



Academy for Five Element Acupuncture

passion · education · community

Spring 2020

Letter from the President

Spring Greetings!

And what a spring it has been! I hope this newsletter finds you safe, centered, and healthy during this difficult and unprecedented time. I realize that many of you have suffered tremendous challenges in your lives and practices due to COVID-19. Everyone at the Academy sends our love and support to you. As parts of the country begin to reopen, we send wishes for your continued safety and wellbeing.

Due to COVID-19, the Academy closed to the public on March 17th. The administrative staff and local faculty spent the next week preparing to move our operation online. The staff valiantly took up the challenge of working from home in order to keep the school moving forward. Thankfully, we were using Zoom for meetings and that familiarity facilitated our rapid change in work environment. The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) made available an emergency waiver for distance education for didactic education, followed shortly by an emergency waiver for distance education for clinical training. **Joanne Epstein** and **Chuck Graham** were instrumental in successfully obtaining both waivers for the Academy. **Joanne Epstein** and **Odalis Cruz** have been working diligently to obtain emergency funding towards the expenses of moving to online education, administrative overhead, and

additional financial aid funds for students while the clinic is closed.

We held an intensive session by Zoom in late March and another in May. I am grateful for our students' patience, flexibility, and positive attitudes. I also want to thank our wonderful local faculty and away faculty members for courageously facing - and conquering - the steep learning curve of adjusting to online teaching. Specifically, I want to thank local teachers **Joon Thomas, Janet Rucker, Jim Brooks, Ruby Bienert, and Patty Getford,** and away faculty **Dan Sachs, Alexander Love, Chuck Graham** and **Dava Michelson.** A big thank you goes to our Registrar, **Jessica Babapour** for shepherding the integration of Zoom into our academic software management system. The online intensives were a success and gave us confidence to plan for more.

The interns had an extended spring break and, upon their "return" in April, we went to online clinical seminar courses and grand rounds case presentations. Thanks to Zoom technology, we have had the unique opportunity for **Niki Bilton** teach the interns from Canada. We have recently begun offering supervised telemedicine appointments in our herbal teaching clinic. We are also holding faculty development for the clinical supervisors during this interesting "downtime." Because of everyone's hard work, perseverance,

and graciousness, we have continued to offer our programs without interruption. Obviously, with online classes and physical distancing, we are not able to teach the more practical aspects of the curriculum. We have plans to make up that material when we can be together in Gainesville in the fall.

The looming issue at the moment is when we can safely have the interns and patients return to the clinic. We are carefully considering all aspects, and we will be consulting with a local physician who is a leader in our community around the COVID-19 epidemic. The health and safety of our school community is the number one priority. With that in mind, we have cancelled all events at the school until further notice, including all upcoming CEU workshops, such as Zero Balancing.

We are also continuing to plan for the future and the start of a new acupuncture cohort in August. We held a very well-attended and successful Virtual Preview Day for prospective students on May 16th. I am encouraged that interest in the school has stayed constant throughout this challenging time. Now more than ever, the world needs what we have to offer. Not only are acupuncture and herbal medicine profound tools for helping people recover their health, they are inherently about helping people maintain wellness and to

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take charge of their lives to the fullest degree possible. While there is no doubt that these are potentially frightening and uncertain times, I am choosing to look for the gifts. I would never have expected to be so grateful for the gift of technology. I am deeply grateful for the gift of working at an amazing school with incredible, brilliant, dedicated people and to continue to teach this profound tradition of medicine to students eager and committed to keeping it alive and thriving in the world. I am grateful for the

gift of our wider community supporting and encouraging the next generation of practitioners. Thank you for all you do.

Please keep in touch. We'd love to hear how you are faring. May you, and all those dear to you, be well.

Misti Oxford-Pickeral

Graduates Respond to the Pandemic



Catherine Hollingsworth
Class 29

I live and work in Miami. My acupuncture practice, as a person-to-person business in a high density zone, was mandated to close during the coronavirus outbreak. I remember recently wishing for a month of peace and quiet to stop the rush and stress, and suddenly I had it. It wasn't the retreat I had imagined but I decided to make the best of the circumstances.

My first instinct was to go into solitude and get myself in a good state of mind. And when I could not be present in person with my patients, friends and family, who were facing extreme circumstances of all kinds, I asked myself what I could offer.

During the state-wide lockdown I decided to find out what I could do with

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Cheng Liu
Class 34

I am newly licensed in Kentucky. Since the outbreak of Covid-19, I have translated two herbal formulas used in Chinese hospitals, attended conferences by ER doctors and epidemiologists, and worked with western herbalists to help people recovering at home under CDC guidelines. I immensely enjoyed the Integrative Medicine curriculum by Dr. Connie Ross, Jim Brooks and other instructors during our internship. With my previous background as a computer engineer, I am passionate about integrating rigorous western life sciences with Five Element tradition. Currently I am building an off-grid cabin in central Kentucky among a loose community of homesteaders, but I'm offering consultation remotely over phone and video. Please visit my website www.logicGirl.com, and Facebook: [logicalGirls](https://www.facebook.com/logicalGirls)



Graduates Respond to the Pandemic



Miha Kim, Class 33

Moving to Gainesville in 2016 from NYC in the healthcare industry and being in touch with a few close physician friends on the frontlines of COVID-19, what was happening in NYC since early March was very close to my heart and mind. It was emotional on many levels with thoughts and feelings of hopelessness, sadness, overwhelm and fear, not only for myself but dear friends, family members and colleagues. It may be an understatement to say that things have been a juggle and shifting for all of us. For

me personally, life has been a little like this, living on the edge financially (with a bit more isolation) since I moved to Gainesville to change careers. This huge shift became a larger task than I had originally anticipated trying to finish school, pass boards, starting a brand new private practice in July 2019. Overcoming these challenges in away has taught me a few things to prepare for COVID-19 - be flexible, be compassionate to myself and trust in the process.

I chose to close my office physically March 19 except for telemedicine appointments for herbal/nutritional/exercise consultations including distance zero balancing sessions. After the initial shock of accepting what was happening, I took opportunities to learn from many teachers online through free webinars in the healing arts, acupuncture and in the Chinese herbal medicine community which have been a great resource and support. I

have also taken on some work in the western health system doing home visits and also in a skilled nursing rehabilitation facility to fill in for staff and the overload as a physical therapist. Many patients in hospitals are being sent home or to rehab much sooner than usual to prepare for COVID-19. I am grateful now and happy to work where I am needed and can use any of my skills. I am getting better at riding the stream downhill, to lean in with the currents and always reminded that nature doesn't hurry. Mostly importantly, I have been mindful of taking care of myself.

When all of this is more stable in time, our services from the Five Element acupuncture community with our unique skill to be present with our clients in their season of life will be extremely valuable. I am guessing many people will be needing much care emotionally and physically. For now I am cherishing every quiet morning with the birds chirping, every yin moment to peacefully read or meditate, every silent evening with my dog BaiShao reminiscing of her dog park days. Ironically with social distancing, I have been receiving calls and reconnecting with beloved friends and family from all over the country! Peace be with you all dear Academy family.

Stay Connected with the Academy



Thank you to our generous donors:
Michael Kowalski
Eve Soldinger
Mark Larsen

And a special

thank you to **William Cebulskie, Class 10** for his generous annual contribution.

Your financial support enables us to prepare the next generation of Five Element acupuncturists. Our gifted graduates touch the lives of hundreds of people in their communities across the country. When you make a gift to the Academy, you are making an investment with an everlasting impact. Your generous gift is appreciated today.



The Academy is now on LinkedIn! We are excited to use LinkedIn to connect with both prospective students interested in the

Academy and with graduates. Haven't visited our campus in a while? You can take a tour of our beautiful Gainesville campus from your living room! Click on the icon above to watch our new video campus tour with Isabelle Winzeler, Admissions Coordinator. Make sure you also "like" our Facebook page to stay up to date with continuing education and workshop opportunities.



Marilyn Mesh is joining the Academy's governing board. Marilyn is a graduate of Worsley Institute of Classical

Acupuncture and College for Traditional Acupuncture (UK) (Class 6) and recently retired after many years as Executive Director of Suwanee River Area Health Education Center. She also had a private acupuncture practice in Gainesville for a decade. We welcome her positive energy, valued insight, and community awareness to the Board.

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intuitive energy medicine at a distance. The essence of this way of working is that energy patterns are detected in the intuitive space using inner vision, inner knowing, and more. With intention, those energetic patterns can be decoded and shifted and healing takes place.

Although I have a lot of training and experience working intuitively, I had not yet developed a process for a distance healing treatment. So I began studying intuitive energy medicine during the mornings. I also started giving treatments by phone to patients who normally would have asked for acupuncture.

I have been surprised to find that in some cases, I am watching the five elements rebalancing within these distance treatments. And I have been humbly amazed at the ways these treatments have worked.

I have no doubt that this way of working will become an important part my practice and I'm curious to see what awaits me on the other side of this coronavirus experience – business-wise, personally, and within my practice. Truly I believe that alongside the pain and suffering for many, there will be many gifts.

Upcoming Events

Our Spring continuing education workshops have been canceled. We hope to reschedule all of our offerings for later in the year. Please check our Facebook page for updates. We hope that you and your family are staying safe in this challenging time.

August 19

Next Master of Acupuncture class begins

October 24-25

Lonny Jarrett

Registration will open in July



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