



MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ACUPUNCTURE EXPERIENCE

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Fruit of the Earth
Natural Health

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My background

- BS in Finance from University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign, 2001
- Western herbal studies with Jim McDonald in Michigan, 2012
- Work-study herbalism/naturopathic trip to Nicaragua, 2012
- Zen Shiatsu Chicago certificate program, 2012-2013
- Pacific College of Oriental Medicine, 2013-2016
- Southwest Acupuncture College, 2016-2017
- Licensed New Mexico Doctor of Oriental Medicine, 2018-present
- White Pine Healing Arts Graduate Mentorship Program, 2021-present

Agenda

- Classical texts
- What is Qi?
- How does acupuncture work?
- Acupuncture Patient Training 101
- Chinese Medicine Myths

Remember...

Be curious, invite skepticism

Some things apply broadly, some narrowly



Chinese Medicine Myth #1

- All acupuncture is the same
- “I tried acupuncture once and it didn’t work”

[illegible]

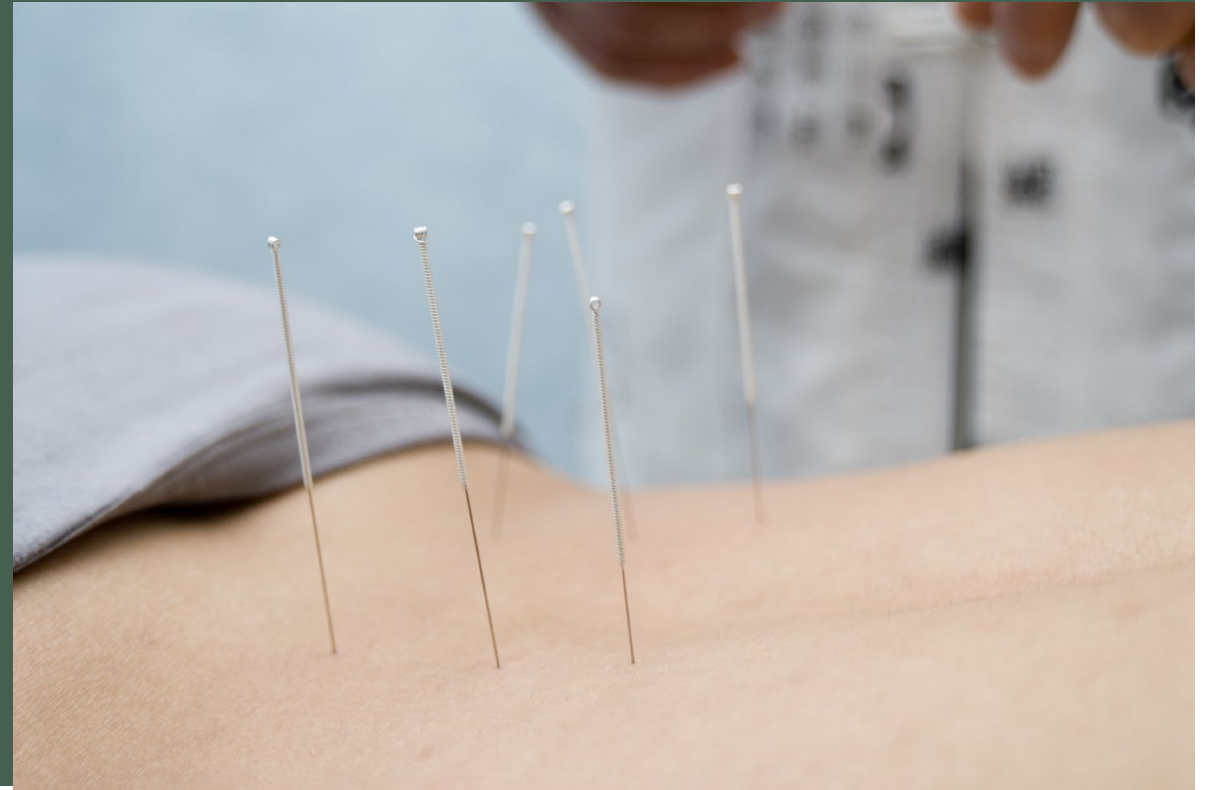
Depth,
Elegance,
Luminosity

陽明於陽
照補明邱

The classics of Chinese Medicine are the foundational texts written many centuries ago and are considered to be the most important sources of information for this practice. In the west we value new innovations and look to the future as providing the technologies that will enhance our lives and our understanding of the world. In the east there is a different perspective. They look to the past as the source of all the information we need. The past is valued in this way because everything in the past is known, whereas the future represents the unknown and is therefore an unreliable source of information. We can learn from the mistakes of the past, if we're paying attention. Some may say, when it comes to ancient knowledge, the older the better; these ideas and theories have been tested over very long periods of time.

Chinese Medicine Myth #2

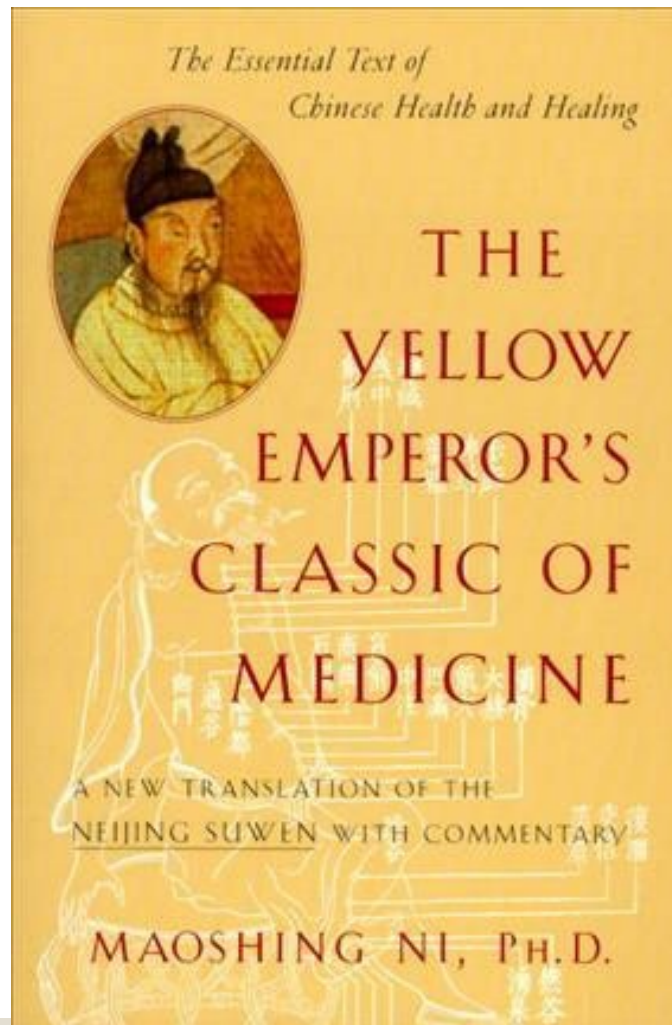
- Chinese medicine is outdated



“The late Professor Lin Peixiang was a teacher who I greatly respected. Master Lin was not only an expert of Chinese Medicine theory, but also an accomplished clinician. Besides internal medicine, he specialized in gynecology, pediatrics and ENT issues. But Professor Lin never read specialized texts for internal medicine, external medicine, gynecology, pediatrics or texts devoted to the diseases of the five senses. He relied solely on his single copy of the *Yellow Emperor’s Classic* to cure disease. During one of his lecture courses, he is quoted as having said: ‘As for the content of the *Yellow Emperor’s Classic*, if you fully understand even one sentence, you will be able to receive nourishment from that for your entire life’.”

-Liu Lihong, from the book Classical Chinese Medicine

The *Huang Di Nei Jing* was written or compiled at some point between 475 BCE-206 BCE. It is a series of conversations between the Yellow Emperor, thought to have lived and ruled around 2,700 BCE, and his advisors. Huang Di is a mythical figure who may or may not have actually existed, though he is credited with the origination of the centralized state among other things. The conversations between him and his advisors center around nature, cosmology, numerology and other topics. The word “inner” from the title refers to the inner state of the human form; the text attempts to relate these inner workings to the outer universe. This is an esoteric text that is best studied directly (with an understanding of how to read classical Chinese writing) and/or with a mentor.



Huang Di Nei Jing



Huang Di: “I’ve heard that in the days of old everyone lived 100 years without showing the usual signs of aging, however today people age prematurely and only live 50 years. What could account for this?”

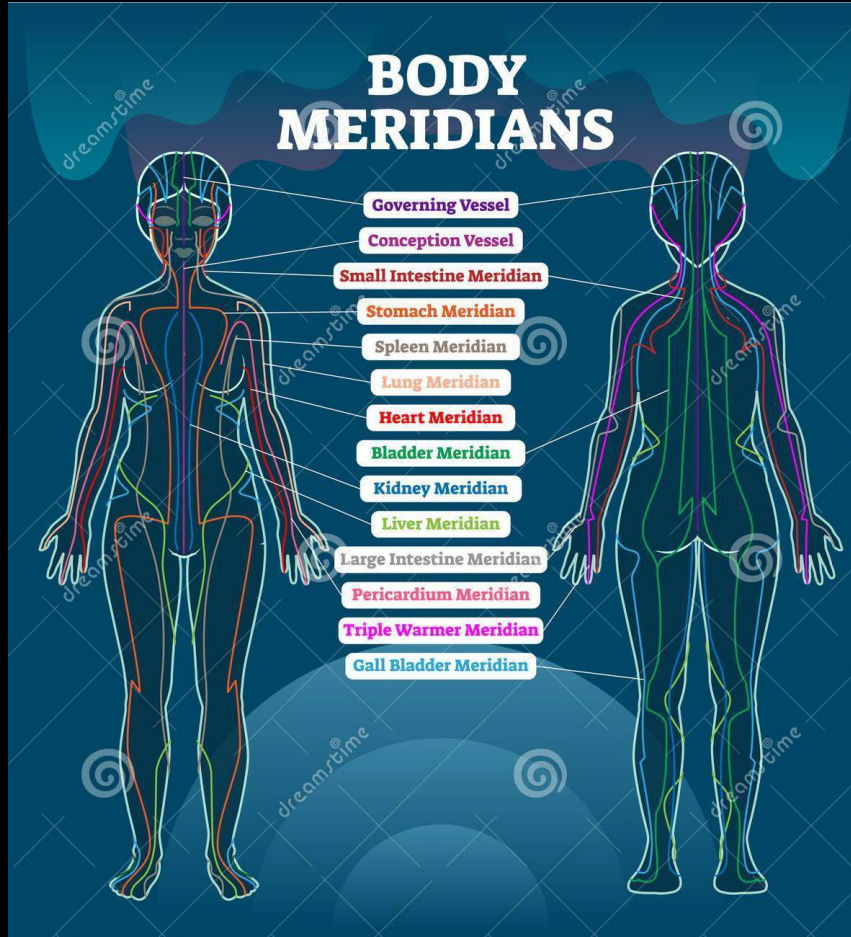
Qi Bo: “In the past people practiced the Tao, the Way of Life. They understood the principle of balance. They formulated exercises to promote Qi flow to harmonize themselves with the universe. They ate a balanced diet, slept at regular hours, avoided overstressing their bodies and minds, and refrained from overindulgence of all kinds. These days people do not live in this way.”

-First Chapter, *Huang Di Nei Jing* (paraphrased)

“The *Neijing* departs from the old shamanistic beliefs that disease was caused by demonic influences. Instead the natural effects of diet, lifestyle, emotions, environment, and age are the reason diseases develop. According to the *Neijing*, the universe is composed of various forces and principles, such as Yin and Yang, Qi and the Five Elements (or phases). These forces can be understood via rational means and man can stay in balance or return to balance and health by understanding the laws of these natural forces. Man is a microcosm that mirrors the larger macrocosm. The principles of Yin and Yang, the Five Elements, the environmental factors of wind, damp, hot and cold and so on that are part of the macrocosm equally apply to the human microcosm.”

-Wikipedia entry, Huangdi Neijing

Qi and the Channel System



- Qi is the energetic substance that acupuncture works to adjust
- The channel system is the container

....so what is Qi?

“Qi is at the basis of all phenomena in the universe and provides a continuity between coarse, material forms and tenuous, rarefied, non-material energies. It therefore completely sidesteps the dilemma that pervaded Western philosophy from the time of Plato down to the present day, ie the duality and contrast between materialism and idealism. The infinite variety of phenomena in the universe is the result of the continuous coming together and dispersion of Qi to form phenomena of various degrees of materialization. This idea of aggregation and dispersion of Qi was discussed by many Chinese philosophers [throughout time].”

-*Giovanni Maciocia*, The Foundations of Chinese Medicine

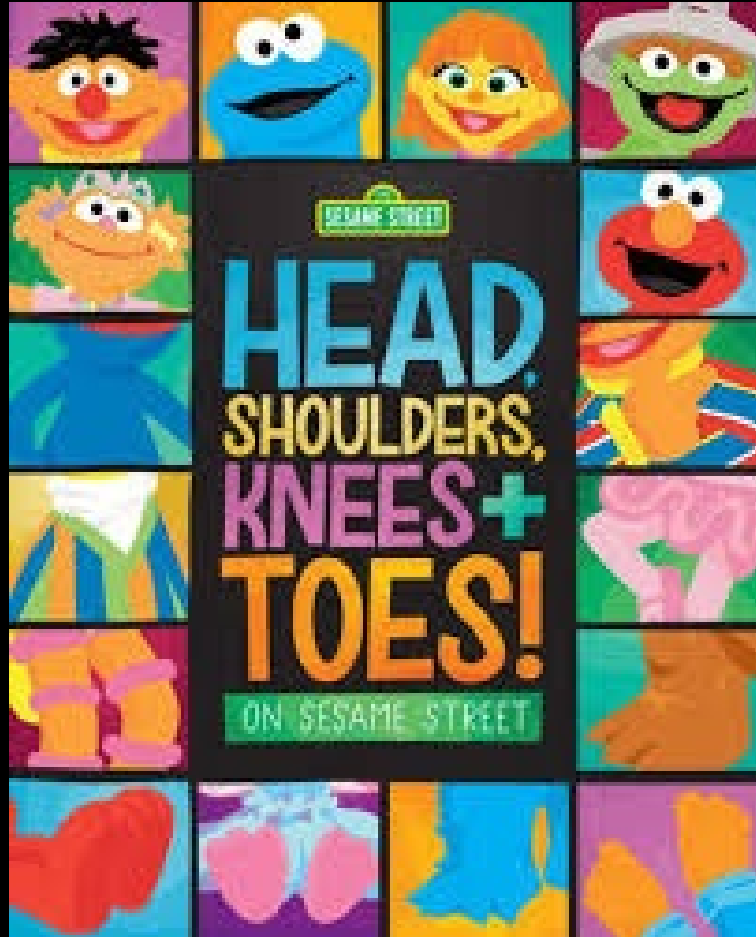


Things to know about Qi

- Difficult to pin down; it is a functional substance, more Yang than Yin
- Qi, and the channel system itself, are theoretical; we know it exists because of its *responsiveness*
- Qi is thick and moves slowly; effects from acupuncture can be slow and subtle

Containers of “Qi”

- This view of the body is rudimentary but nonetheless valid and true
- The sinew channels of acupuncture work at this level
- Problems here require Western medical, often emergency interventions



Containers of “Qi”



- This view of the body is more esoteric but nonetheless valid and true
- Problems here can be adjusted with different energetic interventions and self-care techniques

Containers of “Qi”

- The electromagnetic field can be adjusted using various methods
- Visit biofieldtuning.com

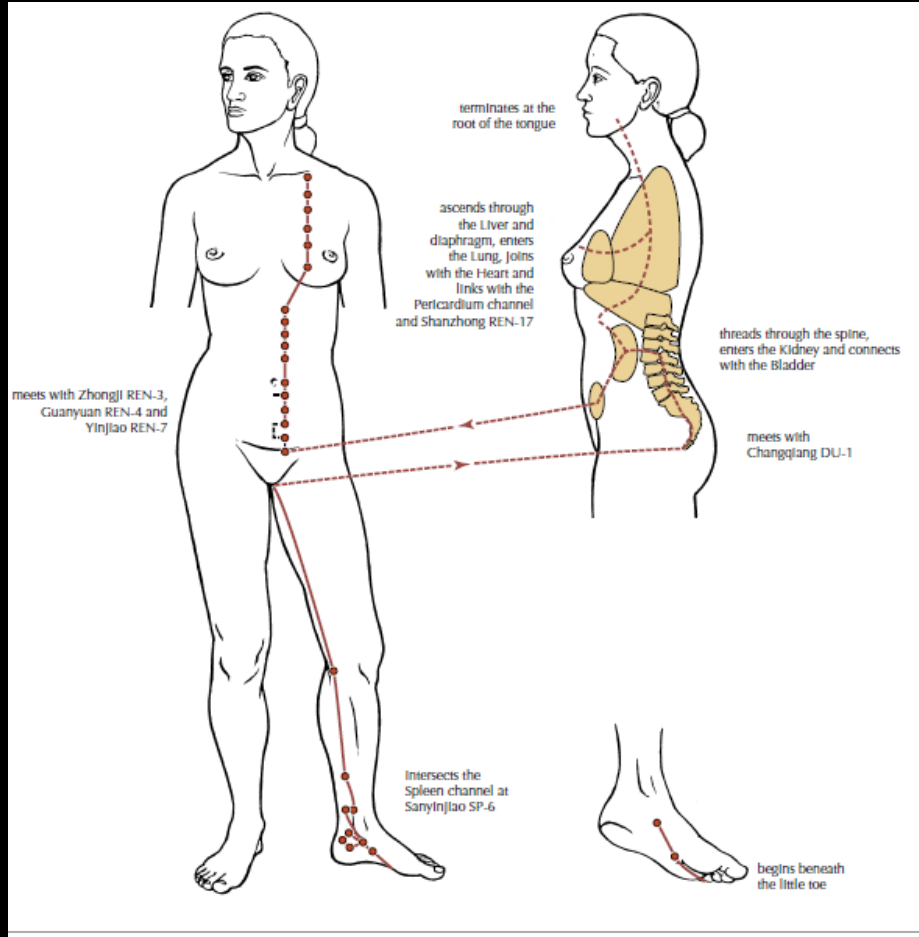


Containers of “Qi”

- We are learning more and more about the endocannabinoid system every day
- New cannabinoids are being discovered and researched

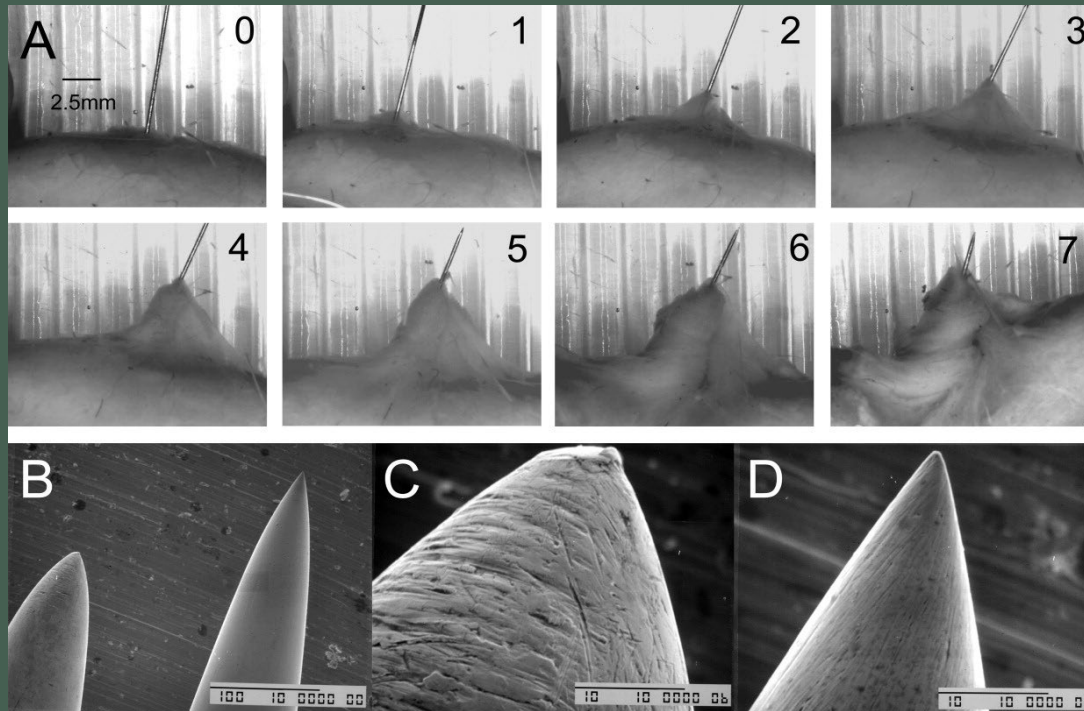


Containers of “Qi”



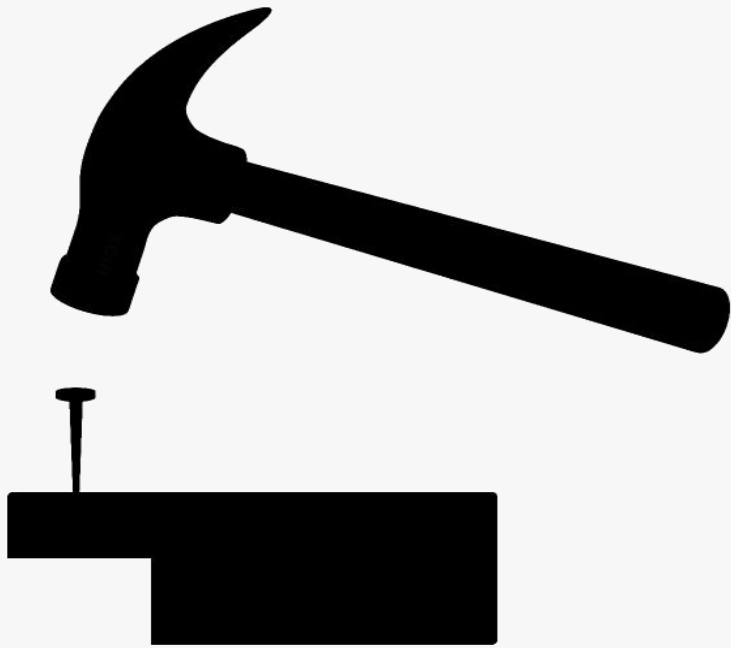
- The acupuncture channel system is a series of channels, meridians or “rivers”
- The channels also connect to the internal organs
- This is a comprehensive system that can address many different issues
- Because of its complexity, the way Qi behaves can seem confusing or contradictory

How does acupuncture work?



- Nervous system? Yes
- But also: endocrine system, circulatory system, respiratory system, etc.
- Research on connective tissue planes
- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ar.10185>

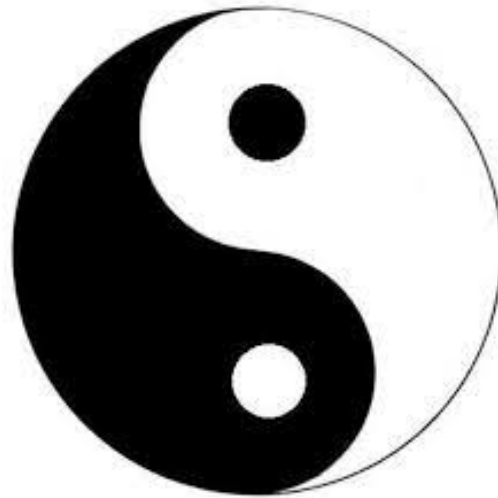
How does acupuncture work?



- Sa'am method: energetic imbalance is the nail for which I have a hammer
- Twelve primary channels grouped into 6 counterbalancing pairs

How does acupuncture work?

- Working within the Five Phase system
- Goal is to bring the body into balance taking into account the main complaint(s) and the overall energetic picture
- Signs vs symptoms



Chinese Medicine Myth #3

- Acupuncturists are clairvoyant
- “You’re the professional, I trust you”

Acupuncture Patient Training 101

- Tell your acupuncturist everything
- Know what your goals are for treatment
- Acupuncture will not help everything or everyone
- How to find a good acupuncturist: research, intuition



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