

Healing Axis

Integrative Energy Medicine

E-Connections

Healing Axis

Is now **online!**
Drop by for a visit
by going to:

healingaxis.net.
Comments and/or
feedback would be
appreciated.

In the News:

This past Monday,
on the ABC Eve-
ning news there
was a report on the
positive effects of
acupuncture with
regard to back
pain. It surpassed
conventional ap-
proaches convinc-
ingly. To see the
report click [here](#).



Although I am
not a vegetarian,
see this link about
chocolate, sugar
and meat. In many
ways, we are a na-
tion of addicts.
The more we lead
stressful life-styles
the more we need
to get rid of our
stress. If we don't
express the stress
in some positive
way, it will gradu-
ally eat us away.

[Play Video](#)

Fall Has Returned!

As a result of a dry September, this fall
promises to be very colorful.



Photo by Kevin Barr

The seasons bring their own special energy
to the world. Understanding more about
what each season brings can help us to make
changes in harmony with that season.

Our physical body, our activities, diet, mental
attitude and emotional states are all affected
by the change of seasons. In this article, you
will have access to plenty of helpful tips to
get you through the fall season in healthy
fashion so you can prepare yourself for the
unique energetic of winter. In addition, you
will get a unique perspective from the world
of Traditional Chinese Medicine of the con-
nections between the fall season and how
it relates to nature, including we (humans)
who live in it.

[Fall- The Energy Of Gathering Inward and Letting Go](#)

In fall we harvest the fruits of our labor in
preparation for the colder months of winter.
It is a time of thanks for the gifts of suste-
nance that come from the earth. For plants

[continue](#)

Stress- What Stress?

Modern life has a special way of promoting
stress in our lives. Stress is also the largest
contributor to accident, illness, disease and
premature death. So what is stress? The fol-
lowing writers may provide some insights.

Stanley J. Sarnoff: "If you had to define
stress, it would not be far off if you said it
was the process of living. The process of liv-
ing is the process of having stress imposed
on you and reacting to it."

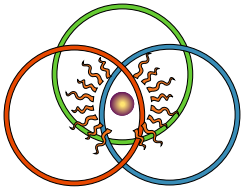
Garson Kanin: "There are thousands of
causes for stress, and one antidote to stress
is self-expression."

From a Western and Chinese medical stand-
point click [here](#) to see a special Healing
Axis brochure on Stress. Rather than repeat



what this brochure literature con-
tains, I would like to write about
stress and the most important fac-
tor, as Stanley Sarnoff pints out
above, is our reaction to it. We
all carry our own filters i.e., how
we look at life through our past and pres-
ent experiences given our genetic heritage.
This genetic heritage includes, at least from
a Chinese Medical perspective, the human
evolutionary lineage which brings an indi-
vidual into the present through the context
of family. Where mankind is collectively, at
present, is dependent upon each individual's
evolutionary impulse enacted primarily on
the family stage and later in the community.
What might that impulse be? It is to meet
with our destiny i.e., to find the lost parts of
ourselves and integrate them back into our
larger self. With this integration, the false or
illusory aspects of our personality fade away

[continue](#)



Healing Axis

Integrative Energy Medicine

E-Connections

Fall- The Energy Of Gathering Inward and Letting Go (Page 2)

and flora, it is a time of letting go, of letting its energy go back to the earth from which it came. The time of reaching for light from the sun has reversed as the sun itself reverses direction in the sky. In fact, if one were to photograph the sun from the same vantage point throughout the year it looks like a figure eight. This is called an analemma. For a photograph and more info click [here](#).

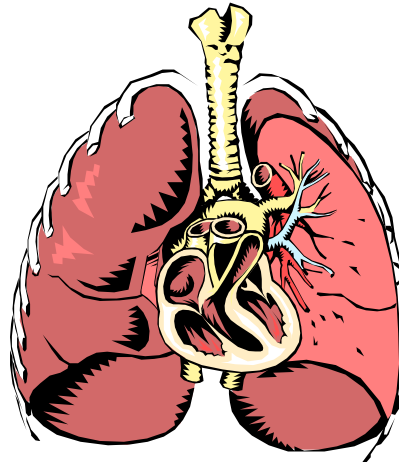
In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the organs are not just physical structures but they are also functional energies which also affect body, mind and spirit.

Fall is the metal element. Its energy is inward and downward. The metal organ/meridians are the Lung and Large Intestine. The Lung governs the formation of energy or “Qi” (chee). The energy from the air we breathe joins with the energy sent up to the lung from the spleen (energy from food). This energy mix called Zhong (jong) Qi is then distributed to the rest of the body in various forms. That is why the lung is so important in the regulation of qi in the body. One form of this energy is Wei (way) qi, also known as Defensive qi. It exists in the area between the skin and the muscles underneath. External climate conditions like heat, cold, humidity, wind etc. can invade the body through the skin. The quality of your wei qi can determine whether or not you might catch a cold, flu or get a fever. Likewise, the quality of your skin can indicate the state of the lungs. If the skin is dry and rough it may indicate deficient lung qi. Another symptom may be sweating easily since the lung cannot regulate the opening and closing of the pores.

Since the lung is the only organ in direct contact with the external environment, it is the organ most easily affected by weather conditions and microbes. Once your defensive or Wei qi is compromise your overall energy

or qi is affected. The lungs loathe cold and can be adversely affected by it.

Another kind of qi that forms in the lungs is Ying (nutritive) qi. It flows in the blood and the meridians and nourishes all the organs and tissues in the body. The lungs also provide the qi to move the blood. Poor circulation especially to the extremities may be a sign of weak lung qi. Other symptoms may be: cough, shortness of breath and fatigue.

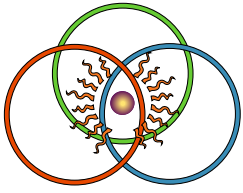


In TCM the lungs open into the nose. So if heat is in the lungs one may get nosebleeds easily. Also our sense of smell can be influenced by the state of the lungs.

Having a close relationship with its metal element partner, the large intestine, an imbalanced lung can indirectly cause diarrhea or constipation. When the lung energy is deficient, it doesn't give the large intestine enough energy to excrete properly resulting in constipation. In turn, if the large intestine energy is weak and there is constipation it may affect the descending energy of the lung causing breathlessness.

The emotion associated to the metal element is sadness and grief. Even in our own culture, people often refer to these two states as being “down”. So, we instinctively know that there is a directional energetic to emotional states. We just don't consider the importance of it nor the subtleties of how it works.

When we are sad it constrains our feelings and the lungs can become restricted resulting in shallow and short breathing. This in turn will then create more rapid breathing. And since the lungs surround the heart (see illustration above) chronic sadness and/or grief can then affect the heart meridian and possibly the organ.



Fall- The Energy Of Gathering Inward and Letting Go (Page 3)

The emotion related to the heart is joy, so eventually chronic or repressed grief/sadness can lead to joylessness.

We can be sad or grieve any time of the year but it can be especially useful to know the energetics of the seasons since they too can affect our mood. Grief has a



contracting force and used constructively, encourages introspection to identify unresolved issues so we can be mindful of them. Sharing these issues with others can help to dissipate and eventually clear sadness or grief. When we grieve we are holding on to something and in time it needs to be let go.

After the open and active time of summer, fall is the time to reorganize and refocus mentally. These are processes of contraction. To help facilitate this process eat sour type foods. Sour is a flavor which contracts our energy. Think of it, when you eat something really sour, you contract your lips and may even draw your arms inward to your torso. Sour foods are especially beneficial for those who consider too many things, who are capricious in character.



Some sour foods to consider are: sauerkraut, aduki beans, olives, vinegar, yogurt, cheese, leeks, pickles, limes lemon, grapefruit and sour varieties of apple, plum

and grapes. Strong sour foods should be used in small amounts. Also don't overdo your dairy intake.

Cautions: Those with constipation, foggy mind, dampness in the body and diseases of tendons or sinews should use sour flavors sparingly. Some sour flavors contain salt. Salt tightens the water organs (kidney and bladder) causing coldness and water retention. Those with high blood pressure need to exercise caution.

Sour also acts as an astringent to prevent or reverse abnormal leakage of fluids and energy. Conditions that might benefit from using sour foods are: urinary dripping, diarrhea, uterine prolapse, sagging tissues including flaccid skin and hemorrhoids. Sour flavors in green and black tea can also be considered astringent.

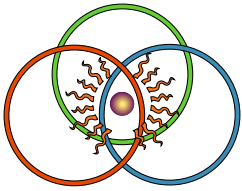
Lung and colon problems can be aggravated by a poor diet. Too much dairy, meat, greasy foods, processed foods, not eating enough roughage, using recreational drugs, and smoking cigarettes.



Since the lungs move your qi and are essential for energy, it is important to not lead a sedentary lifestyle. In addition, if we don't exercise we don't flex the lungs enough, encourage deeper breathing and good circulation. When you exercise, always make sure to warm up ahead of time and stretch afterwards.

In summary, good lung health gives us shiny and lustrous looking skin and hair, better elimination- of mucous formation in lungs, sinuses and the colon, prevents colds and flu, increases immunity overall and aids in rebounding from emotional holding.

Fall is a transition time, it is a good time to get a tune-up with any of the modalities offered at Healing Axis. For those of you who are needle reluctant know that excellent bodywork and energy therapies are available.



Healing Axis

Integrative Energy Medicine

E-Connections

Stress- What Stress? (cont. p.2)

self or original self strengthens. When we regain more of our true selves our energy flows better. Having a better connection between mind and heart, our thoughts need not hinder as much what the true self desires.

We all want connection, love and fulfilment. When these are denied one's energy moves inward. If enough time passes, this energy when held inside, can build up and become self-destructive. One of the laws of the Law of Conservation of Energy is that energy must change. So too must we change. To resist change requires energy expenditure in the attempt to keep outside forces at bay. This causes stress or tension.

Stress can actually be a positive force if it is used to motivate oneself in the direction of positive change. How we respond to stress is in many ways a choice. How we perceive ourselves and situations around us is in large part affected by our mental attitude and the filters we see life through. When we don't see life as safe we rely more on the mind and the will. When we see life as a chance to express ourselves, as a creative endeavor, even with all its ups and downs, we can rely more on the heart. The energy of the heart in Chinese Medicine is represented by the figure of an emperor. The emperor, like the heart, oversees the territory, getting information from ambassadors. From this information, the emperor must decide where defenses must be placed and where movement and commerce occurs for the welfare of the people. This scenario is at work in all of nature. e.g. Our cells have walls and move wastes out and bring food and nourishment in.

The heart gets information from all the other organs and integrates it so that it may proceed from wisdom. With wisdom comes an inner knowing and from this comes right action. There is an old Chinese proverb, "He who looks outside dreams. He who looks inside awakens." When we have stressors in our lives, and we all do, it is

important how we react to them. Some of the stress factors we may not be able to change, at least for the time being. Other stressors we can change. This may require lifestyle changes or a change in one's mental attitude. Making changes is never easy but it does require some inward searching and a desire to improve one's self and the conditions around us. Looking at things negatively hinders this process.

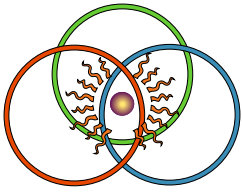
Here are a few tips to keep in mind to facilitate adapting to stress:

- Try not to have expectations. This includes expectations of others and oneself.
- If you are feeling strong emotion in response to a stressful situation, know that this is the mind and body (including the heart) talking to one another. The energy exchange between mind and body is an attempt to sort things "out". Emotion is the alchemical result. But, we need not give this process more energy by being led into it. We can see it for what it is- energy exchange searching for equilibrium. It is a sign from our body and mind that some-

thing needs our attention and giving in to the emotion is not necessarily the answer. Emotion is defined in Webster's Dictionary in part as "a physiological departure from homeostasis that is subjectively experienced in strong feeling (as of love, hate, desire or fear) and manifests itself in neuromuscular, respiratory, circulatory, hormonal and other physiological changes..." Well there it is- physiological (body) and subjective (mind) creating a state of mind that produces the physiological signs of stress that we all have heard of as effects of our modern lifestyles.

- For help in an emotional situation, try reminding the body that only the mind need observe the situation. Think of this while you tap gently on your sternum, the bone in the center of your chest. Use a short light tap from one finger in a set of three, done three times. You could also use the point in the center of the eyebrows, above the bridge of the nose. This technique





Healing Axis

Integrative Energy Medicine

E-Connections

Stress- What Stress? (cont. p.3)

brows, above the bridge of the nose. This technique can be enough to shift emotional energy into a more rational one.

- When we get stressed our breathing usually becomes restricted. To counteract this, do some deep breathing making sure to breathe through the nose into the abdomen first and then fill up the lung. When you expire visualize all the stress in your body going out with the exhalation.
- Make sure you get enough physical movement in during the day. Walks are great for increasing circulation and they help to integrate both hemispheres of the brain. I highly recommend reading a book by Thom Hartman called “Walking your Blues Away”. It isn’t long, is only \$13. new and you may never walk the same again. Highly recommended.
- Most of us sit in front of a computer or a TV a decent portion of the day. Any time we lay stagnant for a while it stifles our energy. Periodically, get up from your chair and stretch, your arms, legs, neck, jaw, torso, feet, and hands. If you can’t remember to do this, set a timer or use your computer to remind you.

There are many different kinds of stress which can affect us. This article has only mentioned the general concept of stress and reaction to it.

Due to the importance of stress and its effect on our individual lives and society, I will continue to reserve a section on stress. In future articles, we will delve into the different kinds of stress from emotional to physical, toxins (in air, water, food), lifestyle patterns, job stress and major life changes (moving, new job, death of a loved one, divorce etc.).

Remember to get a tune-up at Healing Axis. This is especially important during the change of seasons. Acupuncture, bodywork and energy therapies are available for help in the alleviation of stress and many other conditions.



Wishing you all- Wellness, equilibrium and a radically serene dose of joy.

Kevin J. Barr M.Ac., R.Ac.

