

NATURE'S RHYTHM

TRADITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE
ANNE SMUCKER, LICENSED ACUPUNCTURIST

Spring Edition

Dear Friends

This is the first issue of a seasonal newsletter about Traditional Acupuncture. I'm enthusiastic about acupuncture and the place it has in our modern healthcare system. I'm also enthusiastic about my personal practice and the goal I have set for myself this year to reach out to more people with the gifts I can give in health and healing service.

Acupuncture is an art form as well as a traditional medical system with a complex history. It's also the simple surprise and joy I find in my office when someone says: "I can move my shoulder with less pain than when I came in." or "That treatment left me feeling so peaceful." I plan to write about both aspects of the practice of acupuncture. I hope that the practical information I give you will be a good balance for the more theoretical.

The title of the newsletter -- *Nature's Rhythm* -- refers to traditional acupuncture's view of the human body as a microcosm of the natural world. Each of us reflects nature's rhythmical cycles. In health, we flow with ease through change: hot and cold temperatures; growth, maturity and decline, outward expansion and inward reflection. When illness or a sense of unease arises, acupuncture gently moves us back in the direction of harmony with nature's rhythms.



A Joyous "Yes!" for Spring

Traditional Acupuncture celebrates each season as a unique gift to our human repertoire of "ways of being." The springtime carries us from winter's contemplative seclusion into an upward and outward energy of birth and creativity. In the spring, we release a joyous "yes" for life and join all of nature as it bursts forth in blooming color and scent and shoots up new green spears of life.



We reflect the clear movement in nature that spring brings when we have a clear vision of what we want in the future and make plans for going about getting there. Spring's energy helps us meet obstacles head-on with the flexibility and stamina we need to hold onto our vision while working through the tasks that pave the way.

When spring's upward and outward force is confined or blocked in us, tension can build up causing physical and/or emotional symptoms. Physical symptoms which traditional Chinese medicine associates with disrupted spring energy (or spring Qi) are: headaches, joint problems, tendonitis, liver and gall bladder diseases, eye diseases and menstrual problems. On the emotional level, blocked spring energy can result in anger or

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Three Acupuncture Points on the Liver and Gallbladder Meridians

The Liver and Gallbladder meridians are the starting points for working with the energy (Qi) of the springtime. This type of energy corresponds to the Wood energy within the Five Element cycle of Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood. Acupuncture points are the places on the surface of the body where the Qi, which lies deep inside the body, is accessible. Acupuncture points may be stimulated with an acupuncture needle, with heat, or with acupressure massage.

Liver 3: Supreme Rushing or Happy Calm

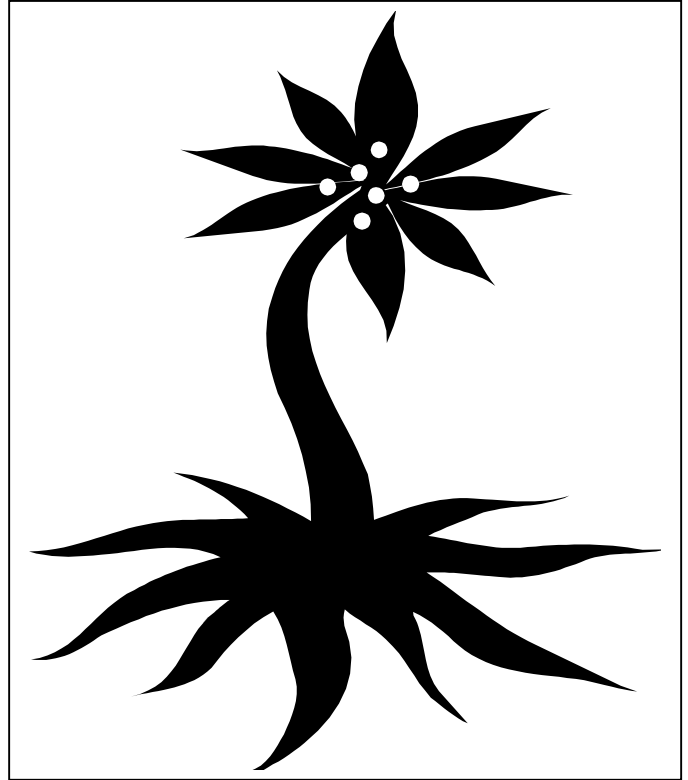
Liver 3 is found on the top of the foot between the big toe and the second toe. I use it to support a person who wants to feel calm and let go of frustration or anger. I might use it to help someone's self-healing mechanisms work through a migraine headache or muscle tension. Liver 3 is also beneficial for someone who has high blood pressure or liver disease.

Liver 14: Gate of Hope

Liver 14 is the last acupuncture point on the liver meridian and is located on the chest near the liver itself. I might use Gate of Hope to help someone move out of a depression and create a vision for the future. Liver 14 is also a good point for chest pain.

Gall Bladder 1: Orbit Bone

Gallbladder 1 is located on the temple, just behind the bone which surrounds the eye. Orbit Bone is helpful with eye problems. I might also choose this point for someone who came to the office with premenstrual irritability.



Acupuncture Supports Fertility

Acupuncture has long been used in China and more recently in the West to support women's reproductive and gynecological health. Western scientists are beginning to conduct clinical trials to evaluate the effectiveness of acupuncture in the realm of fertility.

In 2002, *Fertility and Sterility* published a study conducted in Germany of women undergoing assisted reproduction therapy in conjunction with acupuncture. Pregnancies were documented in 42.5% of the group receiving acupuncture (34 of 80 patients) and in 26.3% of the control group (21 of 80 patients.) The study concluded that acupuncture seems to be a useful tool for improving pregnancy rates in conjunction with assisted reproduction therapy.

The full study is available in *Fertility and Sterility*, vol. 77, no. 4, April 2002, copyright 2002 American Society for Reproductive Medicine.



CELEBRATE SPRINGTIME

Nourish and celebrate the energy of spring – spring Qi – by trying one of the following:

- Walk in the woods with a friend and go farther than you have before. Observe the natural events of the season happening around you.
- Plan and plant a garden of vegetables or flowers.
- Visit an art supply store and see what colors and mediums attract you. Express yourself creatively.
- Plan a special surprise for a loved one – unrelated to a particular calendar date.
- Be assertive. Express anger or frustration in a constructive way. State your interests and request that you and the other party negotiate a mutually satisfactory solution.
- Go on a spontaneous adventure to someplace you have never been before.
- Eat green, leafy vegetables to cleanse and refresh your liver and gall bladder: kale, spinach, beet greens, Swiss chard, mustard greens, collards, or spring onions.
- Begin a class in tai chi or yoga to keep muscles and tendons supple and mobile.
- Envision your life a year from now. What changes do you want to be in place? Plan the steps you need to take to get you there.

irritability, depression, difficulty with planning or loss of direction.

Spring Qi resides in you! Whether this energy is right on the surface or more hidden under other qualities helps determine your unique personality and the gifts that you bring to life. Traditional Acupuncture works with the many types of energies inherent in each of us to keep their waxing and waning a smooth flow. Greater health results when we are able to access with ease the qualities of springtime Qi – flexibility, vision, hope, youthful grace, and creativity. When these qualities are in harmony with the others that we call upon each day, no matter what the season, our bodies function with ease and our minds and spirits soar with a joyous “Yes!”

Patients Ask: Why use Moxa?

First of all, what is moxa? Moxa is dried *Artemisia Vulgaris*, a species of chrysanthemum. Dried moxa, formed into a stick or cone, has a high concentration of oils which smolder when lit and stimulate the acupuncture points with heat.

The use of moxa, called moxibustion, warms the body and expels cold. “Cold” in Chinese medicine is a pathogen which causes the body’s energy, or Qi, to stagnate, just as cold in western medicine can impede blood circulation. So, the use of moxa helps generate the smooth flow of energy through the body.

Moxa has traditionally been used to prevent disease and promote longevity. The Chinese text *Notes on Bian Que’s Moxibustion* says: “When a healthy man often has moxibustion on the points of Ren 4 (First Gate), Ren 6 (Sea of Qi), Du 4 (Gate of Life) and Ren 12 (Stomach Correspondence), he would live a very long life, at least one hundred year’s life.”

Additionally, moxa has the herbal qualities of being “bitter” and “acid.” When burned, the odor of the leaf affects the whole person. This treatment is particularly good for someone who feels cold most of the time, feels a dizzy or heavy sensation, or has soreness and pain in the joints or muscles.

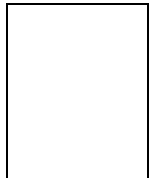


The Three Months of Spring

The three months of spring
Are called springing up and unfolding.
Heaven and Earth together produce life,
And the 10,000 beings are invigorated.

From
The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine

Anne Smucker, Licensed Acupuncturist
1982 Arlington Blvd., Suite 5
Charlottesville, VA. 22903
434 825 4181
www.cvilleacupuncture.com



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
