed the vital force to be both present in blood and transmitted by the nervous system.

Despite a growing body of evidence supporting the clinical efficacy of homeopathy, it has historically been rejected by the scientific community because of these two seemingly ethereal concepts: the vital force and the highly potentized remedy, neither of which has so far presented a reducible quantity that can be isolated for laboratory testing. (The next grand revolution in modern medical science will likely require a paradigm shift away from reductionist tactics.) With the advent of modern physics, many homeopaths have

equated the vital force to the body's electromagnetic field, which research suggests may be responsible for the synchronistic coordination of form and function. Theories regarding the active component of remedies range from quantum waveforms to charged clusters of water molecules. Although there have been some intriguing studies on the physical properties of remedies, much more needs to be done. There is certainly ample precedent for using medicines whose mechanisms of action are as yet unknown.

Several explanations for how homeopathic remedies effect healing have emerged over the last two centuries, the most prevalent of which are:

1. The remedy, having dynamic properties similar to the disease state but made stronger through potentization, replaces the natural disease with its own artificial disease (based on the assumption that two similar diseases can't coexist). The vital force is then able to counteract the artificial disease because of the latter's relatively short duration of action.
2. The remedy presents a clear image of the natural disease (magnified through potentization) to the vital force. Once the confused vital force recognizes the disease state, it can then direct its energies effectively. Cure in this case need only rely on recognition rather than on replacement, action, and counter-action.
3. The remedy acts by a principle called *hormesis*, which states that very small doses of potentially toxic substances activate healing mechanisms. Toxicologists theorize that this is due to an adaptive response to low intensity stress.
4. Symptoms, rather than being signs of the electromagnetic field's mistunement, are signs of its best efforts at recovery. Therefore, the similar symptom pattern of the remedy means that it will match, and thereby augment via resonance, the waveform characteristics of these efforts. (This assumes that these efforts are also the most appropriate for healing.)

Hahnemann himself was not convinced that people would ever achieve a complete understanding of the vital force. He relied on clinical observations to instruct his methods. Over the years, he experimented with many different potencies and dosage methods up to his last days. Many of his later methods differed greatly from his earlier ones, but only in dosage tactics; the most effective choice of remedy always proved to be the simillimum.

My own observation, particularly in the case of behavioral issues, has been that the remedy is somehow able to alter patients' habitual reactions to a given stress event (whether it be exposure to a virus or a ride in the car). For example, the dog who would automatically bark and lunge at an approaching stranger seems able to now "take a step back" and think about the situation before acting. He is able to respond, rather than simply react. The old habits, patterns, and predispositions are loosened, so that exposure to a stress trigger on any level (physical, emotional, or mental) need not be such a hardship.

Everyone responds to stress differently. Those who suffer most usually react to stress based on restrictive patterns, habits, and preconceptions. Those folks who have an easy-going attitude unhindered by such restrictions are able to manifest themselves openly and securely in any situation. It's what practitioners of Chinese medicine refer to when they talk about the "free and easy wanderer." Perhaps the similar remedy is able to reflect our reaction patterns back to us in a manner that helps us transcend them, opening the door to a response better suited to our unique selves. Rather than putting emphasis on the pathology caused by a morbidic foe, it focuses on our own worst enemy. (The reader is encouraged to reconsider this possibility when learning about the Governing Vessel, one of the extraordinary vessels of Chinese medicine described in chapter 15. This acupuncture meridian runs the entire length of the spinal cord and brain, structures closely associated in classical homeopathy with the vital force. The Governing Vessel plays an important role in self-reflection and response, and although the "crude and senseless" vital force was not believed capable of self-reflection, it is possible from a Chinese medicine perspective that homeopathic remedies may act primarily through this meridian to harmonize the entire body-mind.)

Though we don't yet know how homeopathy works, the results I see in my patients are too significant to ignore or pass off as placebo (particularly when different effects are observed in the same patient depending on the remedy chosen). There are more things in heaven and earth...and a lot of things that our current technologies are ill equipped to measure.

*Vitalism and Mechanism are the two competing doctrines which emerged during the early development of Western medicine. Vitalism states that a non-physical "vital force" exists in living organisms, animating and regulating their basic functions, distinguishing them from inanimate matter. Mechanism states that all natural phenomena including living systems can be explained using the laws of physics and chemistry alone. Hahnemann followed the vitalist doctrine developed by a French physician, Paul Barthez (1734-1806) of Montpellier. In this doctrine, the vital force is separate from the conscious mind and free will, being limited to the subconscious autonomic and instinctive functions that maintain the body. Many authors equate the vital force to qi, the "stuff of being" in Chinese medicine; there are crucial differences, however, between these two concepts. In Chinese medical philosophy there is no separation between energy and matter, animate and inanimate, mind and body, function and structure. All phenomena in the universe are composed of and maintained by qi. Thoughts and actions are simply different manifestations of qi along the same continuum as organs and tissues – a continuum which extends to our relations with each other and the natural environment. The closest equivalent to the vital force in Chinese medicine would be a rarified form of qi called pò, an instinctive type of awareness related to the Metal phase and its associated organs (chapter 13).

Tending the Wind – Chapter 4
Homeopathy – Part 2
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

When you take your four-legged friend to a homeopathic veterinarian, you'll be asked a multitude of questions that your average vet wouldn't typically ask. If you say your pet has been vomiting, you won't just be asked when it started or what might have triggered it. You'll be asked detailed questions about the color, consistency, time of day it happens, whether it happens immediately after eating or several hours after, what your pet does afterward, and equally detailed questions about any other symptoms accompanying it. You'll also be asked about the emotional state of your pet, both in general and since symptoms began. Even your pet's body type, temperature preferences and daily habits are important. In human homeopathy, the sensations and emotions of the patient are taken in great detail. We can't quite achieve this level of questioning in animals ("Do you feel a dull pain or a stabbing pain? Do you feel like you have a stone in your stomach? Are you depressed or just tired?") but we can usually get enough of an impression to start remedy selection.

The reason for all this detail, of course, is to choose the most similar remedy (*simillimum*). Two centuries of clinical work has shown that this is the remedy that will work best – not just a remedy made from the toxin your dog ate or the virus your cat caught. The strength of homeopathy is that it addresses the individual's response to a particular trigger, not the trigger itself.

It may take a few tries before the *simillimum* is found. One reason is the difficulty in obtaining all the information needed to make an informed selection, but the other is that a given remedy doesn't behave exactly the same way in all individuals. Critics are quick to point out that many provings of the same substance have come up with different symptom pictures, depending on the prover. There are, however, significant commonalities among the various provings that point to a remedy's appropriate application. They are clues as to how a remedy is likely to act. The degree of variation within a particular symptom portrait suggests that any one remedy is capable of accommodating several different subtypes within its general sphere of action.

Once the *simillimum* is chosen, you'll be given either a bottle of liquid remedy, or more typically a vial of tiny pellets (lactose/sucrose beads embedded with the liquid potency). These pellets are smaller than the ones for humans, so that when put in your pet's mouth they'll stick easily and dissolve quickly. Because remedies are thought to contain the subtle energies of a substance, they are considered sensitive to other electromagnetic fields; the bottle must be stored away from appliances, computers, television sets, phones, direct sunlight, and even strong odors such as camphor. The dose should ideally be given away from food and other medications.

The name of the remedy (e.g. Pulsatilla) will be labeled with its potency (e.g. 30C). This is its strength. Homeopathic remedies are made by a process called *potentization* – serial dilution and succussion (vigorous shaking) of a substance in a mixture of water and alcohol. For example, one drop of an herbal tincture is diluted in 99 drops of water/alcohol, shaken a specified number of times, and then one drop of that mixture is further diluted in 99 drops of water/alcohol, shaken, and so forth. The dilution factor each time in this example is 1:100, called a centesimal (or C) potentization. Other commonly used scales are X (1:10) and M (1:1000). A 30C potency means the 1:100 process has been done 30 times in a row, representing a total dilution of 10^{60} . Chemical theory states that a dilution greater than 6.022×10^{23} (Avogadro's number) theoretically contains none of the original substance. Hence all the controversy. Succussion is said to be the key to the biological activity of such dilute solutions. (Quantum physics is beyond the scope of this work, but for those interested please investigate the double entanglement theory of homeopathic action. Quantum mechanics, and specifically weak quantum theory, predicts entanglement/correlatedness within quantum systems. Homeopathy uses

two instances of entanglement: one between the remedy and its original substance, and one between the similar symptom portraits of the original substance and the patient.)*

The greater the dilution scale, or the greater the number of dilutions and succussions within a scale, the stronger the remedy is considered to be. The strength chosen will depend on the strength of the patient and the duration of the disease; the potency should be suited to the vigor of the vital force. Stronger remedies, if chosen poorly, tend to be less forgiving than weaker ones because their effects are more precise and longer lasting. Homeopaths often start with a lower potency and work up. Stronger potencies are also given less frequently than weaker ones.

As a general rule of thumb, the frequency of dosage should be reduced as improvement occurs. (And certainly stop the remedy if symptoms worsen.) Any medicine given when it's no longer needed can cause problems. For this reason, and to see if they've chosen the right remedy, many homeopaths start with only one dose. (Chronic or deep-seated illness typically requires some degree of repetition.) The earliest signs of improvement in the patient are usually increased vitality and a brighter attitude. Physical changes come gradually after.

In Hahnemann's earlier works, he spoke of a brief aggravation of the patient's symptoms as the stronger remedy displaced the disease state, inciting an opposing counteraction by the vital force. In his later years, he felt this aggravation was not a necessary part of the healing process if one used the appropriate potency, dosage size and frequency. He spoke then of a purely curative action rather than an opposing counteraction. Some homeopaths feel the quantity of remedy given is not crucial, since it's only the vibrational quality and/or informational content that's important. Others feel quite strongly that the size of the dose matters because each dry pellet or drop of liquid represents a packet of energy. (Is it a wave or a particle?) Until we understand the biological activity of remedies, proper dosage size and frequency (as well as potency) will be an ongoing debate. Practitioners must ultimately rely on their own clinical experience to decide.

Homeopathy doesn't work for everyone, but it can work very well. The important lessons to take home are to be as observant as possible (this will aid in remedy selection and adjustment of dosage), and to be patient but not foolish. Change is not as rapid as with conventional medicine, but should occur within a reasonable amount of time. If improvement doesn't seem forthcoming, don't wait too long to make adjustments. The benefits of homeopathy must be regarded in light of other options. The next chapter will examine this important issue in more detail.

* Entanglement Model of Homeopathy as an Example of Generalized Entanglement Predicted by Weak Quantum Theory, by H. Walach, Samuelli Institute; Forsch Komplementarmed Klass Naturheilkd 2003; 10:192-200

Tending the Wind – Chapter 5
Homeopathy – Part 3
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Among the various alternative therapies available, homeopathy probably raises the greatest philosophical objection to conventional medicine. Homeopathic purists often won't even take a case under consideration if other medicines are being used (including herbs). The reasoning behind this is the thought that any medicine which isn't the simillimum will cause further mistunement to the vital force, sending the disease deeper – a concept called *suppression*.

Some homeopaths are adamant regarding the incompatibility of allopathic and homeopathic methods. (*Allopathy* is defined as any method of treatment using substances that produce effects *different* from those caused by the disease. The use of bitter, cooling herbs to treat a hot condition is an example.) Others take the more moderate position that mechanical and chemical measures can be employed to palliate physical ailments while the remedy helps the vital force to complete the cure from within...the middle path, so to speak. Still others feel that as long as the adjunct method chosen also addresses the totality of the patient in a holistic manner (e.g. acupuncture and Chinese herbs) their vibrational effects will be in tune with the homeopathic remedy, and aid its action.

The issue of suppression is important to you, as your pet's advocate, because you must decide for him or her in the midst of all these different opinions. New clients sometimes arrive torn and anxious because their other homeopathic veterinarian has told them they mustn't use any allopathic medications with the remedy, but their conventional veterinarian says their pet will suffer unduly if they don't. Here are some considerations which may help you in deciding what to do:

1. If there's one thing conventional medicine is good at, it's handling acute and serious illness. There are situations that don't grant any time to see if a remedy is going to work. And there are life-threatening illnesses that require strong intervention. Once the patient is physically stable, there will be time enough to institute more gentle and holistic measures. People don't expect homeopathy to fix a fractured bone without surgery, and they shouldn't expect it to work alone for other equally imperative situations.
2. It is reasonable to take measures to improve the comfort of the patient while homeopathy has a chance to work. Hippocrates himself said that concurrent supportive physical and nutritional measures work best using the principle of opposites while the dynamic cure is being addressed with similars. I've seen many cases in which significant healing did not begin using one approach until the other was added, and vice versa. Nor does every ailment require homeopathic intervention; the otherwise healthy patient with no predisposing patterns may be quite capable of rebalancing with just a little outside help using allopathic support.
3. If history teaches us anything, it's that attachment to philosophical absolutes is inhibitory. Science and medicine (and any other endeavor) have only ever truly blossomed because of paradigm shifts created by open minds. And the best advances are always achieved within an atmosphere of tolerance and thoughtful discussion.

There is no doubt that certain drugs have been overused in conventional medicine, and that the ideal situation is to enhance the patient's own healing capacity. Homeopathy can initiate change on profound levels, and help release deeply held patterns of illness as well as provide relief for acute ailments. But to call every use of allopathic agents a suppressive act is not only to ignore a multitude of beneficial medical traditions from various cultures, but also to assume the body is incapable of harmoniously assimilating dissimilar substances.

My own experience using homeopathy in conjunction with other methods has been quite favorable. I have seen homeopathy speed recovery time after allopathic methods were begun, and continue the healing process once those methods were stopped. I have

seen homeopathy work synergistically with other alternative methods like acupuncture and herbs. And I have seen homeopathy work even in conjunction with overtly suppressive agents. Ultimately, the question is quite simple – is the patient, as a whole, getting better or not? As the person who spends more time with your animal friends than anyone else, you are best equipped to answer that question, and to ask for help on their behalf.



One last topic related to homeopathy should be introduced before moving on to chiropractic. *Nosodes* are potentized preparations made from diseased tissues, discharges, and other body matter. Their use in homeopathy has grown from Hahnemann's theory of *miasms* (from the Greek for “defilement” or “taint”), which represent certain archetypal disease patterns transmitted through the ages. These then become inherited tendencies or predispositions. An example is the miasm called Psora (meaning “itch”), which can be described in broad strokes as an ongoing struggle to maintain oneself in a world full of external stressors. Physically, this may manifest as an inability to kick an infestation or infection, to alleviate an allergy, or to recover from a reaction. Mental symptoms may include obsessive-compulsive behavior, self-doubt, or depression. Psorinum is the associated nosode, made from the scabies vesicle. (The vesicle, or blister, is formed from the burrowing of the scabies mite into skin.)

In addition to nosodes for the archetypal miasms, there are nosodes made from a plethora of other diseases, including veterinary ones such as CDV (Canine Distemper Virus) and FeLV (Feline Leukemia Virus). The use of nosodes to treat patients suffering from the *same* specific disease (as opposed to homeopathy's similar disease) is called *isopathy*. Hahnemann warned against isopathy, since it ignores the unique attributes of the individual patient and their personal response to disease, and focuses only on the named disease itself. Nosodes tend to be reserved for those patients whose individual simillimum is difficult to identify, or whose body has been so thoroughly overtaken by the disease that the simillimum is ineffective. In certain cases, of course, the nosode *is* the simillimum, and so its use would be truly homeopathic.

Over the years, the isopathic use of nosodes has been extended to prophylaxis for specific diseases during times of epidemic outbreak, and even as a form of routine childhood vaccination. This has led to the use of animal nosodes in lieu of vaccination by many veterinary homeopaths. Some start nosodes after the kitten or puppy vaccine series, and some use them exclusively. Their efficacy in prophylaxis, however, has not been adequately demonstrated (especially for the more deadly diseases like parvovirus). For this reason, I don't generally recommend them unless the disease in question is relatively mild anyway (e.g. Kennel Cough), the animal is at high risk for adverse reaction to vaccination, or no vaccine exists for the disease. Each case must be considered individually, and with full understanding of the potential risks involved. Fortunately, blood tests called titers are now available to determine if adult dogs and cats need booster vaccines. And many boarding kennels, day care facilities, and training classes now accept an adequate titer in lieu of vaccination for select diseases.

In the case of epidemics, Hahnemann did use homeopathic remedies for prophylaxis, selected as the simillimum to a general presentation of the disease. These were usually not nosodes, but simply substances with similar symptom profiles to most of the patients struck down by the disease. Hahnemann would study the symptoms in a range of people representing several different constitutional types to determine common aspects in their response to the epidemic, and then choose his preventive remedy. He measured great success with remedies such as Belladonna for a scarlet fever outbreak. Since then more success has been recorded with remedies such as Gelsemium and Arsenicum during flu outbreaks, and Veratrum album for cholera. Different remedies may be selected for the same named disease depending on the most widely represented symptom profile during a particular epidemic. This same process could also be applied to epidemics in veterinary

medicine to help prevent and treat a wide range of exposed animals quickly; as time permitted, each individual animal's simillimum could then be more accurately determined if necessary.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 6
Chiropractic – Part 1
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Chiropractic as a profession is just over a hundred years old, but various forms of spinal manipulation have been used by numerous cultures throughout history. Hippocrates used manipulative procedures to treat spinal displacements, and is credited with the phrase “Look to the spine for disease.” Similar procedures were performed by several American Indian tribes, and appear in the records of ancient Asian and Egyptian cultures. Treatment by “bonesetters” became popular in England and America during the 19th century, but manipulation techniques weren’t systematized until the development of chiropractic and osteopathy in the late 1800s.

The story of chiropractic begins with Daniel David Palmer (1845-1913). He moved from Canada to the U.S. just after the Civil War, and after being a sometime farmer, beekeeper, goldfish peddler, and grocer, became interested in spirituality and healing. He took a course in magnetic healing (treating disease by influencing the magnetic field surrounding the body) and opened an infirmary in Davenport, Iowa. During his practice he became interested in the nervous system as a carrier of the body’s self-healing vital energy (which he called *innate intelligence* – a concept similar to homeopathy’s vital force), and postulated that disturbance of the nerves would cause an excess of this life energy in some areas, and deficiency in others. The spine, being the major conduit of nerves, was of key interest.

Palmer’s first spinal adjustment was performed in 1895 on a janitor in his building who had gone deaf 17 years earlier after working in a bent position and feeling something pop in his back. A lump had developed at the spot. Palmer’s examination concluded that one of the janitor’s vertebrae was out of its normal position, so he delivered a forceful thrust with his hands to “reduce” it back into place. After several treatments, the janitor’s hearing was restored. He termed the thrust an “adjustment” and the malpositioned vertebra a “subluxation.” He reasoned that a subluxation impedes normal nerve flow and causes disease. If the structural integrity of the spine is restored, the functional integrity of the nervous system returns, and the body’s self-healing vital energies are once again freely able to maintain homeostasis.

Over the next two years, Palmer perfected his technique, each time using the bony prominences of individual vertebrae as levers for repositioning. (This would eventually be termed a *short-lever* adjustment. A *long-lever* technique uses leverage contact points distant from the vertebral joint in question.) He then opened the first chiropractic school. A patient versed in Greek had come up with the term chiropractic: *kheir* meaning hand (*chiro* in Latin), and *praktikos* meaning practical (relating to practice rather than theory, or engaged in work). The American Heritage Dictionary defines chiropractic as “a system of therapy in which disease is considered the result of abnormal function of the nervous system. Treatment usually involves the manipulation of the spinal column and other body structures.” Would that it were that simple.

The definition of chiropractic and the terminology and techniques it employs are the ongoing subject of much discussion, debate, and even courtroom battles. Debate began when new schools of chiropractic developed techniques in addition to Palmer’s short-lever adjustment to treat subluxations. Palmer felt the adjustment must be specific to one vertebra at a time, and not employ manipulation of a series of vertebrae. He also limited his practice to the spinal adjustment without the addition of other healing methods. Those who adhered to Palmer’s strict principles became known as “straights” and those who deviated by adding long-lever techniques or other modalities were called “mixers.” Lines were drawn between various schools and associations which still exist today.

As hand-held instruments (such as today’s commonly used Activator) became available which could produce a similar rapid (*High Velocity*) and shallow (*Low Amplitude*) specific force (*HVLA thrust*) to individual vertebrae, further argument evolved between

manual adjusters and instrument adjusters. Some organizations and legal bodies don't recognize instrument adjusting as part of chiropractic. Some of this argument is semantic, but most of it stems from the fact that instrument adjusting applies a much lower force to the spine than manual adjusting, and seldom produces the audible "crack" caused by joint separation and cavitation of joint fluid. Proponents of a strictly manual technique argue that the joint must be forced beyond its elastic limits, which generally involves movement sufficient to overcome the fluid tension between joint surfaces resulting in cavitation. Proponents of instrument adjusting argue that their higher-speed, lower-force, extremely specific thrusts are sufficient to restore the joint's normal neuromuscular homeostatic mechanisms without taking the joint beyond its elastic limits. For now, leaders in the profession define a chiropractic adjustment as any HVLA thrust delivered with controlled velocity, depth and direction. This definition would include instrument adjusting, and about 50% of today's human chiropractors employ such methods. The HVLA thrust distinguishes the chiropractic adjustment from other forms of spinal therapy.

The terms chiropractic uses to define itself are further complicated by a historic lack of scientific evidence – the source of its battles with conventional medicine. *Subluxation* is medically defined as an incomplete or partial dislocation of a bone, visible on radiographs. Palmer defined it in similar terms, as a displacement, or misalignment, but the lack of radiographic confirmation for many palpable problems has led to less strictly anatomic definitions. Modern chiropractic defines a subluxation as any joint dysfunction, including anatomic, dynamic, or physiologic abnormalities. Since functional disturbances are much less obvious on radiographs, chiropractors have traditionally relied on primarily subjective means to identify their presence and evaluate response to treatment. (Techniques are available to measure indicators like skin temperature and electrical conductivity, but their validity in identifying subluxations needs more research.) And of particular controversy is the claim that subluxations can cause internal organ disease in addition to musculoskeletal dysfunction by disturbing autonomic nerve impulses. Scientific study relevant to these issues is still in its infancy. However, many clinical studies support the efficacy of chiropractic (both manual and by instrument), and advancements in the study of the spine and related structures are beginning to offer plausible explanations for the benefits observed.

The next chapter examines the science behind chiropractic, so you'll be learning a little anatomy and neurophysiology...just enough to provide an understanding of what modern chiropractic is all about.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 7
Chiropractic – Part 2
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

In the 19th century, bonesetters in America and England mended bones, but also treated bones that were “out of place” by forcing them back “in.” Daniel Palmer was certainly familiar with the bonesetters’ tradition, and likely had some training in it, but perfected his technique into a new profession – chiropractic. Even today, people commonly say their “back is out.” However, as chiropractic has evolved along with our understanding of spinal joint anatomy and physiology, we now know that subluxations are a lot more complex and subtle than a simple bone being out of place. A joint does not have to be misaligned to be dysfunctional, or to cause neurologic abnormalities. (Please see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joints> as a visual aid to the following discussion of joint anatomy, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vertebral_column regarding spinal anatomy, and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nervous_system for neural anatomy and afferent/efferent pathways. These websites show human anatomy only. See <http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/ClientED/anatomy/nervous.aspx> for images of a canine spinal segment showing the spinal cord and intervertebral discs.)

An *articulation* is any type of joint between bones. Three functional types are described: *synarthroses* (permitting little to no movement), *amphiarthroses* (permitting limited movement), and *diarthroses* (permitting a wide range of movements). The union of adjacent vertebral bones is quite complex since the vertebral column must provide flexibility while also protecting the delicate spinal cord that runs within its length. There are actually three separate articulations between vertebrae – one amphiarthrosis where each disc resides below the spinal cord in quadrupeds (in front of the cord in bipeds), and two diarthroses above the cord near the spinous process (the bump you can feel on the midline of the back). The largest part of each vertebral bone between discs is called the *vertebral body*; the parts that face each other at the diarthroses are called *articular facets*. (An exception to this arrangement is the meeting between the first two cervical vertebrae in the neck, which consists of three diarthrodial joints.) All spinal joints have cartilage between the bones, but in amphiarthrodial joints involving discs the cartilage is firmly attached to both vertebral bodies, while in the diarthrodial joints (also called *synovial joints*) the cartilage attached to each bone is separated by *synovial fluid* – a highly viscous lubricant. Synovial joints are lined by a membrane which provides nutrients to the cartilage, and are protected by a fibrous capsule. Strong and variably elastic ligaments form several connections between bones, and are contiguous with joint capsules where they cross over synovial joints.

Intervertebral discs (also spelled *disks*) are shaped like hockey pucks, and are composed of a semifluid gel center (*nucleus pulposus*) encircled by a fibrous cartilage outer ring (*annulus fibrosus*). The nucleus is deformable, but considered incompressible (hence the disc’s major role in handling compressive forces through the spine). It contains a high percentage of water which decreases with age and repeated stress. The annulus keeps the nucleus in place during compression, and although its fibers are not very elastic, it does allow some motion between vertebral bodies. Excessive rotational or shear forces can tear the fibers, allowing the nucleus to protrude (commonly referred to as a “slipped disc”). The flat sides of the disc are firmly attached to adjacent vertebral bodies by an *endplate*, composed of the same type of cartilage (hyaline) that covers the articular facets.

Muscles attach to various surfaces of the vertebrae, the larger ones contributing to gross body movements and the smaller ones handling finer relations between vertebrae. The muscles are considered to be the main stabilizers of the joints, and are responsible for shock absorption as well as controlled acceleration, deceleration and sustained tension. If they fail to function properly, the ligaments must bear extra stress, followed by the discs and articular cartilage, and finally the bone. Trauma to muscles can be acute, but more

commonly the damage is insidious resulting from the ongoing stress of poor posture, repetitive movements, and sustained loads. The resulting strain to joint tissues creates a cycle of pain, inflammation, muscle spasm, connective tissue fibrosis (scarring), and, most importantly, joint fixation (also termed *hypomobility*).

Proper blood supply to all of these tissues is critical, and is compromised by stress and tension around the joint. Poor blood supply leads to tissue starvation and further inflammation. Muscles and bones have direct blood supply, but cartilage and ligaments contain no vessels, and must rely on neighboring tissues for nutrition.

Finally, we come to the nerves...here's where things get more hypothetical, and where the crux of the matter lies for chiropractic.

Palmer stated that subluxations are bony displacements causing disease by pinching nerves as they exit the spinal cord through the space between adjacent vertebrae. In the absence of disc herniation or bony remodeling, however, direct anatomic compression of nerve roots by displaced bones has not been confirmed as the key factor in subluxation-induced disease. Nor is it known whether stress to local blood vessels, either by bony displacement or altered joint mobility, is sufficient to cause significant nerve damage. This anatomic model, called the *non-impulse-based* model, has been challenged in recent years by a functional, *impulse-based* model. In this model, nerve impulses carrying information to and from the spinal cord play the central role.

Efferent nerves carry information out of the spinal cord, sending instructions to various organs and tissues. *Afferent* nerves carry sensory information from organs and tissues back to the spinal cord. Some of this information is processed within the cord, and some is sent on to the brain. Sensory information to afferent nerves is provided by various types of receptors. Most important in impulse-based subluxation theory are *mechanoreceptors* (sensing movement) and *nociceptors* (sensing pain). Both types of receptors reside in the ligaments and joint capsules of the spine; there are also nociceptors in the annulus fibrosus of the disc (and some evidence of mechanoreceptors).

Research suggests that information from nociceptive afferents is toned down in the spinal cord by information from the faster-signaling mechanoreceptive afferents. Normal joint mobility thus allows regulatory inhibition of pain signals. In joint fixation, whether or not there is bony displacement, appropriate mechanoreceptor stimulation is missing because the joint isn't moving normally. Uninhibited pain signals from stressed or inflamed ligaments, joint capsules and discs then cause altered spinal cord neural processing, and reflex changes in efferent signals to the organs and tissues served by that spinal cord segment. The result is further joint dysfunction due to reflex muscle guarding, and physiologic dysfunction due to reflex stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system. The High-Velocity, Low-Amplitude (HVLA) adjustment is thought to restore normal neural processing by stimulating mechanoreceptors whose afferent signals interrupt abnormal reflex patterns. Thrusts that cause joint separation and stretching (either along or at right angles to the articular plane) provide better stimulation than thrusts that cause joint compression.

The altered neural patterns created by joint hypomobility and excess nociceptive input can remain long after that input ceases. Repetition of the same afferent signals creates long-lasting alterations in how the spinal cord responds to all future signals – a process called *reflex entrainment*. This is why joint dysfunction can persist even after the pain is gone, and why it continues until neural reflexes are normalized. Reflex entrainment also results in lowering of the pain threshold, so that it takes even less nociceptive input to disturb homeostasis. In this model, actual bony displacement is likely the result rather than the cause of neuromuscular dysfunction, due to chronic reflex muscle spasm and long-term damage to ligaments.

Research is ongoing, and a specific mechanism for chiropractic's benefits has not yet been determined. As with most things in living organisms, the reality of joint dysfunction is likely more complex than either model. What we do know is that the HVLA thrust moves articulations, stretches tissues, and stimulates the nervous system in

a manner different from other forms of spinal therapy. The most important difference may be its speed, because one of the three mechanoreceptor types only responds to rapid changes in joint movement. (The other two will fire with slower movements and sustained loads.) The other important difference is its precision, directing energy into a narrow field of focus. The next chapter explores the application of HVLA adjustments in animals.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 8
Chiropractic – Part 3
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

The spine of dogs and cats is somewhat different from that of humans. All mammals have 7 cervical (neck) vertebrae, but dogs and cats have 13 thoracic, 7 lumbar, and 3 sacral vertebrae whereas humans have 12, 5, and 5 respectively. (The sacrum is one solid structure composed of fused vertebrae.) Humans also have more curvature in the overall shape of their spines to aid in upright load-bearing. And of course there are major anatomical differences around the shoulder and hip areas between bipeds and quadrupeds. Subluxation theory, however, applies equally to both. The High-Velocity Low-Amplitude (HVLA) adjustment may be delivered either manually or using a hand-held device.

Daniel Palmer, sometime after 1910, experimented with performing adjustments using a rubber hammer device called a pleximeter. Similar inventions appear throughout the early history of chiropractic. One of the most commonly used devices today is a spring-activated device called the Activator Adjusting Instrument (AAI), created for a human chiropractic technique – Activator Methods Chiropractic Technique (AMCT). A similar technique for animals which also uses the Activator is Veterinary Orthopedic Manipulation (VOM). This is the technique I use in my practice.

VOM and AMCT both rely on a phenomenon called *facilitation* to locate subluxations. Facilitation refers to an increased excitability of neural pathways in the spinal cord caused by abnormal stimulation patterns from afferent (sensory) neurons. Subsequent afferent stimulation then causes hyperactive efferent (motor) responses, such as muscle spasm and shortening. (Recall that in the impulse-based subluxation theory, joint hypomobility leads to a lack of the mechanoreceptor stimulation necessary for proper down-regulation of nociceptive input to the spinal cord. Abnormal neural patterns are set up in the spinal cord resulting in hyperactive responses to all further sensory input, whether nociceptive or mechanoreceptive.)

Muscle spasm and shortening along the spine can be observed in humans as functional (not anatomical) leg length inequality – the manifestation of facilitation used in AMCT to locate subluxations. In small animals, AMCT isn't practical because dogs and cats have much shorter legs than humans, and you can't tell them to sit still for the required procedures. Luckily, they have another muscle system which humans don't, and it serves as a great reflex indicator of spinal facilitation.

The *cutaneous trunci* is a thin sheet of muscle just under the skin covering the trunk of the body. It is commonly called the “fly-twitch” muscle because of the reflex twitch it exhibits when a fly lands on the skin. This normal reflex is called the *panniculus reflex*, and is triggered by stimulation of certain receptors whose afferent nerves enter the spinal column at the third thoracic through the fourth or fifth lumbar intervertebral spaces. In VOM, a similar reflex involving the cutaneous trunci muscle (*panniculus-like reflex*) is used to locate subluxations. Every spinal joint is tested by using the Activator device placed strategically on each vertebra. Where there is a subluxation, the mechanical stimulus to the joint will cause a reflex twitch of the cutaneous trunci muscle; if there is no facilitation at that level, no twitch will occur. This is a pathologic reflex rather than a normal reflex, occurring only with subluxation and referred to as a “read” in VOM nomenclature. In areas not indicated by this reflex, above T-3 and below L-4 or L-5, we commonly observe reflex twitching of forelimb and hindlimb muscles respectively.

At the same time the Activator is locating subluxations, it is also providing an adjustment (HVLA thrust). To be most effective, the instrument's line of drive is oriented to cause distraction of the joint, either in line with or at right angles to the articular planes. The instrument can then be used to check each joint again for remaining subluxations. This procedure is also done for joints along the limbs. Students of VOM are taught to make two or three passes with the Activator down the spine and key

locations on the limbs. With each pass, secondary subluxations resulting from dysfunction in other areas are cleared, revealing primary subluxations which usually require a series of treatments to resolve.

A common criticism of VOM by manual adjusters is that every joint receives an adjustment, not just the subluxated ones. Traditional chiropractic warns against overadjusting the spine. Normal areas and areas of minor compensation are typically avoided. There is a massively important difference, though, between manual technique and VOM technique which alleviates the concern about overadjusting with VOM. While both methods induce movement in the joint, the intent of manual technique is typically to force the joint beyond its elastic limits, creating joint separation that is often accompanied by cavitation (cracking); the intent of VOM is to induce just enough movement to normalize nerve impulses without stressing tissues. Once nerve impulses are normalized, the body's own homeostatic mechanisms can take over joint healing.

Some measurements have been made in human chiropractic for the forces, speeds, and movements generated during adjustment. The data collected so far suggest that instrument adjusting achieves similar immediate movement of the vertebrae using much less force and more speed. Comparing forces and speeds in the cervical spine^{1,2}, for example, manual thrusts average around 100 Newtons of peak force with thrust duration times ranging from 80-100 milliseconds; Activator cervical thrusts average around 40 Newtons of peak force with a thrust duration time of about 30 milliseconds. Comparing movements in the lumbar spine^{1,3}, manual and Activator thrusts both generate about 0.5-1mm translation and 0.5-1° rotation. (Studies need to be conducted that simultaneously compare forces, speeds, and movements all in the same spinal region.) In manual therapy, the joint is taken to its elastic limits before the thrust is applied. Using the Activator, the thrust is applied with the joint in its resting position. The Activator therefore requires less force to achieve the same amount of immediate movement; overall movement is of course greater using manual technique.

The question remains, is it better to take the joint beyond its elastic limits? Is that degree of stretch to ligaments, joint capsules, discs and muscles necessary to break up fibrous adhesions and free the joint? Or is it enough to simply induce the movement needed to restore neuromuscular homeostasis?

Current and future research will help answer these questions, but in the real world, as with most things in medicine, some patients respond better to one method, and some to the other. As practitioners, we tend to focus on those methods that work better for our own bodies, and for me that's instrument adjusting. I also prefer using gentler techniques for small animals who can't always tell us when something hurts, and who don't particularly like to hold still for intricate movements. The improvement I see in my patients, and the joy I see in my clients when their pet can jump into the car and climb the stairs again, is the real world evidence for VOM's worth.

VOM has successfully helped pets with a wide range of ailments, including disc herniation, wobbler's syndrome, sciatica, arthritis, partial cruciate tears, lick granulomas, feline hyperesthesia syndrome, and even certain internal disorders. A full exam and appropriate diagnostic tests are necessary to identify the nature of the problem, and to determine if adjustments are appropriate.

Whether joint adjustments are done manually or by instrument, the benefits last much longer when adjacent soft tissues are treated with methods like massage and acupuncture. Their effects are synergistic, providing relaxation and stimulation to all the tissues involved in joint fixation. So don't skimp on those butt rubs!

1. Chiropractic Technique, D. Peterson & T. Bergmann, Mosby 2002, Ch.4 Pg.125-6

2. Biomechanical Characterization of Five Novel Methods of Cervical Spine Manipulation, J Manipulative Physiol Ther 1993; 16(9):573-7.

3. Measurement and Analysis of the In Vivo Posteroanterior Impulse Response of the Human Thoracolumbar Spine: A Feasibility Study, *J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1994; 17(7):431-41.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 9
Chinese Medicine – Part 1
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) encompasses a wide range of related healing modalities, including acupuncture, acupressure, herbal and nutritional therapy, massage, specific exercises, and meditation. The common denominator underlying all TCM methods is the unique Chinese perspective on health and disease, which focuses on whole body/mind harmony as a microcosmic parallel to the harmonic patterns of the natural world. (This will be discussed further in subsequent chapters as it is a complex topic.) In veterinary medicine, acupuncture and herbal therapy are the most commonly used methods in the clinic setting.

Acupuncture involves the placement of thin needles through the skin into superficial soft tissues. Needle placement is very specific according to ancient maps of the body surface, each point having a unique set of effects on both superficial and deep organs and tissues. Needles today are typically stainless steel with a copper, steel or plastic handle. The number of needles used depends on the patient's condition, but most point formulas range between 5 to 15 needles. Dogs and cats usually permit needle insertion without much fuss, either not reacting at all or looking back as if bitten by a flea. As in human acupuncture, though, some points are more sensitive, requiring gradual insertion or acupressure instead.

In small animals, needles are typically left in place anywhere from 5 to 25 minutes depending on point location and patient response. Many veterinary acupuncturists set a timer for 20 minutes and leave the room, a technician later returning to remove the needles. I prefer to stay with my patients the whole time for a couple of reasons: it gives me more time to discuss my patient's condition with my client (not to mention the time bonding with both), and I can monitor my patient's response to the needles as they're working. Just as needle placement is unique to each patient, so too is needle timing. With experience and a good sense of feel, a practitioner can tell when it's time for a needle to come out.

As with chiropractic, it is a normal part of the healing process for a few patients to feel temporarily worse after acupuncture, perhaps for the first 6 to 48 hours. Most, however, don't experience any aggravation, and many have a long sleep after arriving home. Improvement in the patient's condition may be obvious after one session, but most chronic ailments require a few sessions to begin seeing significant change. Acupuncture sessions are typically repeated weekly to start, with the frequency of visits decreasing as improvement becomes more consistent and longer-lasting.

Western science has tried to isolate a specific mechanism of action to explain the effects of acupuncture. One theory is that the needles stimulate specific nerves which alter neural processing in the spinal cord and brain, changing the molecular signals that then go out to the rest of the body. This *neurohormonal mechanism* proposes that the effects of acupuncture are dependent on nerve stimulation alone, ignoring the classical acupuncture pathways called meridians. However, some studies in which the appropriate nerve was deactivated (either by chemical block or physical denervation) showed that acupuncture treatment still achieved its desired effects. The neurohormonal theory also has difficulty explaining other observations, including the multiple effects of stimulating a single acupuncture point and the distribution of many important points away from significant nerve pathways. A competing theory, the *electromagnetic mechanism*, is based on the fact that most points studied have both lower electrical resistance and increased electrical conductivity than the surrounding skin. These properties vary depending on the disease state (with increased conductivity noted in points related to the diseased organ), physical activity, emotional state, time of day, and changes in the environment such as temperature and season. In the emerging science of bioelectromagnetics, it is known that the body's electromagnetic (EM) fields regulate

development and physiology; such EM fields are low-frequency and low-intensity, similar to those created during acupuncture treatment. The microcurrent generated as a metallic needle is inserted through the skin causes fluctuations in the patient's EM field, likely altering this field in very specific ways depending on the points chosen. Such a non-molecular mechanism can affect the nerves (and the balance of molecules they release) but is not dependent on them, and early research suggests a correlation between the ancient meridian maps and modern EM field measurements. As research progresses, it is likely that even subtler forms of energy and information exchange will be discovered.

Chinese herbs have also been studied from a Western perspective with attempts to isolate the active ingredients of single herbs and formulas. These attempts have been successful in some cases, but not others, and again fail to explain or predict the full range of the observed therapeutic effects. As with acupuncture, it is likely that non-molecular mechanisms will prove important to a full understanding of Chinese herbal therapy. Classical texts discuss the thermal properties of herbs, as well as how they affect the flow of bioenergy through the body in a holographic manner. It is only from this perspective that the most effective formula is chosen.

An individual herb can be used alone, but most commonly Chinese herbs are combined into formulas. Ingredients are chosen for their harmonious interactions, one or two herbs addressing the main pattern of disharmony, with the others serving to assist or modify the actions of the leading herbs. (It is interesting to note that the Chinese character for "harmony" is a culinary reference to the flavorful blending of ingredients.) A typical herbal formula, like acupuncture formulas, includes between 5 and 15 herbs. Formulas may be sold in their raw form and prepared as a tea, or in powder or pill form. Most veterinary preparations are sold as powders to be mixed in food, or as pills. Palatability can be an issue with the powders, but most dogs (and even a few cats) will eat their food without much objection if any.

Chinese herbs are usually taken daily, and can be used concurrently with regular acupuncture treatment. Herbs tend to be used for more chronic and deep-seated illness than acupuncture, but either or both may benefit a given situation. Some herbs can be toxic to small animals, and these are typically avoided or used only in minute doses. Where information is available, interactions between herbs and pharmaceutical drugs are taken into consideration. But because Chinese herbal formulas are balanced mixtures that don't rely on large doses of any one ingredient, harmful interactions are much less likely than with treatment paradigms that use a single herb approach.

To choose the appropriate acupuncture or herbal formula, TCM practitioners use a combination of history-taking, physical examination, point palpation, and tongue and pulse evaluation. History-taking in TCM is as detailed as in homeopathy, including many more questions than would typically be asked in a conventional setting. Physical examination is equally detailed, paying more attention to the texture, color, temperature and overall feel of tissues – especially over acupuncture points. The tongue gives unique insight into the patient's pattern of disharmony, based on its coating, color, texture and movement. Different locations on the tongue also tend to map which internal organs are involved. Finally, the arterial pulses inside the hindlegs are palpated for their speed, quality, strength and depth – each detail providing clues toward the pattern of illness and the treatment required.

But what exactly is a "pattern of disharmony" in TCM? How are points on the skin surface related to internal organs as well as superficial musculoskeletal structures? And why are the internal organs given many more functions in TCM than in Western medicine, being involved also in mental and emotional illness? The answers lie in understanding the profoundly holographic nature of TCM theory, its philosophical origins, and even its language.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 10
Chinese Medicine – Part 2
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

All forms of medicine evolve in relation to their culture of origin, influenced by language, lifestyle, beliefs, geography, and social structure. Traditional Chinese Medicine is no exception. Cultural influences are not often addressed when discussing Western medicine with Western audiences; a shared cultural experience provides common ground. Eastern culture is sufficiently different, however, that at least a basic introduction is essential to understanding TCM, beginning with its language – the imagery of Chinese characters. (The romanization of characters into letter-words using the latin alphabet is a relatively recent invention to indicate Mandarin pronunciation. Most notable among the romanization systems are Wade-Giles, still popular in Taiwan and some academic circles, and the newer international standard called Pinyin. This is why readers will often see “the Way” written as both Tao and Dào. This article series will use Pinyin, including the tone indicators. Note that many Pinyin words are combined into one, as in the two options for the legendary Yellow Emperor: Huáng Dì and Huángdì.)*

The earliest recognizable Chinese characters date back to the oracle bone writings of the Shāng Dynasty (1765-1122 B.C.); shamans drew these characters to record their divinations, gleaned from interpreting the cracks that appeared on the surface of a heated ox scapula or tortoise shell. (There are also Neolithic pottery markings dating to roughly 4000 B.C. but their form cannot be directly linked to the lineage of Chinese characters.) Characters were first carved onto bones or shells, then metals during the bronze age; they later appeared in ink on bamboo, then silk, and finally paper.

The original characters were pictographs that could be quite complicated. They were first simplified and systematized during the Qín Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) to reduce complexity while improving phonetic and semantic information. Once ink brush became the norm and new inconsistencies arose, characters were standardized again during the Later Hàn Dynasty (25-220 A.D.) in an etymological dictionary, the *Shūowén Jiězhì*. This dictionary, written shortly after the invention of paper, explains the logic of the characters and describes six types: pictographs, ideographs, logical aggregates, phonetic complexes, associative transformations, and borrowings. Pictographs and ideographs are the basis for all the other types.

A *pictograph* is a character whose shape alludes to its meaning. For example, the character for “tree” looks very much like a tree. An *ideograph* uses simple strokes to express abstract ideas; the image for “one” is a single horizontal line. *Logical aggregates* combine the meanings of different pictographs and/or ideographs to create a new meaning; the character for “fan” combines an image of a half-door with an image of feathers. *Phonetic complexes* use one character to provide the meaning and another to provide the spoken sound (though the latter often adds further meaning as well). *Associative transformations* extend the meaning of a character to a related concept. *Borrowings* use a character with the same sound as a spoken word that doesn’t have its own character but does have its own unique meaning.

The fact that Chinese words are composed of pictures rather than letters is extremely significant. Pictures are much more open to interpretation. In Western courses on Chinese medicine, students are given one or two English definitions for a word whose Chinese character suggests a panoply of different interpretations, nuances, and feelings depending on the context and the reader. English words have no way of translating these possibilities (nor do many Western readers want such a subjective reality). But this is precisely the beauty of Chinese writing. In his translation of the *Book of Changes*, an ancient textual oracle describing the inherent processes of life’s transformations, Alfred Huang says of Chinese characters: “They do not connect in the same way that English speakers think of words as doing. There is no tense, gender, plural, article, preposition or

punctuation, and quite often no subject or object. The beauty of this ancient language, and of the [*Book of Changes*], is that it merely presents pictures and lets the reader's own imagination resonate with the scene. Translating these 'sentences' into proper English is impossible without seriously limiting the wealth of possible meanings."

This view of language is in keeping with the Daoist view of reality. (Daoist philosophy emerged during the Zhōu Dynasty, 1121-222 B.C., and was given formal expression in the *Dào Dé Jīng* written sometime before 300 B.C.) The world is not comprised of clear-cut distinctions and does not support permanent definitions. Reality is porous and fluid, involving a continual process of co-creative transformation. Although we make distinctions between things, we must remember that things are constantly shifting relative to each other, their environment, and the observer. In describing how the sage views distinctions, the Daoist philosopher Zhuāngzǐ writes: "He too recognizes a 'this,' but a 'this' which is also 'that,' a 'that' which is also 'this.' His 'that' has both a right and a wrong in it; his 'this' too has both a right and a wrong in it. So, in fact, does he still have a 'this' and a 'that'? Or does he in fact no longer have a 'this' and a 'that'? A state in which 'this' and 'that' no longer find their opposites is called the hinge of the Way. When the hinge is fitted into the socket, it can respond endlessly... The sage embraces things. Ordinary men discriminate among them and parade their discriminations before others. So I say, those who discriminate fail to see."

Historically, written characters represented much more than just a system of communication in China. Legend states that the first characters were the eight trigrams (the basis of the *Book of Changes*) which describe the natural cycles of the universe and allude to the secrets of creation. The trigrams, said to have appeared to one of China's original kings of the 3rd millennium B.C. (Fú Xī or Huáng Dì depending on the source), are regarded by many Chinese as the very foundation of their mathematics, medicine, cosmology, fēng shuǐ, and divination. The mysteries of writing are thus said to have a close connection with the natural as well as the supernatural. The inherent power believed to exist in written characters resulted in fine calligraphy over the centuries that often fetched higher prices than painting.

The understanding of Chinese characters as allusions rather than definitions can greatly aid our explorations into Chinese medicine. Terms translated as "energy" and "mind" take on new dimensions when we allow ourselves the freedom to experience the imagery of the original characters without limiting ourselves to fixed English definitions. This imagery was severely restricted by the Communist effort at simplification during the 1950s. In the view of many scholars, their new characters, while reducing complexity, did nothing to improve phonetic or semantic content and lost much of the original meaning. It follows that this loss would translate into any English versions of modernized texts. Also due to Communist influence, medical training focused more on the material aspects of Chinese medicine, purging reference to more philosophical and esoteric concepts. While this loss has made Chinese medicine more palatable to Western doctors, it ultimately robs us of options.

Before moving on to the philosophical foundations of TCM, I'll leave you with this thought from Zhuāngzǐ: "Words exist because of meaning; once you've got the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?"

*Please see the website <http://zhongwen.com/> for information about written Chinese characters. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinyin> for information on the Pinyin romanization system.

The philosophy behind the development of Chinese medicine is just as intriguing as its language. There emerged no single system of thought informing concepts of health and healing, but rather a synthesis of four different systems: Yīn-Yáng theory, Five-Phase theory, Daoist philosophy, and Confucian philosophy. All four had roots in earlier times, but found formal expression during the Later Zhōu Dynasty (770-256 B.C.) among what are known as the “Hundred Schools of Thought.” This was a time of intense warfare and social upheaval, resulting in the development of scores of philosophical systems – each one attempting to provide an understanding of reality and a guide for living.

What we know of these schools of thought, and their early roots (often difficult to trace), has been gleaned from what little remained after the book burnings of the Qín Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) when “subversive” prose and poetry were destroyed, and dissenting scholars were killed, exiled, imprisoned, or forced to labor on public works projects. The subsequent Early Hàn Dynasty (206 B.C.-8 A.D.) renewed interest in scholarly works, bringing together many different philosophies in an effort known as the Hàn Synthesis. This open-minded blending of ideas is evident in the Hàn era medical text *Huángdì Nèijīng* (*The Yellow Emperor’s Inner Classic*) – the first complete treatise on Chinese medical theory and practice, and the foundation of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Yīn and Yáng

The character for yīn literally means the shady side of a hill; its yáng counterpart is the sunny side. Rather than being opposing forces (though many teachings describe them as such), yīn and yáng simply describe the relative qualities of things as complementary polarities. Yīn descriptions include terms like cold, inner, lower, passive, dark, dense, feminine, right side, and the directions west (early yīn) and north (full yīn). Yáng counterparts are hot, outer, upper, active, light, rarified, masculine, left side, and the directions east (early yáng) and south (full yáng). The yīn and yáng aspects of reality aid each others’ emergence and expression. This emergence is cyclical, as shown in the well known circular tàijí symbol depicting yīn descending to its fullness on the right and yáng ascending to its fullness on the left. (This orientation is the most appropriate for learning Chinese philosophy and medicine; reversed and rotated versions also exist in the literature.) Within the fullness of yīn is the seed of yáng; within the fullness of yáng is the seed of yīn. Both are contained in the wholeness of all things.

Wǔ Xíng (Five Phases)

Also called Five Elements, the term “phase” is more appropriate since the character for xíng is a composite of the pictographs for *step/left step* and *stop/right step* indicating processional motion. In this case, each of the five phases represents a stage of manifestation along the yīn-yáng cycle. Rather than describing the innate composition and static properties of things as do the Greek elements, the wǔ xíng suggest how things behave in the process of co-creative expression. They are a dynamic metaphor for being. Water and Fire correspond to yīn and yáng at their extremes. Metal and Wood are the intermediate phases, yáng moving toward yīn and yīn moving toward yáng respectively. Earth represents both the central focus of transformation, and the last moments of each phase before the next. As applied to the seasons, for example, Water represents winter, Fire summer, Metal fall, Wood spring, and Earth both late summer and the last few weeks of all the other seasons. For centuries, the wǔ xíng have also been applied to social activities, politics, architecture, and medicine, since the metaphors of the macrocosm apply equally well to the microcosm. Both landscapes behave similarly.

The yīn-yáng and wǔ xíng concepts were part of what has been labeled the Naturalist School whose ideas were formalized by Zōu Yǎn (350-270 B.C.), often credited with being the father of Chinese science. During the Later Zhōu, science and medicine began

to seek natural reasons for events and illness rather than the will of ancestors or the wrath of demons. Observance of the natural patterns of a dynamic universe became paramount.

Daoist Philosophy

The three Daoist sages are said to be Huáng Dì (one of three legendary original kings of the 3rd millennium B.C.), Lǎozǐ (604-531 B.C. if legend is correct), and Zhuāngzǐ (370-286 B.C.) who are credited with the origins of the philosophy. The three Daoist classics are the *Yì Jīng* (*Book of Changes*, whose current form dates back to the Early Zhōu Dynasty, 1121-771 B.C., though earlier forms date back to 2000 B.C. at least), *Dào Dé Jīng* (*Book of the Way and the Power*, written sometime before 300 B.C.), and *Zhuāngzǐ* (written around 300 B.C. and named for its author). The *Dào Dé Jīng*, also called the *Lǎozǐ*, is the cornerstone of Daoist philosophy. Much debate exists as to the exact date of this work, and whether Lǎozǐ was a real person or a convenient name for several Daoist authors. Legend states he was a keeper of archives for the Zhōu Dynasty, and composed the roughly 5,000 characters of the *Dào Dé Jīng* on bamboo slips as he was leaving for the West. [Daoist philosophy (dàojiā) must be distinguished from Daoist religion (dàojiào) which did not emerge until the Later Hàn Dynasty (25-220 A.D.) when Lǎozǐ was deified and the philosophy was fused with aspects of existing immortality cults, messianic cults, local folk religions, Confucianism, and also Buddhist religion which had recently arrived from India via the Silk Road.]*

In contrast to the rigid ceremonial and hierarchical social order of the Early Zhōu, Daoist philosophy espoused behavior in accordance with naturally spontaneous self-becoming (zìrán: *naturally so, self-so-ing, self-deriving*) in harmony with one's surroundings and unhindered by attachment to fixed concepts or expectations (the source of frustration and conflict). All things and processes, including the Dào itself, emulate zìrán.

Dào is a combination of two composite pictographs “step + stop” and “river/hair + face” and is commonly translated as *way, doctrine, method* or *path*, but in Daoist philosophy alludes to the continuously shifting expression of all that exists...the Way. (Dào is also the act of *way-making*, as Chinese characters can serve as different parts of speech depending on context.) Things and events may seem like discrete items which can be defined and categorized, but in fact are only momentary pauses in the ever-changing expression of an ultimately un-namable and un-definable mystery. A tree is not finally a definable singular object, nor does it have an ideal form; it is one perceptible expression of the tree's un-namable self within a particular context. The tree and every other being in that forest co-create that context. It would take a different form (focused expression) within a different context (field of expression). For this reason, to give the Dào itself a fixed name and definition in the end isn't possible because it, too, is always changing. To function in the world we make distinctions, but those names must not create false limits; the act of putting something into a category is an act of control which limits potential expression. Proper naming thus presents rather than defines.

Dé (step + ten eyes saw no concealment + heart/mind) is translated as *virtue, inner nature*, or *inner power*, and alludes to the ability to act from the heart's truth without obstruction. Dào and dé go hand in hand, our path and the steps we take which both follow and create that path. If those steps come from the heart/mind without interference, they will be spontaneous and natural – they will follow the Way. A related concept is wúwèi, literally “not-doing” but a better translation is “effortless doing” since action requires no force when there is no obstruction. (The pictograph for “not” is a person dancing.) There is no originating first step and no final last step; the Dào has no beginning and no end. It is simply the ongoing process of expression and experience – a dance of being. “Right” behavior follows the natural expression of one's inner truth, not an artificial cultural norm.

Confucian Philosophy

Confucius is the Latin name for Kǒng Fūzǐ (551-479 B.C.) who became a teacher after his political career dwindled. He is said to have edited and/or assembled the Five

Classics, which became required reading for any educated person and those seeking government positions: *Yì Jīng* (often called a Confucian rather than a Daoist classic since he is credited with the interpretive commentaries called *Wings*), *Shī Jīng* (*Classic of Poetry*), *Shū Jīng* (*Classic of History*), *Lǐ Jì* (*Classic of Rites*), and *Chūn Qiū* (*Spring and Autumn Annals*). Confucianism was adopted as the Hàn Dynasty's official state doctrine, which it would remain through many dynasties to come until the 20th century. It became such an integral part of Chinese life that Confucius was gradually deified over the centuries, and was honored with the same religious sacrifices and ceremonies accorded to other deities.

Confucius desired a return to the social and political order of the Early Zhōu, before the chaos, ruthlessness, and treachery of his time. Behavior should be in accordance with the needs of a defined social hierarchy, with observance of proper and virtuous conduct as defined by the ancients, adherence to traditional customs, ancestor worship, and strict attention to the correct performance of ritual. (Ancestor worship was based on the belief that prosperity and health were guaranteed by one's ancestors to those descendants who observed the proper burial and sacrificial customs. A similar form of reciprocity applied to the relationships between living members of different social levels; failure on either side resulted in misfortune. Thus neglect of, or improper performance of rites and ceremonies demonstrated moral and social anarchy.) Education in all these matters was considered essential.

The ruler must be a moral, highly educated man, leading by example and benevolent intervention. It should then follow that his subjects would obey the rules of propriety and avoid wrongdoing from a sense of shame, rather than simply obey laws from a desire to avoid punishment. All must act within their station and perform the expected duties and rituals. Within the family, children must be subservient to parents, wives subservient to husbands, with the father deserving filial piety in all situations. Women were (and still are) at the bottom of the list, expected to serve the needs of all the men in their lives with willingness and quiet resignation, and continue the male family line. (Said one Chinese scholar, "Women always have been fighting for a way out of the Confucian shadows.") And in Confucian philosophy, humans are considered superior to every other life form.

All this is in contrast to the perspective of the Daoist philosopher, who did not see himself as above or below other beings, who revered the feminine as equal, who viewed parenthood as having the experience of raising children without assuming any enduring expectation or authority over them, and who viewed the ideal ruler as acting so unobtrusively and naturally as to hardly be noticed. (A lesser ruler expects recognition with songs and praises.) The Daoist also valued personal transformation (experience) over talking about things (education); not only can talking about something obscure truly experiencing it, but institutionalized responses to experience prevent authentic feeling and eliminate the many possibilities presented by a situation.

Achieving Synthesis

Naturalist, Daoist, and Confucian philosophy all make their appearance in the concepts of Chinese medicine. This may seem odd, especially given the differences between Daoist and Confucian philosophy. Chinese culture, however, has a long history of retaining and blending ideas rather than discarding them altogether. In Chinese medicine, this presents some interesting juxtapositions. Are organs to be understood and treated according to their own unique inner natures, or as members of an orderly society with defined roles and duties? Both approaches exist in TCM, and the student must be able to distinguish and select among them. (This author has chosen an approach based primarily on Naturalist and Daoist philosophy, examining the inner nature of things and their co-creative interactions.) The various influences will be evident as Chinese medical theory is explored in the coming chapters.

*The word Daoism thus has different meanings depending on whether one is referring to the pre-Hàn or post-Hàn version. When someone states that a particular idea or principle is Daoist, the listener has to

decipher whether it stems from pure Daoist philosophy, or whether it has the added flavor of Confucian philosophy or the trappings of religious practice. Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism would eventually become known as the “Three Ways” of China, various blends of which emerged and dominated over the centuries.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 12
Chinese Medicine – Part 4
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

The wǔxíng (five phases) are central to understanding the inner workings of living beings in Chinese medicine. They describe patterns of expression. Each phase is associated with a pair of internal organs (one yīn, one yáng), and their related acupuncture points, functions, and affinities. One of the greatest hurdles for Western students is that these functions and affinities are not only physical in nature; they are also mental, emotional, and spiritual. There is no dualism separating mind and body in Chinese medicine. Flesh and bone are just another expression along the same continuum as thought and feeling. The wǔxíng describe variations along this continuum.

So if an organ isn't to be understood as a singular anatomical structure housing a finite set of biochemical activities, how are we to understand it? What is the stuff of life in Chinese medicine that is able to simultaneously manifest in the Water phase as the physical kidney, the emotion fear, and the spiritual quality of wisdom? It is called qì (pronounced “chee”), and an attempt must be made to describe it before moving on to the finer points of wǔxíng medical theory. This chapter will explore the meaning of qì, its origins, and its movements.

The character for qì is a combination of two different pictographs, one showing grains of rice (commonly translated as *rice* or *kernel*) and one showing curling clouds (commonly translated as *air*). The pictograph for kernel is enfolded in the pictograph for air. Together, they suggest several possible meanings: *the most subtle form of that which sustains existence, the kernel of things and their ever-changing expressions and activities, that which is capable of being both expansive and shifting as well as finite and stable, the most basic mutable form of manifestation.* (All of these meanings are lost in the many modern texts that show only the cloud pictograph.) The various English translations of qì include *psychophysical stuff, energy-matter, pneuma*, and others. It is substance as well as function, involved in and composing all things and events in a continuous process of emergence and transformation.

In quantum physics terms, qì is both matter and energy, particle and wave. As such, it would also exhibit the quantum property of entanglement: two or more objects separated by distance but related to each other on a quantum level respond to changes in each other's states instantaneously. Entanglement is one possible way to understand how the qì of seemingly disparate structures and processes are resonantly interconnected within a particular phase, so that treatment of one manifest expression along the continuum of that phase affects all the others. For example, treatment of the emotion anger involves treatment of the liver, as both are part of the Wood phase. The world of qì, like the world of quantum physics, should also be thought of as probabilistic rather than deterministic. Just because the qì of a particular organ is likely to behave a certain way doesn't mean that it will; the practitioner must always have an open and receptive mind.

In Daoist philosophy, qì is the manifest expression of the mystery of the Dào. From primordial oneness it emerges and differentiates into the myriad things (physical and non-physical, dense and rarified, yīn and yáng) and their activities. In the body, it is said to arrive first as the běn qì (běn meaning *basic, root, origin, original* or *personal*). This arrival occurs between the kidneys like an igniting spark at the gate of life (mìngmén) in a manner poetically described by the phrase shènjiàn dòngqì – *light appearing between the kidneys like the sun through a doorway + moving/lacting qì*. This then becomes the yuán qì (source qì) for the rest of the body. The transition from basic (pre-form) qì to source (earliest forming) qì is said to happen with the assistance of one's meditative breath, which creates the space for forming to begin. Hence the great importance of mindful breathing into the abdomen in Chinese therapies.

Many texts refer to mìngmén as or in relation to a greasy membrane between the kidneys (possibly the root of the mesentery) where the igniting spark arrives and from

whence the source qì distributes to the rest of the body via a system called the triple heater, also rooted at the source. It is the triple heater along which the acupuncture meridians flow. There is no typical Western organ corollary for the triple heater as there are for the other organs in Chinese medicine, but many texts refer to it as the connective tissue system of “net-like membranes” such as those lining organs and body cavities (e.g. mesentery, pleura, peritoneum) and the fascia lining muscles and lying superficially under the skin. This interpretation is supported by the character for meridian: jīng (threads twisted together + water course), commonly translated as the *warp of a fabric*, or *to pass through* or *experience*.

The significance of mìngmén and its location in the upper lumbar area may be related to events occurring during early embryogenesis. After one cell type has become two, a critical line of further differentiation called the primitive streak appears at the tail end of the embryo, defining its long axis. Processes occurring at this streak mark the beginning of the three germ layers that then become everything else: *ectoderm* (future skin, nasal/oral linings, nervous system, and sense organs), *mesoderm* (future muscles, heart, vessels, spleen, lymph tissues, uterus, kidneys, bones and marrow, connective tissue linings, tendons, and ligaments), and *endoderm* (future digestive tract, respiratory tract, liver, pancreas, and bladder). An interesting Daoist corollary is a phrase in the *Dào Dé Jīng*, “The Way gives rise to the one, the one to the two, the two to the three, and the three to the ten-thousand things.”

The primitive streak elongates to nearly half the embryo’s length, and then recedes as further growth and differentiation take place. A structure called the primitive node appears at the upper-most end of this streak. From it, mesoderm-forming cells proliferate up the long axis of the embryo creating the notochord, which induces formation of the head, nervous system, and somites (blocks of mesoderm running in pairs along the length of the notochord that become vertebral bones, ribs, basal bones of the skull, dermis, and skeletal muscle). The notochord itself becomes the nucleus pulposus of the intervertebral discs. In addition to causing differentiation of adjacent ectoderm into nervous tissue, the notochord along with the primitive node and related mesoderm determine both the specification and orientation of many other structures. Thus the primitive node and its primordial connective tissue emanations are crucial to the destiny of all the germ layers. It has been postulated that this node may emerge at the future location of the upper lumbar area, the site of mìngmén and the root of the triple heater. The meaning of mìngmén supports this hypothesis: *destiny/life/order + double-leafed door*, the first appearance of creative differentiation. The acupuncture point of the same name lies on the back between the second and third lumbar vertebrae, and is used to “bank the origin” as ongoing access to one’s basic qì is important for optimum health of the fully developed organism as well as the embryo. The source qì of the triple heater may be considered as a kind of flux-qì, or qì in the process of differentiating. This flux-qì is influenced and nurtured along its journey by qì from outside sources, both physical (e.g. food, water, air, climate) and non-physical (e.g. friendship, enlightenment) which must be assimilated in harmony with one’s inner nature (dé).

The movement of qì along meridians has been described by some authors as a linear progression and by others as a spontaneous appearance at distant sites along the same path. It’s likely a bit of both. Early research into the electrical properties of connective tissues (whose distinguishing feature is the orderly arrangement of various protein fibers) suggests that they are capable of a biologically significant amount of both electrical conduction and charge generation. (Conduction may be via movement of charged atoms closely along the surface of proteinaceous tissue. This requires moisture, and dry connective tissues are poor conductors. Generation may be via the piezoelectric effect wherein distortion of regular lattice-type structures creates a surface charge.) Early research also suggests that the meridians follow lines of condensation of the electromagnetic field of the body. It has been suggested that this system represents a bioelectric communication network more primitive than and basic to the nervous system,

capable of responding to stimuli as dense as mechanical distortion and as subtle as electromagnetic fields. The electrical polarities created along connective tissue planes may also guide growth of embryonic structures.

The stimulus used in acupuncture to alter qì flow is the insertion of fine metal needles through the skin into subcutaneous fascia. Acupoints generally exhibit a lower resistance to electrical conduction than surrounding skin, and insertion of metal into body fluids creates a simple battery releasing electrical energy. Bimetallic needles (e.g. copper + stainless steel) create more microcurrent than a single metal alone. Acupuncture is said to be the earliest form of microcurrent therapy, and may treat disease by rebalancing the flow of charged atoms in the body. The character for acupoint is xué (*cave/hole*) which originally referred to sites in the landscape chosen for their harmonious flow of qì.

Based on the microcurrent concept of qì, some systems of acupuncture therapy have emerged that rely strictly on electrical measurements for point selection and treatment, disregarding traditional Chinese medical theory and philosophy. The danger in this, to borrow Zhuāngzǐ's line that words exist because of meaning, is that practitioners will focus only on the words and forget the meaning. That is, the earliest measurable expression of qì (electrical current) is not to be confused with qì itself. Just as the physical liver is only one expression of the Wood phase, electrical currents along connective tissues are only one expression of something greater and more profound. The concepts presented by the classical texts give us a way to come closer to the meaning of qì. This is part of what is transferred to the patient by a thoughtful practitioner.

The next chapter will discuss the various forms of qì in the body in relation to five phase and yīn-yáng theory, finally exploring the patterns of expression that are the basis for acupuncture and herbal therapy.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 13
Chinese Medicine – Part 5
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

The qì of the five phases manifest in the body as densely as an organ or as rarified as a thought. Terms like “liver” and “intuition” are a means of making distinctions between the different types of qì within a phase, but these are not ideal or isolated forms. Nor is a form of qì to be separated from its function; the “liver” is both the fleshy liver and the act of doing what the liver does (to liver, or the act of liver-ing). The qì of an organ is its dynamic way of being – its moment by moment structure and behavior. To perform acupuncture along an organ’s meridian is to influence the nature and emergence of its being. Acupuncture along the liver meridian can be aimed at its physical attributes (such as its store of blood), its physical activities (such as its role in regulating movement), or its mental/emotional attributes and activities (such as the capacity to feel anger, or the ability to visualize one’s future and actuate a plan). These are all attributes of the Wood phase as expressed in the organism. But instead of saying anger belongs to “Wood-as-manifest-in-the-person” we just say it belongs to the liver.

Each phase is associated with two organs, one yīn (solid) and one yáng (hollow). Each organ has a pair of meridians that flow bilaterally, both through the body and on its surface where the qì can be influenced by needling. The yīn organs produce, transform, regulate, and store. Yáng ones receive, break down, and transport. (There are some organs, not directly related to the five phases, which are yáng in form but yīn in function – hollow organs that store vital substances. These “Curious Organs” include the uterus, blood vessels, brain, and bones and marrow. The gall bladder is considered both a Wood phase yáng organ, and a Curious Organ.) Not all anatomical organs as Westerners know them are named in Chinese medicine (such as the glands and nerves), nor do Chinese organ functions always match the physiology of recognized Western organs. The broad behavioral patterns associated with Chinese organs must be emphasized over their individual anatomy. The fleshy organs are simply space-time locations with the highest probability and density of a certain type of qì. The same type of qì can also be found at other locations in varying degrees. This also applies to some of the functional cross-over between yīn and yáng organ pairs.

Each organ pair has a relationship, via its phase, with resonant aspects of the natural environment. Thus the liver and gall bladder are strongly affected by wind, the color green, the season spring, and foods that taste sour. Some of these are also mirrored in the pathology of these organs, such as vomit with green bile or seizures that look like the limbs of the body being whisked about by a strong wind. Each organ pair also has an affinity for corresponding mental and emotional aspects, all related by phase resonance. (Please see the table at the end of this chapter for a full list of phase correspondences.) In the cycle of life, the vitality of one phase directly affects the next and indirectly affects all the others; these phase interactions can be used to predict and trace back sequences of organ pathology.

The five phases are broad categories; there is some variation regarding the specific details of organ function and pathology among different authors. Part of this variation comes from whether that author took a Confucian approach (viewing the organs as members of an orderly society whose disease is the result of a lack of order and propriety) or a Daoist approach (viewing the organs as each having their own inner nature whose disease is the result of stresses and behaviors not in harmony with that nature). And part of the variation among authors, with regard to applying Naturalist philosophy to the body, comes from how different people experience the natural world. The metaphors of nature are open to interpretation – not a problem for the Daoist who relies more on experience and personal transformation, but a big problem for the Confucian who relies more on education and examinations. The earliest texts emphasize that only those who understand the metaphors of the natural environment can heal the body’s landscape. This

is the approach that has been most effective in my own practice, and the one used in this work. It affords a natural and easy way to understand Chinese physiology.

WOOD (Mù, pictograph of a tree: *tree, wood*.) *The natural tendency of trees and plants is to grow upward and spread outward.* Liver qì tends to expand upward and outward, giving the body upright strength and the mental confidence to move out into the world. *Trees move gracefully in the breeze, their swaying a necessary stimulus for healthy roots, trunk, and branches.* The liver ensures the even and smooth flow of qì in the body. This affects all processes, enabling smooth digestion, graceful movement, and an even disposition. If qì is constrained (literally *tree in a box*) liver anger rises. Chronic constraint causes depression. (The character for “emotion” is *feeling that bites the heart*. “Anger” is *a slave’s heart*.) The liver’s importance in movement is manifest in the tendons, ligaments, and the small muscles around joints; these move wildly, like branches in a strong wind, during seizures. *Trees store sap, their nutritive fluid; healthier trees produce better quality sap.* The liver stores blood, and contributes to its nutritive quality. Liver blood that is deficient in either quantity or quality results in dry and brittle nails and tendons, menstrual problems, poor vision, and dull hair and skin color. Mentally, those who don’t feel nurtured by good liver blood are timid and indecisive. (From a scientific standpoint, the liver actually has tremendous blood storage capacity, serving as a capacitance reservoir, and is able to compensate for a 25% loss of blood during moderate hemorrhage. The liver also stores and metabolizes a host of nutrients, and transforms many toxins.) *Leaves and petals provide color.* The liver provides good color to the body, and gives the eyes their ability to see the various colors and shades. Outer vision is complemented by the inner vision of meditation and dreams. It is said that blood returns to the liver during sleep and deficient blood causes abnormal dreaming. (The liver’s blood reservoir is in fact affected by posture.)

The gall bladder is the only five phase yáng organ that doesn’t hold or transport food. Instead, it stores a refined substance (bile) and aids the liver in regulating the sinews and formulating decisions – the liver involved in planning (the ability to see ahead) and the gall bladder involved in discerning and clarifying the course of action. The texts don’t say much about bile, but the gall bladder is valued for its discernment, judgment, and clear decisions. There is a connection with bile’s function as a detergent and its ability to separate fat globules into more manageable sizes for digestion. As a metaphor, this ability to separate a mass of information into manageable pieces is a form of discernment. Once the objects in our field of vision have been clarified, decisive action is possible.

FIRE (Huǒ, pictograph of rising flames: *fire, flame*.) *Fire is warming.* The heart warms the body as blood circulates through its vessels. The heart itself actually develops as a specialized vessel. Vibrant circulation ensures activity and life. *Fire produces light.* The heart stores shén – the light of awareness, and the spiritual vitality of the body. Shén gathers best when the heart is free of desires, like an empty vessel. As the heart circulates blood, it also circulates shén, giving different types of awareness to each organ pair. The awareness of the liver is hún; that of the lungs is pò, and so forth. Shén in the heart itself typically refers to conscious awareness, which must receive and act upon all the other types. The heart is thus said to act as the emperor of the body. Shén is reflected in the face and facial expressions. *Fire consumes its fodder.* The emotion of the heart is xǐ, which is typically translated as joy. However, many authors note that the pictograph really implies the pleasure derived from eating. Xǐ in the etymological dictionary is translated as *happiness*, or *to like*. If we like something we may consume too much of it, and overindulgence in sensual pleasures is said to damage the heart. Similarly, too much excitement about what we like is said to “scatter the shén” and cause mental distraction. An unquenchable desire may lead to obsession, greed, jealousy, neediness and dependence. Liking oneself excessively causes vanity and avoidance of personal responsibility.

The small intestine receives “ground and fermented” food from the stomach, proceeding with the real work of digestive breakdown. The ancient texts say the small

intestine separates the pure from the impure, offering the pure to the spleen for assimilation/absorption and sending the impure to the large intestine for further processing. (With the help of bile from the gall bladder and enzymes from the pancreas, the small intestine does break down and separate ingested food into that which is absorbed and that which is expelled. This is a type of decision, and it could be argued that the small intestine rather than the gall bladder has the final say in making decisions – guided by the heart’s shén and aided by bile-enhanced discernment. Enzymatic action in the small intestine may be viewed as a form of fire, cooking the food and exposing its qualities.)

EARTH (Tǔ, pictograph of object rising through the earth: *earth, dirt, soil, ground, land.*) *Good soil ensures healthy plants and nutritious crops.* The spleen and stomach are the foundation for nutrient energy assimilation in the body. Their health lays the ground for all the other organs. *The sand, silt, and clay that give soil its essential properties are made from the weathering of rocks. Weathering occurs by both physical erosion and chemical dissolution (primarily by mildly acidic rainwater). The majority of caves are made by acidic dissolution, also resulting in underground drainage systems. Caves have traditionally been used as storage and burial sites.* The stomach is said to be the warehouse for grain and water, receiving food, and beginning the “rotting and ripening” process. The stomach may be compared to a cave where the rotting of dead organisms begins. The same physical and chemical weathering that wear down the rock are applied metaphorically to the food that is “ground and fermented” in the stomach. This mixture then begins its journey downward.

Soil is extremely porous, about half its volume being interconnected spaces. These passages contain water, air, and dissolved substances. Porosity is very important to soil quality, with the best soil neither leaching water and nutrients too easily (sand), nor retaining them too tightly (clay). Water is sucked into microscopic pores and held by adsorption on soil particles. The movement of the stomach is said to be downward (heavier food pieces) and that of the spleen is upward (lighter food distillations). The imagery is that of gravitational movement down subterranean byways and the largest openings of the soil, and of upward capillary movement into the smaller soil pores. The upward movement of the spleen is described as a “suctioning” effect, and its functions include the assimilation of nutrients from food and water and their distribution to other organs. This suggests the physiology of nutrient assimilation both from the intestines and into cells, which is why the spleen is treated in situations as diverse as diarrhea and diabetes. Insulin is required for cell assimilation of glucose, and it may be that the endocrine (hormonal) pancreas is better treated through the spleen, while the exocrine (digestive) pancreas is better treated through the small intestine.

The Chinese spleen is the toughest organ for Westerners to relate to, since the anatomic spleen neither absorbs food nor has any ductwork connecting to the stomach. Instead, it houses red blood cells (helping young ones to mature, destroying old ones, and releasing caches of them during exercise or acute blood loss) and white blood cells (exposing red blood cells to the immune system). It is notable, however, that the above functions rely heavily on the spleen’s variably porous pathways. Its unique vascular structure makes three functional compartments: areas of fast blood flow (comparable to the capillaries in muscles), areas of intermediate flow (holding the ready cache of red blood cells), and areas of slow flow (where the ability of red blood cells to deform and squeeze through narrow passageways is key to maturation and destruction). The porous nature of the spleen mirrors the porous nature of soil. It is the most physical expression of a phase that also includes other activities related to the properties of soil.

Boulders and dirt provide the lay of the land, and define its surface contours. The spleen is associated with healthy muscle tone, which provides the surface contours of the body. A weak spleen results in weak and atrophied muscles. *Earth lines streams and rivers, holding their flow.* The spleen is said to hold blood within the vessels; a weak spleen may result in slow hemorrhage. Lack of holding and upward suctioning results in

organ prolapse. Mentally, it affects our ability to extract and hold meaning from information. And thinking about things too much causes worry, the emotion of the spleen. *Waterlogged soil can't support life due to lack of aeration; nutrient and gas flow get bogged down in the pores.* The spleen is responsible for preventing accumulation of “dampness” (sludgy fluid). Dampness has a slippery and sticky quality (like wet clay) and manifests as edema, mucus coating on the stool, sluggish vitality, or slow thinking with an inability to express meaningful ideas.

METAL (Jīn, pictograph of nuggets in the earth with the phonetic “now/current/this”: *gold, metals, money.*) The phonetic meaning “now” is a combination of “union” and “contact” which may add special meaning to the nuggets. *The difference between rocks (Earth) and minerals (Metal) is that rocks are combinations of different minerals, while minerals themselves are pure.* The lungs have much to do with purity in Chinese medicine. They are said to receive the pure qì from air and nutrients and carry these to the heart to be mixed into blood. They eliminate “dirty” qì via exhalation and, through the large intestine, defecation. They maintain physical purity, but also purity of mind and spirit. It is the Metal aspect of a being that knows its own inner nature (dé) most clearly, and can reflect this to the outside world. Thus the lungs are said to serve as advisor to the heart, ensuring that what is allowed into one’s personal space is appropriate, and that what gets expressed to the world is one’s personal truth. A physical example of Metal’s role in purity is the immune system. A mental example is one’s ability to maintain an unpopular but personally appropriate path. *Metal is hard but malleable.* The lungs are associated with the hardness of the bones, and the protective yet pliable nature of the skin. Malleability requires a water-like quality, and the lungs are sensitive to dryness. The lungs also assist the circulation of water through the triple heater; respiratory movements increase water transfer through connective tissues, and may aid their electrical conductivity. *The same metal can be formed and reformed into different shapes.* One theme of Metal is constancy regardless of form. The same běn (original, basic, personal) qì of a being can manifest in a myriad different ways depending on context (location, time, etc.), but all those manifestations come from and must reflect the qualities of their origin. This origin, however, is not static, and changes like the Dào in response to its experiences.

The lungs have an intimate relationship with both the physical and the ethereal, serving as the interface between the two. They hold the same secret that the fox shares with the Little Prince: “L’essentiel est invisible pour les yeux.” *That which is essential is invisible to the eyes.* What is of real value can’t be measured. (Interestingly, autumn was the season when Chinese merchants traditionally recalibrated their scales.) It’s easy to see why the lungs are associated with the emotion grief, as we lament those who’ve gone beyond our immediate perception. The lungs are said to house pò (corporeal spirit), which may be best understood as inherent body awareness. Pò is often translated as the basic body instincts, like the drive to breathe and eat, and the ability to feel basic sensations like pain. Viewed in light of the lungs’ function as an interface between that which is easily perceived and that which is not, pò also includes those subtle “gut feelings” about things not identified by the other types of awareness. The lungs are able to bring the most subtle influences to our attention. They also provide awareness of what some spiritual traditions call the “I Am” – the vast unlimited aspect of a being that spans all space and time.

The lungs’ Chinese functions and their connection to Metal can be appreciated by studying iron. Iron is the most abundant metal in the universe, the earth, and the body. Of all metals, it is the most easily magnetized. Iron is important to the earth’s magnetic field, and is essential in the form of magnetite to many species’ ability to sense magnetic fields and use them for navigation. The human brain also contains magnetite, though its significance is unknown (but would tie into the lungs’ role in sensing subtle forms of energy). Iron is very malleable with a high tensile strength, but is very reactive chemically, corroding rapidly in moist air; it is called the vulnerable metal (and, by

coincidence, the lungs are called the delicate organ). Its unusually easy alternation between its ferrous (oxygen-poor) and ferric (oxygen-rich) states has earned it the title *breather among metals*. Hence its importance in bringing oxygen from the lungs to the tissues, and carrying waste carbon dioxide from the tissues back to the lungs, aiding the respiration of every cell in the body. Iron also has crucial roles in the maintenance of a healthy immune system, cellular energy production, DNA synthesis, and production of thyroid hormone, connective tissues, and several brain neurotransmitters. Iron is recognized in homeopathy as an element that allows the soul to assert itself in the physical world. There is some similarity between homeopathy's vital force and pò.

WATER (Shǔi, pictograph of streams flowing together: *water*.) *Water is the basis of life*. Water covers 75% of the earth's surface and composes 70% of the physical body. It is essential for all biological processes. Water is said to be the first material substance to emerge from the Dào, assisting the processes of emergence and change for the rest of nature. In the body, the kidneys assist the spark of life at míngmén to make all the other organ systems. They are the home of original yīn and yáng, and they store jīng. The character for jīng is composed of *rice/kernel + a plant rising from the ground (new growth) + a red mineral inside a mine or furnace (cinnabar)*. "Rice" is on the left; "new growth" is over "cinnabar" on the right. (Cinnabar is 86.2% mercury and 13.8% sulfur, from which pure mercury is easily obtained. Mercury had special importance in Chinese alchemy practices because of its similarity to water, being the only liquid metal at room temperature.) Jīng suggests the alchemical process of transforming nutrients into new growth. It is the capacity for substantial transformation. When used as a noun, jīng suggests a refined liquid-like substance that holds transformative capacity. Jīng substances include saliva, blood, bone marrow, brain and spinal cord (another kind of marrow in Chinese medicine), and sexual fluids.

Water is a unique substance, well suited to representing the above concepts. H₂O is a polar molecule, having a partial positive charge at the hydrogens and a partial negative charge at the oxygen (yīn and yáng). Attraction between these partial charges creates many of the properties of water that make it so well suited for life. Water is dense, with a high surface tension that gives it capillary action as it carries nutrients through the roots of trees and the tiny blood vessels of the body. Water is called the universal solvent because it can dissolve most substances except non-polar fats and oils; giving up the old form is the first step in creating the new. Water is the only substance found in all three physical states (solid, liquid, gas) at naturally occurring temperatures, holding within itself the ever-changing nature of the Dào. It can also absorb and store a lot of heat before vaporizing, enabling it to carry warmth through the body. And water is crucial for folding enzymes into their functional state, giving proper form to the catalysts of all change in the body. Since water is involved in both dissolution and creation it represents the flow of life in all stages.

Because the kidneys hold the first differentiated form of qì (original yīn and yáng) and jīng (transformative capacity created by the dynamic interaction of yīn and yáng), they are said to govern all transformative processes in the body – especially those involved with development and reproduction. Deficient kidney jīng can cause stunted growth in the young, and as jīng wanes with age we lose the ability to reproduce. For any transformation to be useful and for development to be orderly, jīng must operate with a purpose. This is provided by zhì, the shén of the kidneys. Zhì shows a plant growing from the heart, and is commonly translated as *will, aspiration, or ambition*. It is the goal we have in mind as we change from the old to the new. This requires concentration, and of course the physical kidneys concentrate water.

Kidney jīng is said to make marrow, which includes bone marrow and the brain and spinal cord. Bone marrow supports the body (contributing to strong bones and vital blood) while brain "marrow" supports the mind (contributing to sensory perception and intelligence). When jīng is deficient, the bones are brittle and the mind is dull. (The brain may be best understood as the organ that transforms sensory perception into the five

types of shén. It relies on both the heart and the kidneys to function.) The kidneys actually do produce a hormone (erythropoietin) that induces production of red blood cells by the bone marrow, and they make the active form of vitamin D which affects bone density and mental health.

The emotion of the kidneys is fear, whose character is also translated as *dread* and the verb *to terrify*. Change can be scary and dissolution (death) can be petrifying, literally freezing us in an icy grip. But just as water carries dissolved minerals to a new destination, Water holds the knowledge of Metal – that our true nature in its purest state is not measurable, but is held within all manifest forms.

Oceans are the ultimate destination for all other forms of water. Their surface currents are caused by wind, but the grand ocean currents so important to life on earth are caused by shifts in water density. Density is determined by temperature and salinity. The kidneys are called the ocean of the body, receiving water from all the other organs and governing the overall flow of body water. They separate the “clear” from the “turbid,” sending the latter out through the bladder and recycling the former. The kidneys in fact depend on salinity gradients to preserve water and concentrate urine. They serve a crucial role in regulating blood pressure. The kidneys’ ability to preserve water and sodium also impacts both the volume and density of intracellular and extracellular fluids; density gradients between these two spaces set the stage for currents important to cellular metabolism and communication. This flow is also affected by temperature.

Salinity is lowest in rainwater and streams, with mineral density increasing as rivers empty into oceans. The kidneys are said to draw the breath (Metal) down, concentrating it into the abdomen. This form of concentration roots the ethereal into physical form. Shortness of breath may result if the kidneys can’t “grasp the qì.”

These five phases – Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water – provide the basis for discerning patterns of disharmony in the patient. Phase organs and functions create an intricate web of behaviors and interactions that the practitioner must understand and help to harmonize. As healing progresses and core issues surface, functional patterns shift, so acupuncture point and herb selection requires adjustment through the course of treatment.

Traditional Five Phase Correspondences

	<i>Wood</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Earth</i>	<i>Metal</i>	<i>Water</i>
<i>Direction</i>	East	South	Center	West	North
<i>Season</i>	Spring	Summer	Late Summer	Autumn	Winter
<i>Stage</i>	Birth	Growth	Maturation	Harvest	Storage
<i>Climate</i>	Wind	Heat	Damp	Dry	Cold
<i>Color</i>	Green/Cyan	Red	Yellow	White	Black/Blue
<i>Odor</i>	Goatish/Urine	Scorched	Fragrant	Fishy/Rank	Rotten
<i>Flavor</i>	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent	Salty
<i>Vocalization</i>	Shouting	Laughing	Singing	Weeping	Moan/Groan
<i>Emotion</i>	Anger	Joy (Pleasure)	Worry	Sorrow	Fear
<i>Body Opening</i>	Eyes	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ears/Genitals
<i>Body Tissues</i>	Sinews/Nails	Blood Vessels	Flesh/Muscles	Skin	Bones
<i>Yīn Organ</i>	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lungs	Kidneys
<i>Yáng Organ</i>	Gall Bladder	Small Intestine	Stomach	Large Intestine	Bladder
<i>Physiology</i>	Harmonize and smooth out the flow of qì. Upward and outward movement. Store blood. Provide luster and richness to body colors, tendons, nails, and hair. Vision.	Circulation of blood. Facial expressiveness. Main part of digestion and separating the “pure from the impure” out of foodstuff. (The pure is absorbed by the spleen.) Taste.	Initial holding, fermentation of received food. Assimilation of the “pure” part. Movement of the “pure” upward and the “turbid” down for further processing. Damp/sludge transformation.	Circulation of qì. Assists circulation of water. Inward and downward movement. Intake of pure air; expulsion of dirty air and “turbid” feces. Clarity of voice and tone. Smell.	Like an ocean, the body’s ultimate source and destination of water. Source of the body’s original yīn and yáng. Store jīng and sexual fluids. Grasp air qì. Make marrow. Hearing.
<i>Mind/Spirit</i>	Hún (dreamy awareness)	Shén (waking awareness)	Yì (meaning, intent, ideas)	Pò (corporeal awareness)	Zhì (will, aspirations)
<i>Mental Functions</i>	Intuition. Trance-like awareness. Dreaming. Visualizing. Planning. Making and implementing decisions.	Consciousness. Inspiration. Enlightenment. Ability to be open-minded and receptive. Conscious command of the body.	Ability to hold thoughts, mull over ideas and assimilate the meanings revealed by enlightenment. Thorough understanding.	Instinct. Basic functions not needing any conscious control. Inherent body awareness. Sensations and feelings.	Will and ambitions. Concentration and focus. Basic strength and vitality of mental functions. Memory.
<i>Examples of Pathology</i>	Uneven flow of qì affecting movement, digestion, etc. Dull nails/hair. Dry/red eyes. Poor vision. Menstrual disorders. Emotional outbursts.	Aberrant flow of blood. Heart attack. Hemorrhage. Burning sensations and ulcers. Mental dullness or agitation. Undigested food in stool.	Vessels unable to hold blood. Body unable to hold organs = prolapse. Damp/sludge accumulation. Poor appetite. Loose stool. Sluggishness. Exhaustion.	Respiratory disorders +/- dry or phlegm. General lack of energy; weak immunity. Weak voice. Feeling of being invaded or losing one’s sense of self.	General aging. Loss of head hair, teeth, hearing. Incontinence. Infertility. Impotence. Spermatorrhea. Low-back pain. Developmental abnormalities.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 14
Chinese Medicine – Part 6
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

The five phases describe the workings of ten organs (five yáng and five yīn), each with its own acupuncture meridian, accounting for ten bilateral meridians. However there are twelve main meridians in the body. The last two belong to the triple heater (yáng) and pericardium (yīn). The triple heater is usually listed as the sixth yáng organ, but the pericardium is often not included among the yīn organs. And as there is no sixth phase in TCM, these two “organs” are usually lumped into the fire or water phases to describe their functions. The reason for these vague assignments is the unique nature of these two structures – a nature that is crucial to the comings and goings of one’s original qì.

The other ten organs have a name and a form. The triple heater and pericardium are described as having a name but no-form: wúxíng, which like wúwèi refers to something that isn’t restricted to any specific habit and changes with the ease and effortlessness of the Dào. They accommodate the dé (inner nature) of things. This concept fits with the idea of these organs as membranes that don’t have a fleshy form but rather accommodate their shape to the form of those organs they line and envelop. They represent a kind of pre-organ.

The meridians of these organs are also unique. Unlike the other ten meridians which travel toward their respective organs to permeate them with qì, the meridians of the triple heater and pericardium are said to travel into the chest, through the diaphragm, and then spiral throughout the abdomen as they intertwine to become one. In this way they perfuse the entire abdomen, which is often described as the sea of qì. Like the other ten meridians, those of the triple heater and pericardium are also rooted at the source, mìngmén.

The functions of the triple heater are well described in the classical literature. It carries yuán (source) qì to all the organs of the body and serves as their connection to mìngmén. It helps to regulate all the body’s waterways (fluid compartments), an important physiologic function of membranes. And it is said to differentiate the flesh: “[When] thinking about the triple heater’s unusual doings, then you can understand the yīn organs and yáng organs are the same, or you can distinguish the differences between them.” As discussed before, the primordial connective tissues of the embryo help determine the destiny of its germ layers, and electrical polarities created along connective tissue planes may guide the growth of embryonic structures.

These functions involving the ignition and regulation of transformation are suggested by the Chinese characters for the triple heater (sān jiāo). Sān means *three*, alluding to three compartments in the body; in the classical literature these are the upper burner (above the stomach and dispersing through the chest), the middle burner (epigastric area), and the lower burner (beneath the umbilicus). [These are not the same as the three cinnabar fields (dān tián) important in Daoist meditation practices (inside the head between the eyebrows, in the heart, and in the abdomen at mìngmén).] Another interesting interpretation of the sān jiāo compartments derives from our understanding of water regulation by membranes; the three could be equated with the three physiologic fluid compartments: intracellular fluid, and the two types of extracellular fluid – plasma and interstitial fluid. Jiāo (short-tailed bird + fire) literally means *roasted bird*, but in this context refers to a phoenix rising from the flames. It represents death and rebirth, transformation and purification.

The functions of the pericardium are much more obscure, receiving sparse attention in the classical literature with inconsistent roles assigned to it. Some authors say its only service is to the heart, protecting it and carrying out its orders. Others say it is the master of all the yīn organs (the triple heater being master of the yáng organs). And still others describe it as simply that which is any empty space in the body. More may be gleaned by examining the pericardium’s Chinese characters.

Two terms appear in reference to the pericardium, xīn bāo and xīn zhǔ. Xīn is a pictograph of a heart with three beats, translated as *heart, mind, feelings, center, or middle*. Bāo combines a pictograph of a person bent over something (to envelop) with a pictograph of a snake/dragon or fetus/embryo. It is commonly translated as *to wrap, include, contain, surround, bundle, or pregnant*. Zhǔ is a pictograph of a lamp and flame, commonly translated as *flame, master, owner, main, primary, or advocate*. Combining these, xīnbāo suggests that which not only wraps the heart, but also brings it into being and collects all that the heart/mind entails into one presence. Xīnzhǔ suggests that which brings one's personal flame into the heart to act as master and guide manifestation. These meanings are supported by the symbology of the dragon in Chinese creation myth who caused the gathering of clouds followed by lightning, thunder, and the "big rains" – the first material substance from the Dào. A Hàn era text, the Huáinánzǐ, states that the child of wúxíng is light, and its grandchild is water. The pericardium is functionally similar to the dragon, capable of bringing the mystery of the Dào into physical form. As a natural metaphor, the process of physiologic becoming involves the gathering of one's personal mystery like a cloud into the empty space of the pericardium, followed by the spark of light at míngmén (described as immaterial fire fueled by immaterial water), and then the emergence of the first material phase, water, at the kidneys where original yīn and yáng reside.

The physical pericardium does of course protect and anchor the heart as well as the roots of its great vessels, and its interstitial fluid layer helps prevent friction during heart pumping. However, this is only the densest form of pericardium qì. Its more subtle forms flow throughout the body, aiding the ongoing process of emergence of one's un-namable self into a focused area of manifestation. One can then be present, and proceed with the business of personal transformation. As a hologram, each individual organ can then proceed with its own physical and subtle transformations. The heart still retains its primacy as the seat of shén, but that awareness must be continuously buffered, nourished, and guided by one's un-namable mystery. From this understanding the medical applications of the pericardium meridian are predictable.

In the classical literature, the pericardium meridian is needed for physical issues like angina, palpitations, stroke, fainting, fullness of the chest, phlegm affecting the cardiopulmonary system, pleuritis, and "hot blood" (e.g. nosebleeds, coughing or vomiting blood), and for mental/emotional issues like restlessness, anxiety, fear of others, insomnia, difficulty speaking, and depression. (In this case depression is due to an insufficient presence of self, or lack of inspiration, whereas depression connected to the liver is due to chronic constraint and repression.)

Many medical applications of treating the triple heater overlap with those of the pericardium since their functions are intertwined just like their meridians. (And of course all the membranes of the body are connected to one another from the deepest to the outermost layers.) Both systems are used to treat problems involving the connective tissues of the body (e.g. wrist sprain, carpal tunnel syndrome), applicable issues in the chest and abdomen, phlegm accumulation in the body's waterways, certain mental or emotional disorders, and sudden invasion past the protective layers of the organs or the psyche by outside forces. The pericardium applies to functions and areas that are more yīn in nature, and the triple heater to those that are more yáng in nature. The pericardium is also more involved in preparation and gathering, and the triple heater in activation and spontaneous transmission.

If the pericardium and triple heater had their own phase based on natural metaphors, it would be lightning, shǎndiàn. Shǎn is a pictograph of a person standing in a doorway (*glimpse, flash*); diàn is a pictograph meaning *extending down from a raincloud*. The two together are commonly translated as *lightning*, which serves as the perfect image for the combined functions of the pericardium and triple heater – a sudden flash of light extending down from the clouds toward earth. Unlike regular fire, which is quelled by water, lightning appears only when there is water vapor in the sky (clouds). Lightning is

attracted by metal (the lungs' purity and constancy guide new emergence, and meditative breath creates the space for emergence). And lightning creates a spark (an ancient version of qì shows cloud + fire instead of cloud + grain). It is the immaterial fire fueled by immaterial water, without permanent form or structure.

The pericardium and triple heater are intimately involved in the process of zìrán: spontaneous and natural self-becoming. Each five-phase organ and its functions represent one manifest aspect of that expression. But individual expression is also affected by one's surroundings and circumstances; harmonious interaction with others and the environment is part of zìrán. The body's *extraordinary vessels* which regulate this interaction are the final subject of our exploration into TCM.

The eight *extraordinary vessels* (qí mài) are not as well represented in the literature as the main organ meridians. They are mentioned in texts of the Hàn Dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.), but a complete analysis of their energetic pathways, master points, and treatment applications did not appear until the Míng Dynasty (1368 A.D. – 1644 A.D.) The individual qímài are not associated with any single organ system, instead serving to unite the functions of many different organs. And with two exceptions, they are not comprised of their own points; rather, they incorporate points from the other main meridians. These attributes mean they are more global in their functions, and many texts refer to their importance in determining overall body structure and symmetry as well as regulating such wide-spectrum networks as the endocrine system. In classical descriptions they serve as reservoirs for qì and blood, they interconnect individual organs, and they are intimately associated with the liver, kidneys, and curious organs.

During the Míng Dynasty, each of the eight qímài was placed in association with one of the eight trigrams: divination diagrams called guà, the basis of the *Yì Jīng* (*Book of Changes*). Yì, meaning *easy, change* or *exchange*, is a pictograph of a lizard, also associated with the dragon (bringer of rain and prosperity). The *Yì Jīng* was historically consulted to find one's way through the ever-changing situations presented by one's relations with others and the environment. It follows that the qímài should have some connection to this process. Most scholars feel that qímài theory is deeply rooted in Daoist philosophy and meditative practice. When studied from this perspective with the meanings of the trigrams in mind, the seemingly disparate functions that are listed for each qímài become more unified and predictable.

Trigrams consist of three lines vertically arranged. Each line can be either yáng (solid line) or yīn (split line), and their order determines the qualities and meaning of the trigram, described by a character word. Each trigram is associated with one of the eight directions and one of the eight winds; they describe grander unifying patterns than the five phases, the former being more heavenly (describing relationships among things) and the latter being more earthly (describing things themselves). They allude to the prerequisite energies needed for co-creative expression among individuals, and the relationships they describe both enable and are enabled by the natural tendencies of the five phase forms. (Please see the table at the end of this chapter for the trigram-phase correspondences.) The qímài carry these energies into and out of the body, helping to harmonize individual beings with their fellows and the environment, and coordinating the functions of individual organs into a unified whole. A study of the imagery of each trigram and its associated qímài can aid in understanding the intricate nature of harmonious interaction, and how one is both affected by and can affect one's context.

Mountain Trigram – two yīn lines underneath one yáng line. The character describing this trigram is gèn (turn around and look in the eye), commonly translated as *forthright, straightforward, or blunt*. More ancient meanings are *keeping still* and *sitting in lotus*. Its associated qímài is the yīn partner of a pair of “linking vessels” – wéi mài – each with a bilateral course. Wéi (fine thread + dove/phoenix) is translated as *to tie*, and suggests tying together what might otherwise disperse. Thus the yīn wéi mài coordinates all the yīn organs and meridians, including the coordination of one's inner feelings and personal truth. The above imagery combined suggests that a strong, calm, mountain-like presence in the world requires unity within, both physically and mentally. The quiet confidence of the sage begins with inner harmony.

This understanding provides insight into yīn wéi mài pathology, which covers a diverse array of issues including anxiety, restlessness, apathy, forgetfulness, vulnerability, difficulty in self-expression and speech, throat problems, thyroid problems, allergies, epilepsy, and a number of chest and abdominal disorders. The list is long, and overlaps

in many cases with the other qímài and with the main organ meridians. To decide if a particular ailment should be treated with the yīn wéi mài, one must have a feel for the whole patient and decide if the mountain imagery suits. An example would be a dog who is always nervous and excitable, runs from bigger dogs, often hiccoughs (unable to take a calm breath), and suffers brief episodes of sudden hind limb lameness due to a luxating patella (a growth deformity allowing the kneecap to slide in and out of position).

Thunder Trigram – one yáng line underneath two yīn lines. Its descriptive character is zhèn (rain + cliff + sprouting plants like daggers following stars above), commonly translated as *to shake, tremble, or lightning bolt*. Another version shows rain falling from clouds over a character meaning shock, translated as *arousal, shock, quake, thunder, and taking action*. Zhèn suggests that which gets things moving, the way thunder announces the arrival of Spring and arouses all who were hibernating. Its associated qímài is the yáng wéi mài, which coordinates all the yáng organs and meridians, including the coordination of one's outward expression and action. For harmonious co-creativity to take place out in the world, a working connection and effective communication between self and other has to be established in a clear and unified fashion. Otherwise, the individual lacks a sense of where and when to initiate personal action, and lacks synchronicity with the actions of others and the natural cycles of the environment.

Yáng wéi mài pathology includes many ailments of the sensory organs (including the organs of touch and physical contact), the organs of expression (including face, mouth and hands), and the physiologic events that initiate new activity, especially those that must be synchronized with other events (birthing labor, blood clotting cascade, coordinated movement of the limbs, synchronized pumping of the four heart chambers). An example would be a puppy who was raised alone so she tends to send the wrong behavior signals to other dogs, as a juvenile suffers from elbow dysplasia (uncoordinated bone growth) and Spring allergies, and as an adult develops cataracts and facial nerve paralysis. Another would be an indoor-only cat who develops heart disease and throws a blood clot toward the hind legs causing paralysis.

Both the yīn and yáng wéi mài have to do with connection, inward and outward, and the synchronization of those connections to create unified presence and action. It is no surprise then that their master treatment points lie on the pericardium and triple heater meridians respectively. These points, however, like the other qímài master points, address issues and organs far beyond the one organ meridian on which they're located.

Wind Trigram – one yīn line underneath two yàng lines. Its descriptive character is xùn (two snakes proceeding together), translated as *proceeding humbly, gentleness, and penetration*. The wind enfolds these properties, able to wind its way around and through things in a persistent yet gentle manner. Xùn suggests going with the natural flow of things to move most harmoniously with others. Its associated qímài is the “girdling vessel” – dài mài – which encircles the trunk below the ribs, binding the other channels and regulating the flow of qì between the upper and lower parts of the body. Dài (belt with pendants + cloth) is translated as *belt, sash, band, region, zone, to carry, to take, and to bring*. Once action has been initiated, to proceed with grace and efficiency one must move around or through potential obstacles with a flexible understanding of one's sphere of momentum. Others may move with or against that momentum depending on their own natural path and personal boundaries. The dài mài aids wind-like movement by enhancing unified momentum of all one's qì through one's personal path without butting up against that of others.

Dài mài pathology includes many musculoskeletal disorders (lack of flexibility, tendency to stub the toe, dropping what the hand was carrying, lumbar pain, muscle spasms, ribcage pain), surface disorders (contact allergies, trigeminal neuralgia, fibromyalgia), and disorders arising from an inability of qì or fluids to pass easily through an area, resulting in an uneven distribution (swelling/heat at the elbow with numbness/cold of the hand). A horse suffering from dài mài pathology might exhibit odd

limb movements when backing up, have trouble changing leads, or have a habit of casually running over people.

The master treatment point for the *dài mài* is located on the gallbladder meridian, which suits its role in harmonious movement.

Fire Trigram – a yīn line in between two yàng lines. Its descriptive character is lí (yak + short-tailed bird with bright feathers), variously translated as *oriole*, *flaming beauty*, *brightness*, *to leave/depart*, or *to attach/cling*. The yak pictograph provides the sound of the lì character, but also adds to its meaning. The ancient Chinese domesticated the yak at least 4,500 years ago for use in carrying loads and as a source of milk, meat, hides, and dung (used for fuel in areas above the tree line). The yak’s ability to thrive in harsh environments was a crucial factor in allowing Chinese culture to emerge and prosper in remote areas. Lì in the Yì Jīng can mean attaching to something for safety, clinging to another during times of darkness, coming together to create prosperity, or radiating brightness that attracts others. Its associated qímài is the “conception vessel” – rèn mài – which runs straight up the midline of the front of the body; it is one of only two qímài with its own acupuncture points. Rèn (person + pole for carrying work) is commonly translated as *to appoint*, *to let/allow*, and *to assume a post*. Coming together as a group for any reason (huddling for warmth, sharing a meal, raising a family, creating prosperity) requires the act of allowing others into one’s personal space and accepting a beneficial role that helps the group. If that role flows with one’s inner nature (dé) the relationship benefits everyone; if not, the role becomes a burden which may eventually necessitate leaving. A healthy relationship also requires not clinging too tightly to the group or one’s role in it.

Rèn mài pathology includes disorders related to allowing something new into one’s life or one’s body (difficulty swallowing, diseases of the oral cavity, breathing and lung problems, digestion problems, pregnancy issues), disorders related to carrying a burden or serving a prescribed role (hernias and musculoskeletal disorders from load-bearing, breast and lactation problems, uterine diseases, repetitive stress disorders), and disorders related to “clinging” (anxiety, retained fetus or placenta, urinary retention and cystitis, constipation, congealed blood, coalescing lumps, hand spasms). An example would be an old stiff lackluster cart-horse who develops shoulder problems and is prone to smegma accumulation (called a “bean”) in his sheath causing difficult and painful urination; another would be a young puppy with severe separation anxiety who later in life develops allergic bronchitis and lipomas (benign fatty lumps).

The rèn mài’s master point lies on the lung meridian; if a relationship and the roles of its participants flow harmoniously, its comings and goings are as easy and natural as breathing.

Earth Trigram – three yīn lines. Its descriptive character is kūn (soil from which all things extend), commonly translated as *earth* or *female*, but in the Yì Jīng variously translated as *extension*, *submission*, *responding*, *receptive* or *passive*. It is the ability to respond to, nurture, and sustain creative direction. Its associated qímài is the yīn partner of a pair of “motility vessels” – qiāo mài. Qiāo is a combination of foot and lower leg (foot, leg, sufficient) and earth piled up on a stool. It suggests *feet up high* or *to raise one’s feet*. Combined with kūn, yīn qiāo suggests the act of following direction with nurturing and support. It also suggests being supported by others in one’s own creative endeavors. Mutual responding/supporting is the mark of a healthy relationship.

Yīn qiāo mài pathology includes ailments related to an inability to respond (fatigue, paralysis, coma, impotence, poor circulation and edema, eyes unable to open, sleep disorders, late labor), an inability to nourish or sustain (lactation problems, sterility, miscarriage, poor assimilation of nutrients, poor stamina), and issues involving support or steadiness (uterine prolapse, rectal prolapse, weakness or tension of the supporting muscles, seasickness, vertigo). An example would be an older dog with laryngeal paralysis, fecal incontinence and weak legs that tremble when he stands too long.

The yīn qiāo mài's master point lies on the kidney meridian; water is the basic foundation of physical life, supporting and sustaining all creative endeavors.

Lake Trigram – one yīn line above two yáng lines. Its descriptive character is *dùì* (person with mouth split), whose ancient meaning was *rejoice*, and whose modern translation is *exchange* or *trade*. The pictograph in the Yì Jīng shows an open mouth singing, with dancing legs below and arms swaying above. It can mean *joy*, *exchange*, *lake*, or *marsh* (a rich environment supporting a grand diversity of life). The health of the lake or marsh is reflected in the health of its plants and animals, the nature of its quiet depths reflected in its active surface. Undulating waves created by exchange with the energies of the wind are countered by the resoluteness of the deep unseen. The qímài associated with *dùì* is called the “governing vessel” – *dū mài* – which runs straight up the midline of the back of the body; it is the other qímài with its own acupuncture points. *Dū* (beans collected by hand, or to pick, + eye) has the common meaning *to supervise*. Given its close anatomic relationship with the spinal cord and brain (central nervous system), the *dū mài* is aptly considered the governing vessel of the body, exchanging information with all other body systems, organizing its patterns, and synthesizing appropriate responses and directives. This and the *chōng mài* (next section) are called the Way of the twelve meridians.

The combined imagery of *dùì* and *dū* inspires several different meanings. One's inner nature (*dé*) is reflected in one's exchanges with others. To learn from these exchanges is to learn about one's *dé* and that of others. Then adjustments can be made that reflect personal truth with more authenticity, and that more clearly reveal the truth of others. However, in keeping with the nature of the *Dào*, one's *dé* is constantly changing. Those whose self-concept is too structured can't adjust and demand very structured relationships that don't favor diversity or richness. Conversely, if the pattern of one's relationships changes too quickly or too often, or if one has difficulty seeing one's own reflection in the world (literally picking it out of a myriad possibilities), there is no basis for useful exchange and one simply feels lost, confused and empty...possibly progressing to psychosis. Healthy exchange requires the ability to recognize oneself and the meaning of one's actions within a complex tapestry of co-creative events. Then one can effectively experience, in a *wúwèi* fashion, the interactions described by all the other trigrams.

Dū mài pathology includes ailments affecting the organs of exchange: eyes (inflammation, glaucoma, corneal diseases), ears (deafness, deaf-mutism, tinnitus), speech organs (stroke, tonsillitis, throat spasms), lungs (fullness, cough, panting), skin (hard and scabby skin, scabies, sweating disorders), and hands (finger spasms, hand numbness or pain). It also includes ailments related to structural rigidity (back/limb pain and tension, sciatica, tetanus, stiff neck, wry-neck, headaches, seizures) and mental/emotional issues (madness, phobias, anxiety, melancholy, lack of concentration, insomnia). An example of *dū mài* pathology would be a horse who has had so many different trainers and riders (all giving her different cues and corrections) that she becomes nervous and nippy, holds so much tension that she develops back problems, and finally can't exercise because of heaves (a respiratory condition).

The *dū mài*'s master point lies on the small intestine meridian, fitting with its role in selecting: making choices and decisions that clearly reflect one's truth.

Heaven Trigram – three yáng lines. Its descriptive character is *qián* (plants sprouting toward early light), whose modern translation is *heaven*, but whose ancient form (sun with young grass leaves above and roots below adjacent to an image of *qì* spreading out under the sky) is variously translated as *initiating*, *creating*, *vitality* and *healthy action*. Its associated qímài is the “penetrating vessel” – *chōng mài* – which runs straight up the midline of the body's interior, in front of the spine. The *chōng mài* is called the ocean of the organs and meridians, the ocean of blood, and (along with the *dū mài*) the way of the twelve meridians. It is said to initiate creation from the source *qì* and nourish what is created. *Chōng* (step/left step + standing person with sun rising behind a tree + stop/right

step) is translated as *charge, rush, or toward*; its ancient meaning was *open road*. Some authors also relate chōng to the processes of transformation – specifically alchemical transformation in which individual entities react to create something new. This type of transformation is huà (person transformed: *transform, change*), a character often used in relation to chemistry. It is a more profound alteration than that involved in the transition from one phase to another – biàn (strike + continuous: *alter, become, modify*).

Qián suggests the type of creative and transformative energy that is exemplified by the interaction of the sun with plants: as the sun illuminates the leaves, its energy is used to perform photosynthesis (the transformation of inorganic carbon to organic carbon and the production of oxygen), a process crucial to creative life. Similarly, as one interacts with others a profound change of both self and other is possible if the energy of that interaction is allowed to penetrate deeply. Chōng suggests the ongoing progression and permeation of qián (creative influence) within the individual. On a physical level, blood vessels carry influences from both the outside world (nutrients and oxygen) and from one organ to another (hormones) to all the cells of the body where they are used to supply and initiate biochemical reactions. On a more subtle level, meridians carry the qì from outside influences and other organs that permeate an organ, interact with its source qì, and cause change. Thus the chōng mài regulates the initiation of co-creative transformation in the individual.

Chōng mài pathology includes ailments of the blood vessels and heart (angina pectoris, heart pain, circulatory problems and any secondary respiratory or digestive issues, palpitations, rheumatic heart disease, feeling of fullness in the chest or face), uterine problems (difficult or late menses, endometritis), and issues related to the permeation of influences into the body or between organs (stagnation of qì or nutrients causing pain or swelling, lack of appetite, vomiting, intestinal cramping, bloating, jaundice, yawning or sighing, diaphragm problems, pancreatitis). Mental problems would be expected to include any disturbance of the heart's shén (awareness), and difficulty incorporating new information into creative thought. A young dog suffering from chōng mài pathology might have a liver shunt with secondary jaundice, stunted growth, a small heart, mental depression, and seizures.

The chōng mài's master point lies on the spleen meridian in keeping with its role of easy permeation – an inherently passive process if unhindered, like sunshine being absorbed into leaves, illuminating them.

There is one final concept related to qián and chōng that bears emphasis. Just as transformation within plants results in the production of oxygen that fills the air and influences other organisms, so too does transformation within the individual (jīng) produce qì that then becomes an influence on others and the environment. In this way one becomes another “heavenly influence,” and changes the very context of one's existence. This is not an active process, like moving a chair or building a dam; it is a passive process, like a field in physics affecting the movement of particles – the way the sage is said to influence others just by being.

Water Trigram – one yáng line between two yīn lines. Its descriptive character is kǎn (ground + yawn/exhale), suggesting a dip in the ground that induces exhalation when fallen into; its translation is *dip*. The ancient pictograph shows ground and a person standing on one foot with the other held up; some versions also show a pit under the person. Its translations include *pit, falling, darkness, and abyss*, all of which intimate the seeming danger of the unknown. Kǎn is associated with water since most Chinese lived inland and the oceans represented unknown dangers. Its qímài is the yáng qiāo mài (motility vessel) – the yáng version of *raising one's feet*. Combined with kǎn, yáng qiāo suggests the ability to actively step into the unknown, which is what one has to do when entering a new relationship or situation. And because the path and those who walk it are ever changing, each step is always new to some extent. The Yì Jīng says if one is cautious yet calm, stepping faithfully from the heart in a sincere and honest way, one can walk as though on solid ground and one's actions can turn potential danger into

prosperous opportunity. The nature of water is to flow, but it must fill the pit before it can flow out of it; to flow in life requires the type of wisdom gained by filling the unknown with awareness and experience.

Yáng qiāo mài pathology includes any musculoskeletal issue affecting upward or forward movement (lumbago, sciatica, spasms and cramps, weakness, paralysis), issues related to steady and balanced movement (dizziness, epilepsy, one-sided pain or weakness, torticollis, mouth and eyes awry, difficulty standing up), and any issue related to facing outside dangers and seeing the way through (loss of speech, inability to concentrate, eye problems, myopia, headaches, fear, phobias, mania, anxiety, excitement, palpitations, stroke, sweating, infections, dread of wind). An example would be an overly cautious horse who tends to be violently fearful in the wind, suffers frequent eye infections, and has trouble rising due to chronic hip pain and muscle tension.

The yáng qiāo mài's master treatment point lies on the bladder meridian, which fits with the concept of water as a symbol of the unknown as well as the bladder as the yáng aspect of water (active, flowing, and emerging – the first form raised from unseen mystery).

Each qímài can be treated alone, or in combination with each other and any of the main organ meridians. Through tongue and pulse evaluation, history taking, and body and point palpation an experienced practitioner gleans which patterns need addressing. This process is greatly aided by studying the imagery of the Chinese characters that describe TCM physiology. Then, to borrow once more from Zhuāngzǐ, a deep experiential understanding (meaning) is what guides treatment rather than a memorized list of organ functions and point formulas (words). This way of practicing medicine is more subjective and relative than some would like, but it also carries with it the greater potential. Each unique interpretation of TCM concepts brings with it new possibilities for healing on many different levels.

The Eight Trigrams and their Correspondences

<i>Trigram</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Related Phase</i>	<i>Qímài</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Master Point</i>
Gèn: mountain	stillness	hard Earth	yīn wéi mài	unifying self	Pericardium 6
Zhèn: thunder	arousal/action	hard Wood	yáng wéi mài	synchronizing	Triple Heater 5
Xùn: wind	yielding/gentle	soft Wood	dài mài	limiting	Gall Bladder 41
Lì: fire	join/gather/cling	Fire	rèn mài	take on, admit	Lung 7
Kūn: earth	respond/sustain	soft Earth	yīn qiāo mài	supporting	Kidney 6
Dùì: lake	exchange/reflect	soft Metal	dū mài	supervising	Sm. Intestine 3
Qián: heaven	transform/create	hard Metal	chōng mài	permeating	Spleen 4
Kǎn: water	unknown/caution	Water	yáng qiāo mài	stepping out	Bladder 62

Traditional texts describe correlations between the earthly five phases and the heavenly eight trigrams. This is achieved by dividing three of the phases into their yīn (or “soft”) and yáng (or “hard”) complements while water and fire remain undivided (being primarily yīn or yáng already). Other authors have proposed a one-to-one correlation between the five phases and five of the trigrams (zhèn/wood, lì/fire, kūn/earth, dùì/metal, kǎn/water) while the remaining three trigrams represent those unique activities needed for all aspects of mindful manifestation (gèn/stillness, xùn/gentleness, qián/breathing). Either way, the universal influences of the trigrams tend to affect and be affected by related earthly five-phase forms; in the body this occurs through the extraordinary vessels. These associations cannot be viewed as exclusive relationships, however, as the trigrams cover broad issues spanning and uniting multiple phases.

Earth: Hard types of Earth are mountains, rocks, and pebbles. Mountains suggest solidity, stability, and grounding. This enables and is enabled by forthrightness in all relations. Soft types of Earth are soil, sand, and mud. The fertile soil shepherds things upward and outward into the world and supports their presence.

Wood: The yīn aspect of Wood is the yielding quality of twigs and branches, swaying with the wind rather than fighting it. This quality is enabled by knowing one’s personal boundaries, and enables easy flow through the personal space of others. The yáng aspect of Wood is that ability of all things to spring forth and manifest themselves. This requires synchronization with the other phenomena in one’s context of manifestation, which in turn requires outward communication.

Fire: This is predominantly a yáng phase. The light of one’s conscious awareness (shén) attracts others to its flame, bringing beings together for companionship, sharing, learning, and creative endeavors. This flame can consume others, however, if the relationship involves clinging or possessiveness.

Metal: The yīn aspects of Metal are its ability to reflect the truth (both to oneself and to others), its ability to exchange passively with the outside world (the way iron exchanges oxygen and carbon dioxide), and its malleability (enabling flexible expression while maintaining personal truth). These attributes enable and are enabled by diversity in one’s relations with an eye to selecting the most appropriate path. The yáng aspects of Metal are exemplified by crystals and gemstones, often described as the most condensed earthly form of universal heavenly energies. Crystals have been revered for generations as conduits for spiritual transformation and healing, able to convert ethereal energies into something usable in the physical realm. Texts on crystal healing state that when one is permeated by universal energies channeled through crystals, and applies them to personal transformation, one is in turn able to synthesize and emanate creative energy. In physics crystals are known as transducers, able to change mechanical energy into electrical energy (piezoelectric effect) and able to generate an electrical potential when heated or cooled (pyroelectric effect). Both these effects are exhibited in bone, a connective tissue made hard by hydroxyapatite crystals (primarily calcium phosphate). Applied to qián, the transduction capacity of “hard” Metal enables the conversion of universal influences into something which can then be used for personal transformation and creativity.

Water: This is predominantly a yīn phase, though in this context relates to movement. Water fills everything it comes across before continuing its onward flow. It also carries

The Eight Trigrams and their Correspondences

the qualities and influences of where it's been to where it's going. This is necessary for one to move on in the cycle of co-creative transformation, enabling and enabled by new experience.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 16
Reiki – Part 1
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Reiki is the common name for a Japanese system of subtle energy healing that has gone by various names over the years. Its roots are ancient but its modern form began in the early 1900s. (The term *rei-ki* has various translations that will be explored in the next chapter along with its possible attributes as a form of qì.) The system's founder, Mikao Usui (1865-1926), developed his methods from studying ancient Daoist meditation practices with the aim of achieving "unity of self through harmony and balance." (It is known that Usui was raised and remained a Tendai Buddhist, but research suggests his system originated primarily from Daoist spiritual traditions.) A set of affirmations was used daily to encourage emotional balance, appreciation in one's endeavors, and kindness to others. A set of symbols was taught to help students awaken to their own spiritual qualities. Wúwèi, the Daoist concept of not-doing (i.e. the effortless action that proceeds from living one's life without attachment to outcome) was a crucial part of Usui's practice. This original version of reiki, known as Usui-Do, focused on self-healing and personal transformation rather than treating others. (Do is the same character as dào, in this case as a *method* or *doctrine*, not the Dào of life. Chinese characters arrived in Japan during the 5th century A.D. and are called kanji, that nation's first written language. There are also two phonetic syllabaries used in modern Japanese writing, hiragana and katakana. As Chinese language arrived, so too did various blends of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism which all greatly influenced the development of Japanese culture, philosophy, and spiritual practice.)

In the early 1920s a senior student of Usui, Toshihiro Eguchi, introduced a set of hand positions that rapidly became incorporated into an application of Usui-Do called Usui-Teate; teate means *treatment* or *medical care*, but its Kanji characters refer specifically to use of the hand. This "hand healing" technique was again used primarily for self-healing, but was also applied to treating others...a natural progression as Usui himself had treated many people. In 1925 Usui trained several naval officers, including Chujiro Hayashi who changed the practice of reiki to focus on treating patients in a clinic setting. He developed a more complex set of hand positions, a treatment style using several practitioners per patient, and a step-wise training regimen with different levels of advancement. Each level was accompanied by a set of ceremonies called reiju to assist students' connection to the reiki energy. He also used Usui's original symbols for treatment purposes. This style of practice became known as Usui Reiki Ryoho; ryoho means *treatment method*.

Not long after Usui's death in 1926 divisions emerged between existing reiki teachers and their styles. Hayashi further modified his system to focus almost exclusively on treating others, omitting more of the spiritual Usui-Do teachings. In 1935 a Japanese-American woman named Hawayo Takata came to his clinic for treatment of a terminal illness. After her cure she took the training and received her master/teacher certificate in 1938. Over the next several decades Takata further modified the system and introduced it for the first time to Western countries as Usui Shiki Ryoho; shiki means *style* or *form*. To make reiki more acceptable to post-war, and often anti-Japanese audiences, Takata changed the history of reiki, teaching that Usui was Christian; some versions even place him as the dean of a Christian college. While this distortion was perhaps understandable at the time, it eventually confused people once more accurate accounts began to surface. After Takata's death in 1980 some of her students formed an alliance and tried to standardize her system, but further divisions emerged and many teachers started to incorporate a wide array of other spiritual practices, resulting in the panoply of different reiki styles available today.

In the last few decades more effort has been placed on renewing the original forms of reiki, Usui-Do and Usui-Teate, based on documents, accounts, and training acquired from

some of Usui's and Hayashi's original students before their deaths at very advanced ages. (Hayashi's own documents were lost during WWII.) From these efforts, and discussions with current practitioners in Japan, reiki teachers in the West are designing courses to more closely match traditional style. There will no doubt be ongoing variations as more information is exchanged, but the basics of traditional reiki training and treatment are described below.

There are three practitioner levels in reiki training; more advanced levels are available to become a teacher. In Reiki I students are taught the basic concepts (qì, dào, wúwèi, etc.) and that the term *rei-ki* in Usui Reiki Ryoho simply refers to making a connection with one's ancestral transcendent self that is already present from birth. From this connection one may achieve harmony within, and then one is able to facilitate the healing of others using a subtle form of energy replenished spontaneously from the mystery of the Dào. (This differs from qìgōng treatment which uses the practitioner's own bio-energy reserves, replenished through the work of breathing and movement exercises.) Reiki is offered rather than directed to the patient, with the intent that the energy be used however best suits the unique path of that individual. Each student is taught Usui's affirmations, and is given four "connecting transformations" – ceremonies of remembering that help students connect to their source, and that open the energy channels of the body. (Western reiki classes refer to these as attunements, a term that has fallen out of favor in traditional circles since the ceremonies do not directly alter the student but simply remind him or her of what is already present within.) Students learn a set of hand positions to be used first on themselves, then on others. Each position treats certain meridians as described in Chinese medicine.

Reiki II builds on the material from Reiki I, and includes three "control transformations" that aid students in making use of the first three Usui symbols – images that serve to filter the energy in a specific way when drawn or meditated upon. Students are taught the form, properties, and meaning of each symbol, as well as how to use them on self and others. The first is used to focus energy, the second to harmonize the body-mind, and the third to aid one's connection to their source (or to connect to a patient at a distant location). The final practitioner level offered is Reiki III, which includes an "empowerment transformation" along with the fourth symbol used to promote self-empowerment only, not in treating others. (Students are taught that each person must find their own empowerment in life; it cannot be bestowed since it is based on one's personal understanding.) All four symbols are more like training wheels for students; once the student gains a feeling for the different types of energy the symbols are no longer needed to influence its qualities. Similarly, the hand positions become more free-form as students acquire a sense of what hand position feels right for a particular patient.

Medical research on reiki is early yet, but preliminary clinical trials have shown positive results (e.g. improved blood counts, enhanced immunity, pain relief, relaxation and emotional balance, normalization of blood pressure, decreased healing time). Many hospitals offer reiki as part of their alternative medicine programs. Reiki's benefits for terminally ill patients have also resulted in its use at many cancer treatment facilities. And although its origins are Eastern, reiki is used by people from diverse spiritual and philosophical backgrounds. It is recommended that reiki not be used for burns, broken bones (unless they've already been set), or during surgery.

After all this description the question still remains, "What exactly is the energy of reiki?" How does a "subtle spiritual energy" behave compared to the bodily qì described in Chinese medicine? Where does it come from and how is it invoked? And how exactly do the Usui symbols influence its behavior? Western reiki classes and websites call it universal life force energy, channeled through the practitioner like a current into the patient. This description is misleading, however, in light of recent information gleaned from original students of Usui-Do and Usui-Teate; reiki is described as a presence, or way of being (connecting to one's ancestral self), rather than a type of bio-energy conducted from the surroundings. From such presence, one is then able to help

harmonize bodily qì. To explore the possibilities of how this happens, it helps to study the kanji characters appearing in reiki, especially with reference to the last two chapters on Chinese medicine.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 17
Reiki – Part 2
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Some reiki teachers do not emphasize (or even discourage) close study of the kanji characters associated with reiki, saying either the character meant something else in the context it was used, or the character was not originally an important aspect of practice. Any modality with its origins in Daoism and Chinese medicine, however, calls for a very deep experiential study of the imagery evoked by the characters. Chinese characters, and by extension kanji, are well suited to philosophical and spiritual concepts since they convey a sense of something without absolutely defining it, allowing the reader's ideas to transform as the pictographic landscape is reflected upon. Studying the kanji of reiki in this way opens new doors to the understanding of reiki as a thing and a process.

The word reiki itself is a combination of two kanji, rei and ki. Various translations of reiki in Japanese dictionaries include “aura” and “an atmosphere or feeling of mystery.” Rei in Chinese is líng (raindrops falling through a cloud + three mouths, speak, opening + shamans working), translated as *spiritual*, *numinous*, *transcendent*, and *efficacious*. It conveys the ability to invoke something through spiritual work. The imagery of the rain being summoned is reminiscent of the “big rains” associated with the dragon in Chinese mythology, and the pericardium in Chinese medicine as the organ capable of enveloping that process. (Reiki energy is said to exit the palm at a pericardium point.) In Daoism, líng is described as spiritual power, something that lies within each person and becomes manifest as one is transformed and purified just by mindful living in harmony with the natural cycles and processes of the Dào. Ki is qì, so reiki is líng in its active form.

Transformation and purification within the body are said to occur at three energy centers called dān tián (*cinnabar fields*) – an upper one in the head between the eyes, a middle one in the chest near the heart, and a lower one in the abdomen below the navel near the kidneys and mìngmén. (Physiologically, these areas do exhibit a comparatively high degree of electromagnetic activity.) Dān shows a red mineral (cinnabar) represented by a dot found in a mine; an alternate version shows the mineral inside a kiln being purified into a more potent form. Cinnabar is primarily mercury, a fluid “living metal” prized for its transformative qualities and often used in ancient Chinese alchemy. Tián is a pictograph of a tilled field. Together dān tián suggests the cultivation of personal transformation and purification. Jīng-qì (transformative qì) is said to reside in and disperse from the three dān tián, thus their great importance in Daoist meditation and breathing practices. This is also reflected in the reiki transformation ceremonies, during which the teacher blows a gentle breath on the student's three dān tián.

Through transformation and purification the Daoist adept is said to become transcendent (i.e. inspirational, moving, able to radiate qì), a result of the spiritualization of matter-energy, not spirit separated from matter or an external spirit gifted to form; it is an entirely personal process fed by experience. Those with more experience (ancestors) were thought more likely to know transcendence, so the reference to “connecting with one's ancestral self” in Usui Reiki Ryoho makes sense. It is the connection to one's innate ability to repeatedly move with, be transformed by, and eventually become like the Dào with its characteristic natural spontaneity. In reference to the extraordinary vessels of Chinese medicine, this is analogous to the qián trigram and its chōng mài – through personal transformation one becomes like the universal influences themselves, able to radiate energy that then affects one's environment.

Transcendence does not require years of experience so much as the willingness to transform – a sense of open pliability, but in keeping with one's inner nature. This leads to zìrán (spontaneous self-becoming), the very essence of the Dào and the height of health in Chinese medicine. To practice reiki on oneself is to mindfully engage in personal transformation, becoming, and transcendence. To practice reiki on another is to offer a type of qì that helps the patient in their own process of letting go (old habits,

engrained reflexes, pathologic patterns) and opening to their own natural and spontaneous flow. Then the different types of body-mind qì can move freely and harmoniously.

The first three symbols taught in Reiki II, and the fourth taught in Reiki III, serve as aids in treating self and others. In the past these symbols were kept secret, but over the years their forms and meanings have been published with increasing frequency and detail both in books and on websites. This is appropriate for two reasons. Most importantly, the symbols by themselves hold no secret power; it's the use of them in a mindful way that makes them influential. Secondly, patients have the right to know what they're being treated with, like being able to read the ingredient list on a bottle of herbs. (It should also be remembered that Usui gave students the symbols as helpful tools, like training wheels, not to be relied upon once the student gained a deeper understanding for the full potential of reiki.) The symbols, and their associated kanji, are therefore described here in the order reiki students learn them.

Symbol 1 looks basically like a counter-clockwise three cycle inward spiral, but drawn starting from the end of a downward stroke. It originates from Daoist spiritual texts. Its associated Japanese phrase is cho-ku-rei, which is spoken or thought of while drawing the symbol. Cho in Chinese is chāo (walk, move, leave, depart + summon, convene), translated as *surpass, exceed, or cross over*. Its imagery suggests gathering something as one prepares for action. Ku in Chinese is kōng (hole + carpenter's square, work), translated as *sky, empty, unoccupied, or in vain*. (It could also be viewed as a hole for work, like acupuncture points.) Rei is líng. Altogether, cho-ku-rei is translated for reiki students as "infinite to good effect." The imagery suggests gathering transcendent energy to a specific location for starting treatment. Symbol 1 is used in reiki to focus the energy like a lens, either concentrating it or expanding it. Another variation offered by some teachers is choku-rei, where choku in Chinese is zhí (ten eyes saw no concealment), translated as *straight, direct, vertical, at once, honesty, or simplicity*. The imagery would then suggest the immediate, direct and unadulterated appearance of transcendent energy.

Symbol 2 is a combination of two squiggles, one more angular and the other more rounded, likely derived from a Buddhist symbol associated with harmony. Its Japanese phrase is sei-heki, translated as *disposition, proclivity, inclination, or idiosyncrasy*. The Chinese of sei is xīng (heart + plant rising from the ground), translated as *nature or disposition*. The Chinese of heki is pǐ (lie flat on a bed, illness + rules mouthed to criminals, law), translated as *habit or quirk*. The combined imagery suggests *natural tendencies*. Sei-heki is translated for reiki students as "everyone has idiosyncrasies." Symbol 2 is used to harmonize the body-mind (especially for emotional issues), but it also reminds the reiki student that everyone has their own way of doing things, so when offering reiki to patients the energy must be offered without judgment or attachment to outcome. This follows the Daoist concept of wúwèi.

Symbol 3 is a vertical combination of five kanji characters, hon-sha-ze-sho-nen. Hon is běn (tree with line emphasizing base), meaning *stem, root, basis, origin, own, personal, or principal*. (This is the same character used in Chinese medicine to describe one's original běn qì that arrives at mìngmén.) Sha is zhě (sun just rising, clear, pure + grain, sugarcane stalks), meaning *person or thing*. Ze is shì (right under the light of day), meaning *right, correct, just*. Sho is zhèng (foot with protruding toes, stop, arrive, limit + line), or stop at the line, meaning *proper, right, straight, just, fair, correct or rectify*. Nen is niàn (union with additional strokes suggesting contact, now, current, recent + heart), or keep current in the heart, meaning *remember, study, miss or to think of*. Altogether hon-sha-ze-sho-nen suggests that the original root aspect of a being is the right and only thing to keep in mind during a reiki treatment, since it is that aspect which guides emergence and transformation. The phrase also tells students to trust their first impressions and impulses during treatment. Symbol 3 is used to connect to one's original self, and to connect with patients (including those not present in the room, enabling reiki at a distance).

Symbol 4 is simply a vertical arrangement of three kanji characters, dai-ko-myō, translated for reiki students as “big bright light.” Dai is dà (standing person), meaning *big, large, great* or *grand*. Ko is guàng (fire over legs, a person carrying fire), meaning *light* (as a noun), *smooth, glossy, merely, completely* or *purely*. Myō is míng (sun + moon; window + moon in older pictographs), meaning *light* (as an adjective), *bright, evident, clear, to know, or to understand*. Some philosophers also translate míng as *acuity* – insight gained from the mirroring of things as they are, using a reflective stillness of mind lacking the warp of judgment, and necessarily shifting constantly in relation to one’s experience of them. Then one’s relations with a dynamic world produce no disturbance of the heart/mind, allowing harmonious interaction. Dai-ko-myō is thus the grand light of understanding that emerges from the reflective insight of the sage.

When explaining the meaning of dai-ko-myō, traditional reiki teachers offer the phrase “The Buddha sees the diamond world (metaphysical realm) and the womb world (physical realm) at once.” In esoteric Buddhism, these two worlds are ultimately understood as one and the same. Dai-ko-myō in this sense is one’s innate and empowering knowledge of the interconnection and transcendence of all things on a grand scale. From this state of transcendence qì appears to spontaneously emerge from empty space, but there is ultimately no separation between the manifest and the unmanifest; it is all one continuum, the Dào. On a smaller scale, dai-ko-myō as one’s personal light of understanding means that the empowerment derived from knowledge of oneself and one’s surroundings can only come from within since it relies on personal transformation; it cannot be bestowed. This is not merely information (which can be bestowed), but a deep experiential awareness born of seeking within as well as absorbing outside influences. This is why many traditional reiki teachers reserve this symbol for self-treatment only.

Each reiki symbol can be used alone for a specific purpose (focus, harmony, connection, empowerment) or in various combinations as needed (e.g. focus harmony at one area). When considered in sequence, however, another interesting aspect of the symbols emerges – they tell the story of what happens during a reiki treatment. The practitioner begins from a centered stillness and then places his/her palms on the body. At that moment, at the meeting of palm (and its pericardium point) with body, língqì invites the emergence and flow of body-mind qì in a way that both moves with the natural tendencies of the patient and calls upon the patient’s běn-qì for guidance. Thus reiki treatment is not the forceful insertion or direction of body-mind qì, but an invitation for the innate mystery of that patient to manifest itself naturally and spontaneously.

Reiki students are taught that this entire process is driven by intent, yì (sound from the heart), translated as *meaning*, or *intention*. Yì is the type of shén (awareness) attributed in Chinese medicine to the spleen (Earth phase): the fertile ground and centering influence for all life processes. All of one’s actions, especially if done in a mindful way, derive from intent. On a more subtle level, the meaning, sense, and significance that emerge in one’s life through personal transformation become part of one’s naturally emanating and influential qì, even before physical action is taken...thus the reference by some authors to líng as that ability of the most effective healthcare practitioners to awaken healing in others just by their mere presence, even before any medicine is begun. Yì flavors the body’s electromagnetic field which then, like any field in physics, influences the movement and behavior of any thing encountering it. Once again to quote Zhuāngzǐ: “Words exist because of meaning; once you’ve got the meaning, you can forget the words.” Reiki students are taught hand positions and symbols, but ultimately these may be forgotten as their personal understanding of reiki develops and their own unique style of practice emerges.

Tending the Wind – Chapter 18
Intuition
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

“The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.” – Albert Einstein

Merriam-Webster gives the following information regarding intuition. Its roots come from the Latin term for *the act of contemplation*. It is variably defined as *quick and ready insight, immediate apprehension or cognition, and the power or faculty of attaining to direct knowledge or cognition without evident rational thought and inference*.

Rational and analytical thought, on the other hand, is indirect knowledge gained by comparing bits of acquired information with something else (past experiences, scientific models, culturally accepted norms) to come to a conclusion. It examines specific parts in a pre-determined way, while intuitive insight spontaneously emerges from flowing streams of interconnected influences that come together to form a whole impression. The concept of intuition as direct knowledge is illustrated by its Chinese characters: zhí-jué. Zhí (ten eyes saw no concealment) means *straight, vertical, or direct*. Jué (see and learn) means *to perceive, to feel, or the noun sense*.

In real life intuition and analysis are not readily separated, nor are they in opposition. Someone may have an insight about something but not know why, and follow up with the tools of analysis to cross-reference and verify their intuition. Conversely, rational thought may suggest a correct course of action, but someone may hesitate to act until “feeling” that it’s correct (perhaps waiting for a sense of the right combination of influences to reach their awareness). As people gain more experience in a particular area, their intuitive and analytical processes tend to merge. People who are experts in their field often readily experience an easy interplay between the two, able to call forth at once a number of seemingly disparate influences and pieces of information that somehow manage to form a beautifully seamless and impeccably logical whole. Those who invite inspiration from the heart of things-as-they-are tend to discover more brilliant concepts than those who demand a particular set of responses from things probed with set guidelines and expectations. The key is to harbor a contemplative mind.

Contemplation is defined as *thoughtful observation or study, an act of considering with attention, the act of regarding steadily, or spiritual concentration/meditation*. To the extent that contemplation is performed with an open mind, insight will be free of judgments...but it’s more involved than that.

Direct knowledge does not have to come from contemplation. All living things have a direct understanding of gravity, even if they don’t have a name for it or a means to discuss its attributes. Its effects are directly experienced, influencing the way things grow, move and change. It transforms things. And the grand scale of its physical and physiologic influence, which carries far beyond a single individual, means it doesn’t take any meditation to acknowledge its presence. It’s the smaller influences that require a more delicate sensibility to recognize, and more refined tools to analyze. On a relatively small scale, measurements become impossible because the very tools used to make those measurements cause perturbations in the object or system being studied. As much as science tries to be objective, there are always limitations and alterations presented by the observer. The observer causes transformation. Theorists talk about the interface between the observer and the observed as the only real “thing” that can be perceived. And since perception itself requires transformation (e.g. light waves converted by the retina to chemical signals in the eye), perhaps this interface is better thought of as a field of transformation. And perhaps direct knowledge – intuition – is simply a matter of being willing to participate in mutual transformation. A contemplative mind helps in this

regard because it creates a space for transformation to occur. Repeated experience also helps as the observer gains a feeling for how that process naturally flows.

So how does all of this relate to holistic veterinary medicine? Holistic therapy requires having a feeling for the patient as a unique individual. In the clinic setting this begins with things like the homeopathic interview and Chinese tongue and pulse evaluation. These are analytical tools; the information gathered is fed into the homeopathic repertory or the manual of tongue and pulse evaluation to come up with a conclusion. But these tools are far from being purely objective. The practitioner chooses which questions to ask (even if the choice is to use the same questionnaire provided by a master homeopath for every interview), and how to interpret the tapestry of the tongue and pulse (narrowing their complexities into a few key words). With contemplative insight, he or she might suddenly come up with just the right question to ask, making the difference between a good remedy and a great one. Or something about the pulse just feels like acupuncture should focus on one organ over another, even though disharmony in either could have caused the current complaint. And certainly insight can make the difference between “cookbook” acupuncture versus a symphony of points that promote deep healing.

Introducing intuition into the clinic setting, however, is tricky business. Veterinarians spend a long time in the basic sciences before ever touching a medical text (let alone a living patient), and are deeply entrenched in the objective scientist’s mindset. “Mutual transformation” is not a phrase that crops up anywhere in the curriculum. More importantly, having a “standard of care” requires the absence of individual interpretation; the only valid information comes from objective blood tests and radiographs, the only treatment from drugs proven effective in double-blind studies. There is good reason for this, as it protects patients from hucksters and snake oil. But it also makes practitioners afraid to trust and utilize their own instincts. Clients seeking holistic care for their animals tend to be more open to intuition as a valid component of therapy, and as there are no direct scientific tests for things like damp heat in the triple heater it certainly helps to have intuition as an aid. If intuition is employed to a high degree, the practitioner must have informed consent from the client, and not ignore the benefits of conventional means.

The practitioner who is serious about developing their intuition can take any number of classes on the subject, but in the end it is about personal transformation. What do I believe? Do my beliefs place limitations on the insights I might receive? Am I willing to change and consider other, seemingly outrageous, possibilities? Am I willing to let my patients’ qì flow through me in a deep and profound way, causing transformation within me as I glean perceptive insight into them? Is it safe or must there always be some subtle energy barrier? Must I, as many practitioners do, cleanse my aura after every patient? And how much of my insight is being influenced by the client? These may seem like silly questions, but they become important when discussing subtle energy fields and concepts like qì. (Even on an everyday level, how many of us change our behavior and our physiology based on subtle influences from those around us?)

The question of personal beliefs is a serious one, and can only be answered by each individual. Our beliefs influence everything we allow into ourselves and put out to the world. Changing a belief is the hardest thing to do. (Softening a belief can begin with the idea that you hold it as you would your child, with caring yet flexible support, rather than grasping onto it for dear life or keeping it frozen in time.) The question of personal protection is equally serious for anyone who has experienced that instant sensation of simultaneously being totally connected and yet totally vulnerable. One extraordinary second of connection and intuitive insight is followed in the next second by an instinctive desire to pull back after being so profoundly exposed. It helps in this regard to remember the lessons of the metal phase in Chinese medicine (Chapter 13). We have within us the ability to maintain the truth of our inner nature in any situation and through any transformation; the paradox is that this ability requires constant rhythmic exchange (breathing). Mindful breathing maintains the purity of the self while allowing the self to

shift in accordance with one's *dào* and in harmony with the *dào* of others. Even the body's protective skin layer depends on rhythmic exchange to stay healthy.

An even more interesting question is this: Is the proper goal of medical intuition to come up with answers, or is it better used to simply glean a sense of the patient's path at that particular moment? The expectation to receive an answer to a question is another obstacle to flexible insight. And as one's *dào* is ever-changing, a desire to come up with *the* right and final answer is unreasonable. Whatever aids are used, whether intuitive or analytical, the end result of therapy is subject to the unique mystery of the patient. If the practitioner is mindful of that mystery while palpating points and placing needles, treatment may not be curative but it will be harmonious. Perhaps how we get to the end is more important than the end itself. It determines who we are when we get there.

Tending the Wind – An Introduction to Holistic Veterinary Medicine
by Lauren Chattigré, DVM, DVetHom, CVA, CVCP, Reiki Master

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