

FIVE DRAGONS  
ACUPUNCTURE COLLEGE  
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



LESSON 14  
OF  
31 LESSONS

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Recommended books to simplify your research are as follows

*Essentials of Chinese Acupuncture*  
*Gray's Anatomy*  
*The Merck Manual*  
*Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*

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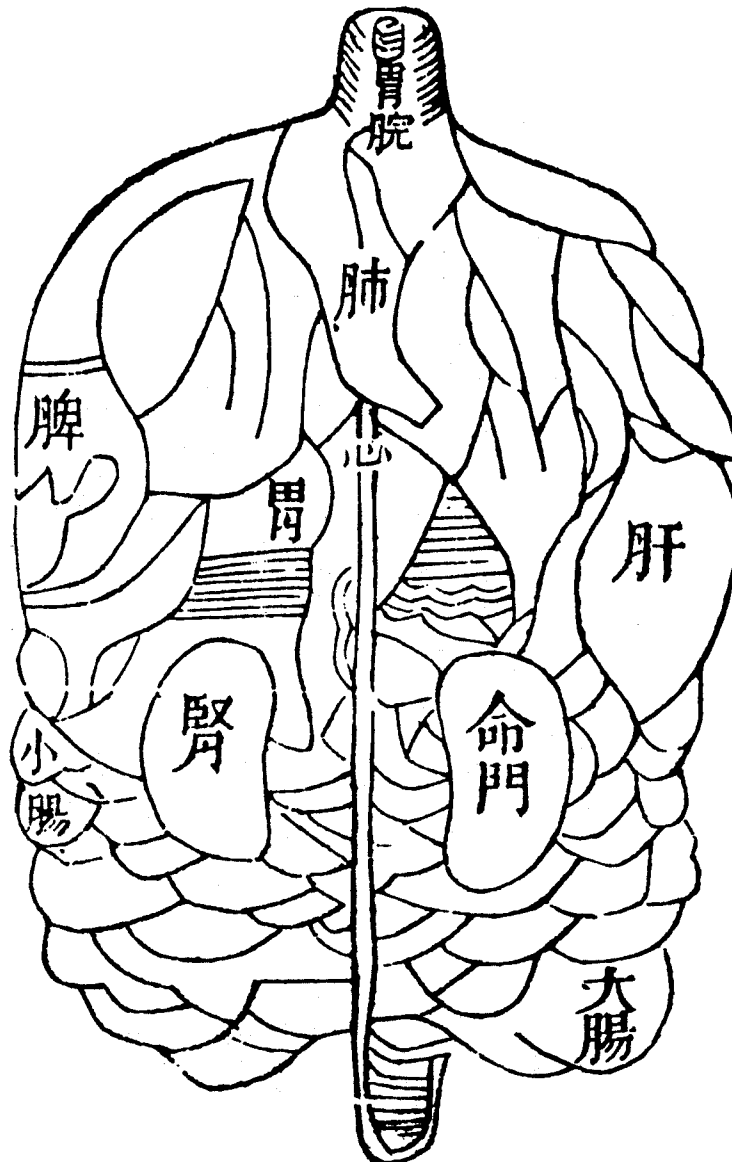
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MODERN & TRADITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE

LESSON 14

FIVE ELEMENT THEORY AND ORGAN CORRESPONDENCIES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: ABOVE DIAGRAM FROM 'LING SHU SU WEN CHIEH-YAO'  
PART I OF THIS LESSON BY CHARLES H. McWILLIAMS  
PART II OF THIS LESSON BY DR. NGUYEN VAN NGHI.

Chinese medicine throughout the ages has defined data based on inductive and synthetic thinking. This means that the Chinese physicians used their intuition more than the intellectual approach to reasoning. For this reason, understanding the essence of Chinese thought requires that we abstain from substituting analytical Western equivalents for Chinese synthetic terms. We should also keep in mind that Western science is not more rational than Chinese science, it's simply just more analytical. Whereas Western anatomy deals with the molecular organs or the termination of energies' effects, Chinese medicine primarily is concerned with the very 'fabric' of the body's functional manifestations of the different body regions. In other words, the system of Chinese organs is not necessarily the close counterpart of Western anatomy (for instance the Triple Burner has no Western equivalent), and thus any attempt to view Chinese organs as anatomical figures will inevitably lead to abortive conclusions. The more one studies the ancient classics, the less correspondence is found between Western and Chinese systems (see the classical "anatomical" figure on the preceding page).

In Chinese medical thinking, all realms of nature (the macrocosm and the microcosm) are interconnected. The energetic processes of the cosmos unceasingly affect and modulate changes within the individual organism. For this reason, a systematic description is needed to explain the variable periods of climatological and immunological influences that affect man, for better or for worse. The most basic statement we can tell you in this regard is that the macrocosmic variation is explained via the Chinese solar-lunar calendar. Reference to this calendar allows a diagnosis and a prognosis of diseases that are of external origin (ie. climatological versus psychological or alimentary). To this day, farmers and traditional doctors take many of their cues from it. To incorporate all these influences rationally into therapy, the Chinese have produced a system which we (based on Manfred Porkert's nomenclature) call "Phase Energetics". Phase Energetics encompasses the conventions of Yin & Yang, the Five Elements and the various classifications of the rather broad term "ch'i", as explained in Lesson Ten.

With this in mind, we will now introduce you to the Five Elements, not as mere physical correspondencies but as a type of energetical quality. As explained in Lesson Eight, all phenomena can be classed to one of the Five Elements. The great Chinese masters formulated a holistic conception that man is not separate from the cosmos as Western analytic thought leads one to understand. The Five Elements, typifying qualities of energy, which because of their richness of associations, are ideally suited to serve as the crystalizing core for a vast system of relations and associations.

AT THIS POINT, SOME OF YOU MAY NEED TO REVIEW THE FIRST PART OF LESSON EIGHT BEFORE CONTINUING!

Many authors have attempted to explain the Five Element correspondencies by physical relations (Wood burns to make Fire, whose ashes form to make Earth, etc.). Actually, due to the sun's yearly positioning, the seasons marked the very foundation for the Five Elemental correspondencies. It was that cycle that led as the model for dividing energy into universal values. Now we have to get you thinking of the Five Elements more as "cycles" than as stationary phenomena. This cyclical aspect is of course obvious in that summer (Fire) is followed by fall (Metal), and that fall is followed by winter (Water), and so on [See Lesson Eight, page 7 and Supplementary Page]. Because of this cyclical nature, and the fact that the seasons change in quality on both sides of the equator, the Five Elements are best defined as "Five Elemental Phases". The transliterated Chinese character for this, "wu yün", designates five variable phases. The term "yün" itself also designates the indefinite, active and the deductive (not empirically observable) aspect. Non-technically, "yün" also means "to transport", "to circulate" and "to move".

Due to the rather obtuse nature of the Five Element theory and general misinterpretations, no English language literature has yet defined the real energetics involved. Now for the first time, this Institute presents this ancient teaching in English. Please take note of the following: The energetical counterpart, or the polar complementary of the Five Elemental Phases is given the Chinese term "ch'i". Here ch'i is the energetic arrangement or configuration of the Five Elemental Phases (wu yün) and ch'i means an energy of a definite quality and configuration versus the Five Elements being less definite and less formative [See Lesson Ten, page 12]. Ch'i is concrete energy that is constructively formed by the various arrangements of the Five Elements. Examples of this are Yong energy, Wei energy, Ancestral energy, etc., as discussed in Lesson Ten. The Five Elements (with five being a Yang number) are the energies of heaven, while Ch'i is the terrestrial energy of earth. In other words, the Five Elements are sort of the cosmic primordial substance, which when incorporated into the kingdoms of earth, form concrete and perceptible energetic configurations (ch'i). In Chinese medicine, there are more than a dozen basic forms of ch'i, and well over two dozen accessory forms are described.

The Five Elements, in their cyclical nature, determine the qualities of the five yearly seasons. With the nature of ch'i, there are basically six (yin number) energetic configurations (being terrestrial in nature) dividing the solar day into six periods, which when split into their yin and yang polar complementaries form the basis of the horary cycle. These six energetic configurations (ch'i) also correspond to the nature of the energetic quality contained in the six yin and the six yang organs of the twelve main meridians (chings) [See Lesson Eight, page 11, diagram]. At this point we must digress and explain briefly the energetical quality of the seasonal perverse (cosmopathogenic) energy which is a major cause of disease and also corresponds to the six energetic configurations.

The energy of the seasons are transformed into six energetic qualities, namely, seasonal perverse (cosmopathogenic or meteorological) energy. At every instant, the human body is exposed to seasonal energy, and in this aspect, perverse energy refers to the more evil part of seasonal energy that attacks the body's meridians. The perverse energies are divided into the following groups:

1. The Wind corresponds to the spring.
2. The Cold corresponds to the winter.
3. The Heat corresponds to the summer.
4. The Humidity corresponds to the late summer.
5. The Dryness corresponds to the autumn (fall).
6. The Fire corresponds to the summer.

Each perverse energy can be combined to one or more of the other in order to form sub-groups. Thus the Wind can be associated to the Cold or the Humidity or even to both of them. This explains why illnesses present a great variety of forms owed to the multitude of possible combinations between the different causes. What is most harmful to the body is an attack of perverse energy which is unusually out of season and for which the body is not prepared. For example, when you are exposed to a cool wind, late in the winter, it is quite normal. It is not very harmful because the body is adjusted to, and prepared for the cold. However, when you have a warm wind during the winter, it can be harmful to the body, causing diseases associated with warmth, like burning pain, fever, headaches (hot), perspiration, etc. So it is with all the seasons, like when you catch a cold, you have literally "caught Cold", from a perverse energy standpoint. However, when the body is strong, it can support all of this influence, but when it is weak and Wei energy (defense energy) is low, perverse energy penetrates into the tissues. When perverse energy is being combatted by Wei energy, you will witness for example, small pains, slight running of the nose, sudden sneezing, rheumatic nodules, intermittent fever, etc. If Wei energy is unusually low, the perverse energy will penetrate even deeper into the deeper regions of the body (organs).

Some of you more adept students may be realizing by now how the various "fasting techniques", "fad diets", dependence on vitamins and food supplements, etc., without the proper nourishment could be detrimental to Wei energy production. This could allow perverse energy to penetrate into deeper regions where sensations of pain are generally not so acute and thus the patient may feel better initially. The deeper perverse energy penetrates, the harder it is to remove. The exact nature of the six perverse energies, the way perverse energy penetrates the main meridians and the methods for removing perverse energy from the body will be covered in advanced Lessons. What can be stated at this point is that perverse energy is not removed by the methods employed in the Law of the Five Elements. Regulation of energy by the Law of the Five Elements concerns itself mainly with internal, psychic disturbances, or perverse energy coming from alimentation. Remember that!

Like Yin and Yang, the Five Elements are further classifications of energy as it goes through continual cyclic transformations. The cause of an illness can be diagnosed on the basis of the Five Elements as explained later on in this Lesson. Health is regarded as a harmonious blend of the interactions of these Elements and up the Yin and Yang conditions. The cycle of the Elements represents how the Yang will change to Yin and how Yin will change to Yang. It can represent the movement of the seasons, the complete span of a man's life, or the course of a disease. As well, it can give the

traditional acupuncturist valuable clues as to the best place to intervene.

Now that we've discussed some preliminaries, let's introduce you to the four main cycles within the Five Element framework. The first such cycle is the SHENG or PRODUCTION CYCLE. Other authors have termed it the Mother-Child relationship or the Mother-Son relationship. This Sheng cycle may be considered as the basic Five Element sequence. The Sheng cycle represents the cycle of birth (creation), nourishment and growth. As each Element reaches its maximum potential, energy overflows and gives birth to its child. Each Element is thus the mother of one Element and the child of another:

Fire creates Earth  
 Earth creates Metal  
 Metal creates Water  
 Water creates Wood  
 Wood creates Fire

However the above creation cycle must necessarily be "checked" within limits by another sequence to maintain equilibrium, namely a conquest or control cycle. This next cycle is called the KO or CONTROL CYCLE. Other authors have referred to it as the destroying cycle, but we will refrain from that terminology. Since the first two cycles presented are cycles operational under normal physiological processes, this latter one should not be thought of as a destruction sequence in any way. The following Ko or Control Cycle sequence "checks" the growth or production cycle and under normal relationships prevents over-stimulation or over-production:

Fire checks Metal  
 Earth checks Water  
 Metal checks Wood  
 Water checks Fire  
 Wood checks Earth

The above two cycles operate the harmonious functions of all living organisms. Energies and stimulation (a basically Yang force) affecting the organism from without tend to advance body functions of the energy sequence in the Sheng cycle. A structural resistance (a basically Yin force) of the Ko cycle ensures that this drive does not overstimulate the energy metabolism. These two cycles are indispensable to existence. They are the basis of all movement and change. Within the human body, if the cycles are disturbed, then disease appears.

The human body is exposed to a multitude of forces, from external and internal influences (basically meteorological, psychological and alimentary) that can disturb the physiological balance of the Sheng and Ko cycles. These disturbances will manifest in single organs or throughout the whole body. Lesson Eight presented how those effects manifest in their character. These disturbances are diagnosed as energetic excesses or deficiencies at certain organs and/or the meridian systems.

With that in mind, we come to the third cycle where one Element attacks or destroys the Element that it normally only checks:

Wood destroys Earth  
 Earth destroys Water  
 Water destroys Fire  
 Fire destroys Metal  
 Metal destroys Wood

If the energy becomes deficient at a given organ's system, its quality will be overpowered or encroached upon by the Element which normally keeps it in check. For example, if Wood becomes deficient in energy, it will be overpowered by Metal which normally checks it (Ko). Inversely, if the energy becomes excessive at a given organ, its own qualities will attack the Element that keeps it in check. For example, if Wood becomes in excess it will attack upon the qualities of Earth.

The fourth cycle is that in which one Element insults or violates upon the Element which normally keeps it in check itself. This sequence is the reverse of the Ko cycle. For example, if Wood becomes in excess and Metal is deficient, Wood could insult Metal. Inversely, if Wood becomes deficient and Earth is in excess, Earth could insult Wood:

Fire insults Water  
 Water insults Earth  
 Earth insults Wood  
 Wood insults Metal  
 Metal insults Fire

These four cycles represent macrocosmically the energetic fluctuations within a cycle either being a deficiency or an excess of an elemental quality. However, as regards the medical aspect (microcosmically) and the many classifications of energy composed of the Five Elements (ch'i or configurational energy), the basic technical terms require further definitions. Listed below are the applied clinical terms in explaining human pathology:

1. EXHAUSTION DISEASE: As regards the Sheng cycle, a pathology originating from the mother encroaches upon the stability of the child. For example, an excessively active Liver (Wood) dominates and encroaches upon the energy of the Heart (Fire).
2. REPLETION DISEASE: Exemplifying the reverse of the Sheng cycle as well as a weakness, the disease spreads backward by the child encroaching upon the mother. For example, a transmission of disease from the Heart (Fire) to the Liver (Wood).
3. DESTRUCTION DISEASE: The disease is transferred according to the destruction sequence (see top of this page). A disease originating in the Liver (Wood) is transferred to the Spleen (Earth).
4. INSULTING DISEASE: Also sometimes termed "Subtle Disease", the transmission is by the reversal of the Ko cycle. A disease originating in the Spleen (Earth) is transferred to the Liver (Wood).



5. DIRECT DISEASE: The pathology (disease) is confined to the organ in which it originated, and does not follow any of the four Five Element cycles (sequences).

The above applied clinical terms define the possible pathways which disease producing energy may take. As with all phenomena, disease producing energy is classed according to its predominating elemental quality. This lays an excellent foundation and a whole gamut of correspondences in which to diagnose the patient's predominating disorder, and to get a 'bird's-eye view' of their internal condition. This is simply done by taking cues from their body odors, emotional states, complexion color, etc.

The Five Elements describe in simple terms the effects of one organ upon another and how all organs work in harmony to maintain health and homeostasis or how they are disrupted into disorder and disease. Traditional physicians are more concerned with the cause rather than the effects of diseases. They are only secondarily concerned with relieving the symptoms temporarily, in order to make the patient more comfortable in daily life. The real therapy is what their patient's condition will be like in two or three years time. It is here that the Five Element knowledge and application becomes of real value in clinical practice, for it is another one of those aspects that distinguishes the differences between "needle-puncture" and true traditional acupuncture.

PLEASE REREAD THE PRECEDING PAGES before going on to the deeper concepts of the elemental relationships in the next part of this Lesson. If after several readings all this is still a bit confusing to you, don't worry. We realize too, that the language in which this (and similar) ancient wisdom is couched often presents additional problems in that it appears difficult to the analytical, Western mind. This should however only be a small obstacle once you realize the significance of Five Element theory itself. In the following pages we will detail each organ within the Five Element framework and show you some of the diagnostic applications.

LIVER: This organ corresponds to the element Wood. Its associated Flavor is sour, and its beneficial foods are chicken, pear and wheat (spring wheat). The odors (body) associated with the Liver are rancid, fetid or a urine-like smell that is sour-sweet.

For defining the injurious influences to the Liver or any other organ, the rule is that moderate amounts are beneficial while excessive amounts are injurious. Keep this in mind! The normal function of the Liver requires an energy of the sour flavor, yet, excessive amounts also drain the energy, and this tends to exhaust it. It is frequently found that a person who loves sour, vinegary kinds of food is subconsciously trying to maintain an existing imbalance. Sour tends to have an astringent effect. One uses pungent food (Metal) in order to supplement the Liver's function and to stop its energy leaks (Metal checks Wood). If too much sour flavor is used, the flesh hardens and wrinkles, and the lips become slack (Wood attacks Earth). Similar reasoning also applies to the Wind (Wood-Spring) as it does for food, with moderate exposure being beneficial or at least having no harmful effect, while in excess being injurious.

The outward manifestation of the Liver are the nails. Each organ tends to feed their associations, or to put it more poetically, the nails are the flowering of the Liver. Depressed energy in the Liver will produce soft, thin nails, pale in color and often with small ridges across them. As people age, the Liver energy dies down while the nails become brittle.

The ascribed body orifice and the corresponding sense organs are the eyes. When the Liver is properly functioning the vision will have strength. Consequently its associated fluids are the tears.

One of the Liver's storage functions is the storage of blood. During movement and wakefulness, the blood supply is circulated throughout the body. But during rest, the blood returns to the Liver. In clinical practice, the vomiting of blood during fits of anger must be regulated by calming down the Liver. Also, when a man is tired it shows that the Liver is depleted and must be restored by food and rest.

The associated emotion of Wood is anger. An excess could mean feeling irritable all the time, on edge with others, always wanting to 'pick a fight'. On the other hand, an exhausted Liver could mean being overcome with fear (a Water emotion), trembling of the hands, etc. (Water dominates Wood). If one is indecisive about making plans and not in control of situations, then the Liver (and probably the Gall Bladder) has become exhausted. The strength of the Liver gives one the ability to control life's situations.

The Liver also regulates and controls the muscles and sinews. Although the muscles are associated with the Spleen (flesh), the Liver regulates the physical force. It is the basis of all forms of fatigue. Consequently, this meridian is useful for treating muscle spasms throughout the body.

**HEART:** The Heart corresponds to Fire. Its associated flavor is bitter. Its beneficial foods (in moderate amounts) are corn, apple, lamb, asparagus, and coarse green vegetables. The associated odor is scorched. This is not the normal odor, but a rather distinct scent.

Clinically, experience has shown that excessive energy of Fire should not be drained by the corresponding flavor bitter (which has a reducing, narcotic and paralyzing effect) but rather by the sweet flavor. If too much bitter is used in the food, the skin becomes withered and the body hair falls out (Fire attacks Metal). Damp heat and summer tend to stimulate the Fire yet will also exhaust it in excess (heat stroke).

The Heart is the basis of all life and the home of the spirit. All consciousness and thought belong to the Heart. Because the Heart is the master of the body and the organs, any disease affecting it will quickly disturb all other functions. As the seat of considerable force, the Heart maintains the individuality and integrity of the personality against foreign influences. Many men today incessantly exert their energy, striving to satisfy their individual personality. By this they thwart the development of true pleasure residing in the Heart. The clinical picture of this is that the patient constantly craves novelty and excitement, but these things do not satisfy the Heart, resulting in irritability (Wood) or depression (Earth), in either repletion or exhaustion, respectively. The emotions not being in proper relation to the Heart, the organs are affected and disease ensues. This initial imbalance is brought about by improper thinking which promotes selfishness and a turning away from the instinctive knowledge of the Heart.

The Heart has its specific unfoldment in the whole meridian system. In Western anatomy, it pretty much controls the vascular system, yet, in Chinese the meridians are often termed the "Heart's conduits". Therefore, we might expect that labels like arteriosclerosis, varicose veins, cold hands and feet, and thrombosis in some way relate to a disturbance of the Heart. "When the Heart is interrupted, the pulse is interrupted, the blood does not flow and the face darkens because the blood is dead." (Nei Ching).

The energy of the Heart flowers in the tongue. When the Heart is normal, the tongue can distinguish the five tastes. Because it is mostly articulated with the tongue, many speech patterns like stuttering and slurring show a Fire imbalance. The Heart also shows its outward manifestation in the face, by noting its texture and quality.

The Heart's associated fluid is sweat. The Chinese masters believed that perspiration is an unclogging and purifying process for the body and mind. In fact, the sweat is one of the best ways to 'dump out' the perverse energies residing in the body. Formulas and techniques will be discussed in later, advanced Lesson materials for accomplishing or bringing on sweating.

ENVELOPE OF THE HEART: Although the ancient medical classics spoke of the five Tsang (viscera) as a stereotype, the Envelope of the Heart primarily fits into the framework of the six energetic configurations. Within that framework, Fire is split into Princely Fire and Ministerial Fire. The Envelope of the Heart is the 'castle of the Heart' and its main function is to protect the Heart from seasonal perverse energy. It is also under the command of the Heart. If the Heart is pure and strong, then the Envelope of the Heart follows giving to life a spirit and freedom from remorse. If the Heart is weak, then the Envelope of the Heart is ruled by desires and passions.

In clinical practice, the patient's attitude can often delay a cure. Since the Envelope of the Heart is affected in most internal diseases, it is necessary to give some type of psychological counseling or assistance to affect the healing.

The Envelope of the Heart is the origin of joy and pleasure and many of its functions are interchangeable as those ascribed to the Heart itself. However, from reading the ancient texts regarding pathology, one gets the impression that its functions are distributed by Western concept among the heart, lungs and vascular system (especially the aorta). The Envelope of the Heart is also the reservoir of energy put at the disposition of the individual at birth.

SPLEEN: This organ is, of course, of the Element Earth. Its associated flavor is sweet and its beneficial foods are rye, dates, yellow millet and the meat of beef. The odor (body) associated with Earth is a sickening, sweet smell somewhat similar to burnt flesh. But it is not the scorch but rather the rank sweetness that is overwhelming here.

As with the Heart, it is not its associated flavor (sweet) which drains or expels the energies of the Spleen, but rather the bitter flavors. Excess dampness and humidity, like an overindulgence in sweets, will disturb and finally damage the Spleen.

As introduced in Lesson Ten, the Spleen is in charge of digestion and the distribution of the flavors. Nourishment and energy for the entire body is controlled by the Spleen. Being that all organs are dependent upon the distribution of the Spleen, one who knows how to treat the Spleen, is capable of harmonizing all the organs. Energy corresponding to the quality of the Spleen exercises a universally neutralizing and calming influence. The Spleen is also in charge of the blood volume. If its function becomes diseased, this could lead to excess menses, blood in the feces, vascular congestions, etc.

The flesh is governed by the Spleen (meaning the body covering, musculature, and fatty tissue). It's tone and texture can give you a clue as to its condition. Also note whether the patient is emaciated or obese. The flesh will indicate the person's nutritional status and their reserve capacities. Wasting and weakness (Yin) of the muscles therefore show the Spleen's diseased condition.

The emotion of the Spleen is sympathy. Thus someone who craves sympathy may be indulging in the element they need. Note here that the five emotions manifest when the organismic activities are generated by external change. The continual shift of emotional states is a natural phenomena which is governed by the autonomic responses of the viscera to the daily life cycles. An overemphasis on one peculiar Emotion will disrupt the natural sequence and consequently in due time will lead to a pathology. The Spleen is also associated with ideation, cognition, and opinions. This also includes obsessions, dogmatisms, and ideas that seem to wither away instead of flourishing.

The Spleen has the function of the transformation of liquids. If water remains in the intestines and is not absorbed, then the feces will be watery. The classics often point out that edema (swelling) is due to a depressed Spleen. Correlations can also be found with obesity. In fact, the North American diet contains such a large proportion of sweet flavored foods (eggs, sugar, beef, potatoes, peas, wheat, lard, etc.) that its no wonder obesity is so prevalent.

To add further, the external orifice of the Spleen is the mouth. The fluid secretion is the saliva. The Spleen also feeds the lips. When the Spleen is functioning correctly the lips and mouth are full and red, and the body muscles have good tone.

LUNGS: This organ corresponds to Metal, and has somewhat of a "cooling" effect. Its associated flavor is pungent, aromatic, or acrid. Among the beneficial foods are onion, radish, peach, rice, and oddly enough, horse meat.

As for the injurious influence, an excess of Metal is drained by the corresponding pungent flavor and a deficiency is replenished by the antithetical sour (Wood). Prolonged dry climate is injurious to the Lungs and skin. Thus a person with dry skin is showing Metal imbalance. When the Lungs are weak, the skin also is weak and depleted, and thereby the body is susceptible to cold and influenza, as well as other external perverse influences. Also, the body hair is the outward manifestation of the Lungs (explained later in this Lesson).

The external orifice of the Lungs is the nose, including the bronchii and trachea. When the Lung energy is calm, it can distinguish the odors. Consequently, the nasal secretions and mucus are also associated with the Lungs.

Within the integral organism the Lungs are the "Prime Minister" and are in control of the rhythmic order and help regulate the pumping of blood. If the energy is in good harmony, then all the constructive and defense energies are in rhythmic order. Breathing conducts the energy into the system. The emotions generated by this organ are sorrow and grief. Extreme grief is injurious to the Lungs. One the other hand, one who cannot express grief will also be showing an imbalance of Metal.

KIDNEYS: The Kidneys are of the element Water. Its flavor is of course salty. Among the beneficial foods are chestnuts, clam, barley, oyster and beans.

As for the injurious influences (the usual beneficial or excess rule applies) an excess of salt will drain off the Kidneys whereas bitter will replenish it. Analogously, the cold will also injure the Kidneys in the same manner.

The Kidneys are associated with the bones, marrow and the brain. The outward manifestation of the Kidneys is the hair on the head. Among the orifices are the urethra and the anus. The sense organs of the Kidneys are the ears.

The emotional reaction of the Kidneys is fear. Its modes and actions are trembling and quivering as well as freezing and congealing, all belonging to this organ's functions.

The associated fluid is the saliva produced at the teeth (marrow) and the base of the tongue. This is distinct from the Spleen's saliva secreted in the mouth and lips. They both comprise two different functions. The Kidneys comprise some rather complicated functions and energetics that are extremely important in acupuncture therapy, and these will be discussed in another Lesson later on.

We will now introduce you to some further concepts concerning the Yang organs/meridians. As with the Yin organs/meridians, the Yang organs of the same element will have many of the same elemental characteristics. However, we will point out some useful analogies. The Triple Burner will not be discussed since it has been thoroughly covered in Lesson Ten as well as Lesson Eleven. Its implications should be rather obvious by now, in that often the Triple Burner meridian is used to treat alimentary diseases (versus psychological and meteorological).

GALL BLADDER (and Hepatic-Biliary function): Coupled with the Liver this rather unusual "bowel" not only functions as an assimilator of food, but also stores 'pure liquid'. Also considered as one of the five Singular Organs (hepatic-biliary function, see Lesson Ten) it exercises as a central organ from which the power of decision issues.

It is the "Minister of Justice" and is in charge of making decisions. If its energies are circulating freely, it gives one bravery and generosity. Because it stores 'pure liquid', it can be the seat of "Justice". The classics assign the ability to plan to the Liver, and the ability to decide to the Gall Bladder.

If its energies become in excess, then the Yang in the Liver will also become extreme and will produce symptoms of anger and irritability. If its energies are deficient, it could depress the Liver and give rise to fear (Water dominates Wood). In some of the later classics, the Gall Bladder along with the Lungs are said to regulate the flow of nutritive and defense energies.

SMALL INTESTINE: This organ is in charge of separation of the pure and impure energies of foods as well as their assimilation. It receives undigested food from the Stomach to process it further and passes on the residue to the Large Intestine. If there is any disturbance in their process, it will show as retention of urine (Fire insults Water) and even blood in the urine. This blood in the urine might also indicate excess Fire in the Heart, and have several other implications as well that are too complex to discuss in this Lesson.

STOMACH: Much of the function of the Stomach has already been discussed in Lesson Ten. Because of its central position as the 'Sea of Nourishment', any disease of the Stomach will reflect in the other organs rather quickly. A deficient and "damp" Spleen will cause congestion of the Yang of the Stomach. Also, if the Stomach gets hyperactive and hot, this will disperse the liquids of the Spleen and reflect in dry mouth and lips. If the Stomach collapses completely, it is regarded as an imminent sign of death.

LARGE INTESTINE: The colon is in charge of transforming and transporting residue. According to the classics, the colon excretes the scum. Because of its coupling to the Lungs, a congested chest with mucus often is accompanied by constipation or diarrhea. Also such symptoms as acne, boils, stopped-up nose, and bloatedness point to colon malfunction.

BLADDER: Within the body, the Bladder is the "Regional Officer in charge of Fluids". In this organ all active and structive fluids convene and are stored. After being assimilated, some of the fluids are excreted. In this respect, it has many similar functions as ascribed to the Kidneys.

This completes Part One of this Lesson. Regulation of perverse seasonal energy through the Five Element Antique Points will be covered in Lesson Twenty-seven.

PLEASE NOTE: At this point we would like to inform you just how technical and advanced diet and herbal therapy really is, in relation to the Five Elemental Phase energetics. Most foods classed as being predominately of one element are based on empirical data and not just taste-testing. This is especially true in reference to herbs. The effects of salt on high blood pressure (Kidney malfunction) or sugar for diabetes (Spleen-pancreas malfunction) are the most obvious examples. But advanced aspects would also entail knowing a given food's or herb's atmospheric energy, its tendency to movement, and its meridian routes. This constitutes a whole study in itself and cannot be covered in just a few Lessons. DO NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS AT THIS POINT EITHER. Many times a patient will crave a food subconsciously, that may be helping the imbalance. With acupuncture intervention, you may find that the craving dissipates when the disorder is corrected.

Some of you may also be wondering where Love and Sex fit into the Five Element scheme. Love is not classed as an emotion as it is a quality of the spirit. Sex is not regarded as an emotion but as a subconscious function of the entire body.

PART TWO: EXAMPLES OF DISEASES OF THE FIVE TSANG (Viscera) TREATED  
BY USE OF THE FIVE ELEMENT THEORY

I. HEART DISEASES, specifically the explanation and treatment of tachycardia with insomnia. This ailment is due to three causes:

a) The Fire energy of the Heart being in excess while the blood is in insufficiency. The clinical manifestations are the following: The patient cannot sleep peacefully; the patient expresses sadness and anguish; tachycardia; constipation; mouth ulcers (sores).

This type of insomnia is especially provoked by troubles of the Heart meridian. The ailment does not come from other meridians and not having penetrated any deeper does not reach the other organs.

TREATMENT: Disperse the Heart meridian, tonify the blood and nurse the organ (Heart) itself.

b) The Spleen in emptiness renders the Heart sick (the Child hoards the energy of the Mother). The clinical manifestations are the following: The patient eats little; liquid stools; asthenia; strong pounding of the heart and insomnia; restlessness; forgetfulness.

TREATMENT: One cannot cure this illness by nursing only the Heart itself, but rather one must simultaneously support the Heart and tonify the Spleen. In doing so one gives back the energy of the Spleen in order that the Child does not rob the energy of the Mother. The energy of the Heart will no longer be insufficient and the pathological signs of the Heart will disappear by themselves.

c) Emptiness of the energy due to renal insufficiency. The clinical manifestations are as follows: Sensations of heat which climbs to the upper part of the body; fever attacks or crises; sweating, cough, hemoptysis; sometimes insomnia.

Here the Kidneys being in insufficiency, the Yin root or origin of Yin cannot direct its energy upwards to the top of the body, the Fire remaining alone at the Heart becomes very tense and provokes the insomnia.

TREATMENT: Tonify the Yin-Water (Kidneys) and disperse the Yang.

II. LIVER DISEASES, specifically explanation and treatment of headache, "blackout" and vertigo. In general, these signs of Liver attacks are due to the energy of Fire of the Liver climbing to the upper part of the body. Sometimes also it is caused by the insufficiency of the Kidney Yin (Water), the energy of the Lungs cannot descend and the energy of the Spleen functions badly.

a) Fire energy of the Liver: At first, the term "Fire of the Liver" appears improper if one reasons it out according to the syllogistic form so common to the thought of Occidentals, ie. "The Liver is Yin, the Fire is Yang, therefore the energy of the Liver cannot be Yang". According to the Law of the Five Elements, the Wood produces the Fire. Normally, this Fire is inhibited by the



Water that maintains the energetic equilibrium in the body. Consequently when the Wood is in great fullness, the normal inhibitive action of the Water is insufficient to cure the exaggerated production of Wood. Thus the Wood produces too much Fire, and this is why one can speak of a "Fire energy of the Liver". This Fire reaches the upper part of the body by its meridian provoking the following signs: Headache; "blackouts"; vertigo; nausea and vomiting; aspects of the face are pinkish in color, eyes are red; the pulse is tense and hard.

TREATMENT: The treatment is simple because the illness is still localized at the Liver and has not reached the other organs. One disperses the Fire of the Liver.

b) Insufficiency of the Kidney Yin (Water). Water being in insufficiency the inhibiting action is almost nil. Wood becomes in great fullness. We know that the Water engenders the Wood, and that the Wood corresponds to the Liver and the Wind. Consequently, when the inhibiting action of the Water is weak, the Wind energy (Yin) of the Liver climbs again towards the top of the body provoking the following symptoms: Sensations of dizziness; the eyes cannot see clearly; "blackouts"; headaches, vertigo.

TREATMENT: If one only nurses the Liver, the ailment will be aggravated. In this case, the Child is attacked and it is necessary to tonify the Mother, that is to say, tonify the Kidneys (Water).

c) Wood-Metal Equilibrium. The Liver (Wood) must count on the Lungs (Metal) to maintain the equilibrium. In sick people with pulmonary insufficiency, the vital energy circulates badly, the organic liquid cannot circulate itself where it is needed. The clinical manifestations are the following: Much glairy mucous; cough with expectoration; the sick person does not wish to eat; the eyes do not see clearly; vertigo; fullness of the chest (oppression).

The energy of the Liver (Wood) climbs towards the top of the body because the energy of the Lungs (Metal) is insufficient. In other words it is a question of a deficiency of the inhibiting action of the Metal (Lungs) upon the Wood (Liver). The Liver becomes powerful (in fullness) and engenders the Fire which reaches the upper part of the body.

TREATMENT: In this case the treatment essentially consists of tonifying the Metal (Lungs).

NOTE: In summary, the headaches, "blackouts" and vertigo are the signs of an attack of the Liver. But the troubles of the Lungs, of the Kidneys, of the Spleen and of the Stomach can reach the Liver in order to provoke these symptoms. This is why the most effective therapy always depends on a perfect knowledge of the causes of the sickness.

III. SPLEEN DISEASES, specifically the explanation and treatment of diarrhea. Diarrhea can have numerous causes such as: Insufficiency of the energy of the Spleen; humidity (perverse energy); in-

sufficiency of the Kidneys Yang (Fire --- the Fire can no longer produce the Earth); or complications of Liver illnesses.

a) Energy of the Spleen in emptiness. This emptiness is owed to a disturbance of the internal energy and not to the perverse energy (humidity). The essential sign of the emptiness of the Spleen is diarrhea accompanied by the following manifestations: The sick person wishes neither to eat nor drink; the sick person has the diarrhea right after eating; fullness of the chest and abdomen (oppression); the limbs are weak.

TREATMENT: In this case tonify the Spleen.

b) Humidity (perverse energy). The humidity corresponds to the late summer, to the Earth, and to the Spleen. Consequently, the perverse energy can penetrate into the meridian of the Spleen, when the Spleen meridian is weak, in order to provoke diarrhea. This is why, the Su Wen (Chapter 5) states: "The humidity triumphs ... the diarrhea is launched (released)."

TREATMENT: In this case tonify the Spleen and disperse the perverse energy.

c) Insufficiency of the Kidneys Yang. Although the Kidneys correspond to the Water, they comprise the root or origin of Yang. [The root of Yang is the origin of all the Yang of the human being. It comes from the mother, during the formation of the fetus, which is why one also designates the Kidneys by the name "Source of Life" or "Gate of Life".] The Yang origin furnishes the necessary energy to the Triple Burner, that is to say to the Stomach and to its coupled organ the Spleen, in order to fulfill their digestive functions. This is why in cases of insufficiency of the Kidneys Yang, the Spleen itself becomes insufficient also, leading to diarrhea, specifically early morning diarrhea [Yang = day, origin of Yang = beginning of day, from midnight on]. The clinical manifestations are the following: The sick person eats little; the stomach is hypotonic; THERE IS NO COLIC (pain).

TREATMENT: The treatment consists of "fortifying the Fire in order to produce the Earth". That is to say, to fortify the Kidneys Yang and to support the Spleen. In other words, in cases of early morning diarrhea without colic, provoked indirectly by the insufficiency of the Kidneys Yang (Fire), it is necessary to nurse the Mother (Kidneys Yang = Mother) and not the Child (Spleen = Earth), Fire being the Mother of the Earth.

d) Liver in fullness. The Liver (Wood) in great fullness injures the Spleen (Earth) and can provoke diarrhea. This type of diarrhea, provoked indirectly by the Liver, does not have the same characteristics as that provoked indirectly by the Kidneys, for it is considerably less strong and is ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY COLIC (pain).

TREATMENT: It is a question of an evolving form of an illness termed "the phenomena of encroachment". The Wood (Liver) encroaches or dominates upon the Earth (Spleen). Consequently, it is necessary to simultaneously treat the Liver and the Spleen because in dis-

persing the Liver, one will be eliminating the pain (colic) but not the diarrhea, and in tonifying the Spleen one will be making the diarrhea disappear but not the pain (colic).

In conclusion, diarrhea always has a splenic origin but it is necessary to look for the true cause of this diarrhea in order to apply the appropriate technique in each case.

IV. LUNG DISEASES, specifically the explanation and treatment of cough and asthma. Cough and asthma are two pathological manifestations of the Lungs. They can appear simultaneously or separately. They do not come solely from the Lungs, because troubles of the other organs can entail repercussions at the level of the Lungs. In the Su Wen (Chapter 38) 'Chi Po' notes: "The five organs and the six bowels can provoke cough." Also in the Su Wen (Chapter 21), is the statement: "Asthma is owed to attack of the Kidneys because the perverse energy reaches the Lungs .... asthma is owed to attack of the Liver because the perverse energy reaches the Spleen ....".

a) Cold and humidity. The cold (perverse energy of the exterior) and the humidity (perverse energy of the interior) in struggling at the level of the Lungs provokes the following clinical signs: Cough and asthma; vomiting; diminished urination; sometimes fear of the cold with fever.

TREATMENT: The treatment consists of chasing away the cold and expelling the humidity by the technique of dispersion.

b) Emptiness of the Lungs. In the insufficiency of the Lungs, the cough becomes chronic; the Spleen and the Stomach function badly, entailing digestive problems (lack of appetite, liquid stools).

TREATMENT: In this case it is necessary to tonify the Earth (Spleen) which produces the Metal (Lungs).

c) Lungs in fullness, Kidneys in emptiness. The clinical manifestations include the following: Cough; abundant sputum; fine or thin pulse; sometimes spermatorrhea.

TREATMENT: The treatment consists of simultaneously nursing the Lungs and Kidneys. If one only takes care of the Lungs, the emptiness of the Kidneys will be augmented. If one tonifies only the Kidneys, the energy of this organ has influence on the Lungs and augments still more their fullness. This is why in this case, it is necessary to work from the principle of "the Metal and the Water are able to produce" as the therapeutic rationale.

d) Emptiness of the Kidneys. When in emptiness the Kidneys are not in a state of receiving the energy of the Lungs, one observes the following clinical manifestations: Cough and sputum; dyspnea; aphonia; strong respiration; attacks of asthma at each effort or movement; sometimes stiffness of the back and limbs (or lumbago) and pollakiuria (abnormally frequent micturition).

TREATMENT: In this case it is necessary to tonify the Kidneys in

order that they can receive the energy. When the Kidneys have sufficient energy, the pulmonary energy can descend there and be absorbed there. The asthma is cured without other treatment. In practice therefore, we are employing the principle "THE METAL PRODUCES THE WATER". That is to say one utilizes the knowledge of the energetic relations between the Kidneys and the Lungs, relations which are broken in the case of renal insufficiency.

In the same way, this case of asthma also belongs to the group of illnesses "the Child who hoards or forestalls the Mother". The treatment belongs to the group of techniques called "the Child can render the Mother in good health".

e) Fullness of the Liver. In fullness of the Liver [Wood produces Fire, the Fire always disengages towards the top of the body, thus destroying the Metal (pulmonary energy)] the energy of the Lungs cannot descend to the bottom, that is to say to the Kidneys, where it will be absorbed, provoking the following signs: Cough; pain at the throat; pains at the ribs.

TREATMENT: In this case, it is necessary to "purify" the Lungs and to "master" the Liver. When one renders the Wood-Liver normal, the energy of the Metal-Lungs is not destroyed. Practically therefore, we are using the principle of anti-contempt (defiance).

V. KIDNEY DISEASES, specifically the explanation and the treatment of spermatorrhea. Spermatorrhea is the principal sign of the insufficiency of the Kidneys. According to the Nei Ching, "The Kidneys (suprarenal capsule) receive and conserve the pure substance (hormones) of the five organs and of the six bowels. This is why the treatment essentially consists of "tonifying the Kidneys in order that they can retain and link the sperm".

In pathology all this is not as simple for the reasons explained in one of the ancient classics: "The five organs fulfilling well their functions secrete the pure substance of good quality and in a discontinuous fashion. If one of the five organs is in disequilibrium it will harm the secretion of the pure substance of the Heart and the Kidneys". In other words, beyond renal insufficiency, spermatorrhea can be provoked by the breaking of the equilibrium of the other organs, namely: The Fire of the Heart in very great fullness; the meridian of the Liver attacked by the humidity-heat (associated perverse energy); the simultaneous insufficiency of the Heart and Kidneys. These pathological manifestations can prevent the closing of the barrier of the Kidneys, thus leaving the gate open to the flowing of the sperm.

a) In individuals indulging in debauchery. The root of the Kidneys (Yin and Yang) is weakened. The clinical manifestations are the following: Renal pains; vertigo and tinnitus; nocturnal spermatorrhea (after a dream) and diurnal spermatorrhea. Here the renal baricade cannot close itself completely, allowing escape of sperm, owing to that renal insufficiency.

TREATMENT: The treatment consists of tonifying the Kidneys in order

that they retain the sperm.

b) Reverie (fantasy) not fulfilled or realized during the day but transformed into dreams at night can cause spermatorrhea. In this case it is necessary to purify the Fire and to calm the Water. The Heart (Fire) will then again become normal and the Kidneys Yin (Water) regain their abatement.

TREATMENT: In practice, one regularizes the energy of the Heart and of the Kidneys and the illness will be cured. If one employs the technique known as "tonify the Kidneys in order that they retain the sperm", not only will the treatment be ineffective, but the illness will become worse.

c) Chagrin or sadness. In the course of sadness or chagrin (feeling of vexation and disappointment or humiliation), the Fire energy of the Liver is in great fullness and provokes the uninterrupted flowing of the sperm. "The Kidneys play the role of conserving the pure substance of the five organs and of the six bowels. The Liver is occupied by the distribution of the secretions." Consequently, when the Liver is in great fullness (following an internal disturbance) it secretes abundantly and distributes the pure substance which cannot be retained at the level of the Kidneys, and thus spermatorrhea.

TREATMENT: In this case, it is necessary to employ the technique of "purification of the pure substance" secreted by the Liver. This technique is not a direct method of treatment of the spermatorrhea, but is instead based on the principle of "the Mother being in fullness, it is necessary to disperse the Child". Thus when the secretions of the Liver again become normal, the conserving function of the Kidneys also again becomes normal.

d) In persons whose general state is deficient. Here one establishes undeniably the following signs: Fatigue at the lumbar region; weakness of the limbs; bad dreams (because the Kidneys and the Heart are simultaneously in a state of emptiness). These signs are accompanied by cold sweats, and by spermatorrhea, "because in the upper part of the body the Fire of the Heart is troubled (whence the perspiration) and in the lower parts the Kidneys are in emptiness (thus the spermatorrhea)". There is thus a loss of equilibrium between the Fire (Heart) and the Water (Kidneys).

TREATMENT: The treatment consists of re-establishing this equilibrium.

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This second part of the Lesson was given mainly to acquaint you with the application of the Five Element theory. As regards the actual regulation of body energies by use of the Five Element Antique Points, this is reserved for Lesson 27 in order to present the full scope of the treatment of internal (psychological and alimentary) and external (seasonal perverse) diseases. In order to treat by the traditional methods, it is necessary to distinguish between external and internal causes, and thus it would be premature to introduce one method without the full scope of the other main causes of diseases.