



Academy for Five Element Acupuncture

passion · education · community

Spring 2021

Letter from the President

Spring Greetings!

New Beginnings

The days are lengthening, the robins have arrived, and change is in the air. According to the Chinese seasonal calendar, spring began officially on February 4th in Taiwan. Wherever you are, I hope you are in touch with the creative, rising, renewing energy of the season.

In addition to a new season, we are also on the verge of a new lunar year- the Year of the Metal Ox. Predictions for this year include good health, prosperity, and hard work for all zodiac signs. This year is slated to be quieter and steadier than last year, thank goodness. The Ox is known for reliability, gentleness, and calmness. With any luck, this year will see the hard work over the last year come to fruition, as we stay the course with calmness and perseverance. We hope you found a safe and meaningful way to celebrate the Chinese New Year on February 12th.

The Academy continues to thrive during these challenging times, thanks to the hard work of our administrative staff, supervisors and faculty. To keep our school community safe and healthy, didactic classes continue to be offered online via Zoom and clinical training continues in person with stringent COVID safety precautions in place. As you will see in this newsletter, we started a new cohort of 15 acupuncture students on January 21st. They are a phenomenal group. We are thrilled to welcome them to the community

for the start of their Five Element journey. I am grateful for the dedication and adaptability of our amazing community.

National News

In November 2020, the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) announced that they would extend the emergency waivers for distance education until further notice. We are grateful for this bold step from our accreditor choosing to go to bat for nationally accredited acupuncture schools in the absence of direction from the Department of Education.

At the end of January 2021, the Department of Education announced official support of the use of emergency waivers for distance education until the national emergency related to COVID-19 ends. This support allows us to continue to offer our programs in these uncertain and unpredictable times and provides time to plan ahead. The Department of Education has also extended the COVID emergency relief flexibilities for federal financial aid repayments through September 2021, at least.

Looking Ahead

Updates to our Chinese Herbal Studies program are underway to meet recently created ACAOM standards and criteria for stand-alone Chinese herbal programs. For years, ACAOM approved stand-alone herbal programs, but no separate standards and criteria existed. **Once the updates are approved, our Chinese Herbal Studies program will be fully accredited.** We anticipate these changes to be implemented with Class 37H.

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Chuck Graham

CLICK HERE TO WATCH VIDEO

Opening the Circle



Please welcome our new Master of Acupuncture cohort! This is our second class to begin on Zoom.

Pictured here (top row, l. to r.) **Gianna Masi, Heather Connors, Mariah Vlach, Shane Murphy,** (second row, l. to r.) **David Kruse, Ryan Callahan, Matthew Olson, Meghan Hedley,** (third row, l. to r.) **Rebecca Rich, Thomas Gersh, Emily Rooney-Bryan, Cerise Harbour,** (bottom row, l. to r.) **Emilie Sheridan, Zahra Love, and Jing Chen.**

Reflections on Spring

“The Four Seasons redistribute to the world the breaths which create and transform the ephemeral beings that we are.” Larre, C; Shatz, J; Rochat de la Vallée, E (1986) *Survey of Traditional Chinese Medicine.*

According to Chinese thought (not the Gregorian calendar), the midpoints of the Four Seasons are the equinoxes (Spring/Fall) and the solstices (Summer/Winter), which accord with the movements of yinyang. Each season has three months, further divided into 2 week periods, which indicate the 24 changes of the breaths and the resultant proper conduct of the 10,000 beings. This year, 2021, the beginning of Spring was on February 3rd-5th, depending on your location in the world, and lasts until the beginning of Summer on May 5th-7th.

Suwen Chapter 2 instructs us, clearly, how to follow *zheng qi* (the regulatory movement of Nature) and harmonize with seasonal qi. Put simply, obeying the seasonal rule enables us

to adopt a preventative approach to health, avoiding disturbance or calamity.

“The three months of spring/
Are called springing up and unfolding.
Heaven and Earth together produce life,
And the 10,000 beings are invigorated.”
Larre, C (1994) *The Way of Heaven (Neijing Suwen Chapters 1 & 2).*

For Wood CFs, spring is both the end and beginning of another personal cycle. The world all around them and inside them

is resonant, embodying the *wuxing* (5 Phase) correspondences: the atmosphere of wind (change); upwards and outwards movement; the stage of sprouting and budding; the planet Jupiter and the stars in the sky; dawn light and sunrise in the East; the impulse of generation, the power of birth and the virtue of benevolence. For many Wood CFs spring is indeed their best time of year, but for some it is the most difficult, if they struggle with forward vision or ease of movement of the sinews, physical or emotional/mental; the world is springing forth and speeding up, while they feel restricted.

“LOOK DEEP INTO NATURE, AND THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING BETTER”. -ALBERT EINSTEIN



Thankfully, classical acupuncture can equally support health and address distress, often through the use of the exact, same points. Applying moxa to and needling the seasonal horary points of Wood is the best treatment at this time of year for Wood CFs, in any or all of the 3 months of Spring. The characters of these wood in wood points are translated as “Foot above Tears”

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Graduates Respond to the Pandemic



Angelica Mordecai
Class 34

Hi Academy family,
Like many of you, I spent the early months of COVID stocking my pharmacy with anti-viral medicinals, and learning how to become a remote practitioner. My herbal practice took off, and I created systems and tools to support my patients in learning about their meridians, giving themselves acupressure treatments, and using their custom-blended formulas to address fatigue, burn-out, depression, and despair.

I quickly noticed that I was both receiving and sending many shipments every month, and wanted to take steps to minimize my carbon footprint. I collaborated with We Are Neutral, a local environmental organization, to conduct a carbon audit for the practice. We are making monthly payments to off-set carbon emissions, as well as committing to several practices to minimize waste and reduce emissions. Please read about these commitments on my practice website: www.ketermedicine.com. Are you also an herbalist interested in this? I would be happy to chat and exchange notes!

Online Marketing Tips

Ron Pratt
Class 27

Over the last year I've noticed a trend among practice management gurus suggesting it's time for practitioners to evolve to a high volume one to many online format. While I can appreciate this model might be ideal for some, I'm devoted to doing the work I love as a Five Element acupuncturist. This means I'm committed to building a thriving practice that focuses on face-to-face, one-on-one interactions.

That said, I haven't always been so confident in my ability to do this. When I first opened my practice, I struggled with how to get patients. Implementing advanced advertising and marketing strategies was an expertise that I didn't possess. I tried a number of options and found they did not yield consistent results. I gave up. I outsourced and that left me feeling like I had an expensive bill to pay but no more consistency. Then I read the book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck. Reading this changed everything for me. I realized my belief that, "I

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Letter from the President

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Gratitude

Thank you for your continued support of the Academy, especially during the pandemic. There are so many ways our community shows support, from staying up with our latest news, to making financial donations and library donations, to referring clinic patients and prospective students. On behalf of the Academy, please accept my heartfelt gratitude. We wouldn't be able to survive, let alone thrive as we have, without you. For more information on how to support the Academy,

please visit our website (<https://acupuncturist.edu/giving/>) or contact our executive assistant, **Andi Houston** (andi.houston@acupuncturist.edu).

Wishing you flexibility, big vision, and creative prospects as we begin our second year of a pandemic,

Misti Oxford-Pickeral

Reflections on Spring

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(Gallbladder 41) and "Great Esteem" (Liver 1): dispelling tears of frustration through engendering wider vision, illuminating what decisions need to be made and arising fresh starts (through GB 41), and dispelling doubt through astute perception, thereby promoting the confidence that fires change and direction (through LR 1).

All of the 10,000 beings though, must live in harmony with the spring season, while still maintaining their own proper or authentic nature (*xing*). So Fire, Earth, Metal and Water CFs must be true to their natures and yet adapt overall to the increasing yang qi of the season, with progressive cleverness and quickness that befits the surge of beginnings in the new solar cycle.

What can we do when other CFs manifest seasonal struggles, or liver/gallbladder officials develop pathophysiology (irrespective of CF), and what might indicate that condition? Here we can be guided by copious information in both the *Neijing Suwen Lingshu* and the *Nanjing, the Classic of Difficulties*.

The Yellow Emperor asked "The pulse of spring is like the string of a musical instrument, but what is this type of pulse (wiry pulse)?" Qi-Bo replied "... any pulse of spring, which appears contrary to the pulse just described is a diseased pulse." Suwen Ch.19 from Lu, HC (2004) *A Complete Translation of the Yellow Emperor's Classics of Internal Medicine and the Difficult Classics (Nei-jing and Nan-jing)*.

This stresses to me, and I hope to you, that the study of acupuncture is a never-ending experience of and commitment to beginner's mind! Just when we thought we understood and could identify wiry as one of the 28 pathological pulse qualities, now we are invited to also embrace it as a sign of seasonal health. And to learn to distinguish between the two clinical manifestations of wiry.

Moreover, rather than using Wood seasonal horary points that only apply to Wood CFs, we must instead look to points that appropriately assist patients of other CFs to find a way forward within increasing spring yang qi, without perverting their

own energetic vibrations. Examples are "Rushing Into the Middle/Central Surge" (Pericardium 9) that maintains the yin qi and blood in the interior, so the spring movement can be expansive but not over-exuberant. Or "Harness the Winds" (Small Intestine 12). We can, basically, use precise points in specific seasons to strengthen the healthy zheng qi movement of life, which both allows maintenance of and restoration of health, when humanly possible. Fire CFs often appreciate spring as it gets going, bringing increasing light and warmth, but it's peak may be too "full-frontal". And Spring is the danger season for Earth CFs, due to the speed, which does not easily accommodate the ponderance of proper digestion and thought.

I hope these words have created some shoots of new possibilities to explore. Those of you who are asking where is the 5th season, that will be addressed in this column in Summer.

Until then, all best wishes,
Niki Bilton, Director of Clinical Education

Stay Connected with the Academy



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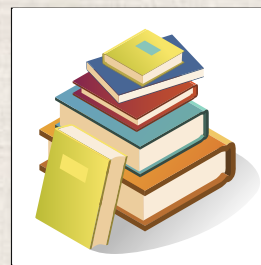
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Your financial support enables us to prepare the next generation of Five Element acupuncturists. Our gifted graduates touch the lives of hundreds of people in their communities across the country. When you make a gift to the Academy, you are making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



to our academic library.

If you have books, audio recordings, or DVD documentaries on Taoist philosophy, Tai Chi, Qigong, acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, herbalism, business management, or any other subject that you think would be a useful addition to our library, please contact the library coordinator at andi.houston@acupuncturist.edu.

We love receiving library donations from our graduates. Big thanks to **Nancy Lustgarten, Class 11**, for her generous donation

Online Marketing Tips

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was lousy at marketing” was a fixed mindset and it was holding me back. I resolved to change my mindset. I invested in programs to learn more about marketing and digital advertising.

For a brick and mortar practice marketing is simply a way to build visibility for your practice. It's about getting your message in front of local people that resonate with what you're offering; in my case acupuncture and lifestyle medicine.

When I was a student at the Academy Ruby Bienert spoke words that I've never forgotten, "In the treatment room, every needle asks a question." I think of this wisdom often and recently it occurred to me marketing is the same. Marketing activities are simply a question to your market - Are you interested in what I'm offering? Does it solve a problem for you? If we combine marketing activities with metrics we can

get clear insights into how our community is responding to what we have to offer. The marketing activity is the needle and the metric is the pulse response, which ultimately tells us whether the community is resonating with what we have to offer.

Three marketing activities I'm doing to ask questions of my market:

With the Pandemic, it's hard to get out and speak in the community. However, podcasts and virtual workshops are great ways to create visibility. Virtual workshops that target your local community are best but if you're doing something that has a broader reach, use social media and email lists to bring it back to your market. Measure the response to content by tracking lead generation. Over time, tracking will help you tweak content and improve response rates.

I broke up with a complicated website platform that often required outsourcing,

pulled all of my website activities back in house and haven't looked back. I relaunched my website this past summer on a simpler platform that has allowed me to stay on top of content updates, ultimately improving search engine optimization. I keep tabs on the pulse by tracking unique visitors and page visits weekly and make adjustments based on data.

Lastly, I'm leveraging paid social media to build my list. Digital ads are an affordable way for us to get our messaging in front of people that are in our service area. I keep my finger on the pulse here by monitoring cost per lead and conversion to client. This enables me to see what's working and offer more of that and drop what's not.

So while I haven't yet cracked the code, I'm well on my way to building consistent patient acquisition results by asking questions and taking pulses.

Upcoming Events

All Continuing Education workshops in a live format remain canceled. We hope to reschedule all of our on campus offerings for later in 2021. Please check our Facebook page for updates. We hope that you and your family are staying safe in this challenging time.



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