

BUBBLING SPRING

A Quinterly Newsletter for the Five Element Community of Australia

WINTER 2011



This edition of Bubbling Spring marks the beginning of its third year. Once more we dive into the Water to continue the endless spiral around the Elements.

For me this year marks 20 years since I began my own Elemental journey. In 1991 I took TAI's SOPHIA program with Dianne Connelly and Bob Duggan, learning how to bring the Five Elements to life and into my own daily life. The inspiration and impetus of that program still fuel my ever deepening journey around the cycle of the Elements.

In alignment with this deepening, the theme for the coming year is the Emotional and Psychological aspects of the Elements.

This theme is reflected in two new columns.

The first is Elemental Psychology, an overview of the psychological patterns that are structured by imbalances in each of the Elements. The second is a new direction for More to the Point. We will consider the Spirit points of the outer Bladder meridian, which are used to treat emotional and psychological imbalances.

Also we continue Lisa Robson's aromatherapy column. Thanks Lisa.

Once again, I invite you to send in your own contributions to the newsletter. If you've enjoyed reading it, then here's your chance to keep it going.

Warm Winter wishes,
John Kirkwood – Editor

Are you fresh to this Newsletter?

If so, you may wish to enrich your understanding of the Winter season by reading the previous two Winter Newsletters. Go to http://www.acupressure.com.au/newsletter_archive.html and select Winter 2009 and Winter 2010.

CONTENTS

- 3 **Elemental Psychology**
An Introduction
- 4 **Elemental Psychology**
Water
- 7 **More to the Point**
BL 52 Residence of the Will
- 8 **Aromatherapy**
Feet Treat
- 9 **Upcoming Events**
Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney

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Issue 3.1 Winter 2011

WINTER

Judith Wright

*Today's white fog won't lift above the tree-tops.
Yesterday's diamond frost has melted to ice-water.*

*Old age and winter are said to have much in common.
Let's pile more wood on the fire and drink red wine.*

*These hundreds of books on the shelves have all been read
but I can't force my mind to recall their wisdom.*

*Let's drink while we can. The sum of all is Energy,
and that went into the wood, the wine, the poems.*

*Logs on the fire burn out into smoke and ash.
Let's talk today, though words die out on the air.*

*Out of the past and the books we must have learned something.
What do we know, what path does the red wine take?*

*I cleared white hair from my brush on the dressing table
and dropped it into the fire. Some protein-chains the less.*

*How long would my hair be now if all the clippings
from the salon-floors returned to join their links?*

*The paths that energy takes on its way to exhaustion
are not to be forecast. These pathways, you and me,*

*followed unguessable routes. But all of us end
at the same point, like the wood on the fire,
the wine in the belly. Let's drink to that point - like Hafiz.*



ELEMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

An Introduction

We begin here a new series of articles that examine the psychological structures which form around the underlying imbalances in each of the Five Elements. In the past year we've explored the various Emotions of the Elements and how they provide both obstacles to and opportunities for growth.

In the coming year we'll look at the personality patterns that crystallise around the Elemental emotions. These patterns underlie much of our behaviour and our perspective on the world.

The more we can understand our psychological makeup by bringing to consciousness what is unconscious, the more we can avert some of the symptoms, syndromes and diseases that result when psychological patterns are not understood and become increasingly entrenched.



Dr Leon Hammer, who has done a lot of work in this area as both a psychiatrist and a Five Element practitioner, puts it like this:

*"Characterological signs of disharmony are among the earliest possible indications that the natural function of the phase [Element] is being disrupted. Generally, they precede by a considerable period of time the signs and symptoms usually associated with disease of these systems and may be thought of as early warning indicators."*¹

We all have access to these early warning signals. By examining our patterns of emotion, thought and behaviour, we can come to identify our fundamental Elemental imbalances. We can address these imbalances through acupuncture, acupressure, bodywork, somatic therapy, psychotherapy and other modalities that work with the bodymind.

The psychological patterning of our particular Constitutional Element is a crucial area to address. In addition, our "Elements Within" also create patterns of thinking and behaviour that cannot be overlooked in this work. In fact, all of us have all of the Elements in our makeup to a greater or lesser degree, and all can provide food for thought in our self examination. Thus, I hope that each of these articles, which will focus on a particular Element, will provide something for everyone to reflect on, and a support for your ongoing growth and healing.

1. Hammer, Leon. *Dragon Rises Red Bird Flies*. 2005 Eastland Press. p89.



ELEMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Water



As we explored in the Winter edition last year, the emotion of the Water Element is Fear.

When there is an underlying imbalance in Water, there will be an inherent instability around the emotion of fear. It becomes the lens through which life events are experienced and interpreted. When this is the core imbalance, then from birth (or even in utero) there will be repeated emotional responses to the emotion of fear, which is the dominant response to life. The character structure then crystallises around these emotional responses to the world.

In a sense, the emotion of fear becomes the guiding principle in life.

The Loss of the Ground

When Water is the core imbalance, the world is a scary place. There is a fundamental loss of connection with the universe as a Ground of holding Presence. There is a profound loss of Basic Trust. This loss of connection with the ground, both inner and outer, means that there is nothing safe to stand on. Any ground that appears is experienced as fleeting, shifting, unstable, and not to be relied on.



A child who is fearful naturally seeks reassurance from her parents, looking to them to provide the ground that has been lost. Yet no matter how much the parents reassure,

there really is nothing that can be provided that will substitute for the loss of the inherent ground of Being. Parents who do their best to provide reassurance will certainly help the child be less afraid than those parents who are insensitive to their child's fears. But when this is a core imbalance, it will structure beliefs, perceptions and behaviour for a lifetime.

When some kind of danger is actually present, fear is a normal and necessary response, prompting us into survival behaviour. If we are being chased by a tiger or attacked in the street, then the adrenaline rush that arises helps us to survive the danger by running away or turning to fight. In our modern world there are many more subtle dangers that provoke fear, like losing our job, our house or our retirement account. All of these fears tell us that our survival is threatened and that we need to take action. But when the Water Element is deeply imbalanced, fear is the response, not just to these, but to most situations in life.

The personality patterns that arise from a fearful response to life will tend toward either of two polarities. One polarity is more yin, where the energy moves downward and inward; the other more yang, moving upward and outward. Both are responses to the same emotion, and you may find both polarities in the same person at various times.

cont. next page ...

The Yin Response **Fearful, cautious, paralysed**

The fearful person is constantly vigilant, scanning the environment, alert for danger. There is a perpetual planning ahead for all eventualities, covering all the bases just in case something goes wrong. There is the belief that nothing is safe unless we make it so. Lots of energy is channelled into this preparation for disaster. Paradoxically, this extreme caution can be paralysing, placing severe limits on our ability to take action. There is a lack of drive and will to act.



The lack of trust in the world and the self may prompt the fearful person to cling to an authority such as a guru, a teacher, a teaching, or a health practitioner. This person or belief system is idealised and trusted completely. This pattern arises out of a desperation to find a ground, to find something stable and solid to rely on to replace the ground that is missing. However, the idealised authority figure usually does not

live up to the unrealistic, misplaced trust, the world becomes even less trustworthy than before, and the core structures are further strengthened. This can prompt a repeated, ongoing search for the 'right' authority.

This personality pattern, when it develops to its extreme, becomes focused on phobias and paranoias. Phobias arise out of an intense fear of the unknown, and especially fear of other people. Here, authorities may become hated and/or feared. Paranoia is a further extension of this and includes delusions of persecution by others.

The Yang Response **Fearless, driven, grandiose**

For some people with a Water imbalance, the fear is so unbearable or unacceptable that a defense is needed, and a layer of fearlessness becomes superimposed over the fear. This defense forms the outermost shell of the personality, and makes unconscious the fear within. The yin response to the fear has changed to the yang response as a way of coping with the difficulty of the emotion.

This kind of person appears unusually fearless, and tends to enjoy risky activities. He is the daredevil who, over and over again, proves to himself and others that he is not afraid. He may take up extreme sports, enter dangerous occupations, choose the riskier path over the safer one, and glory in that rush of adrenaline. And yet this need to constantly prove he is unafraid is actually a reaction to the underlying, unconscious fear.

Another expression of the yang response is drivenness. Here the need to achieve, accumulate, succeed and win are driven by the unconscious fear of not surviving in a dangerous world. The belief is that we must 'kill or be killed'.

This need to get ahead and stay ahead of others can lead to extremes of social behaviour that are intimidating and bullying. The schoolyard bully, the petty tyrant and the ruthless dictator are types that are created out of an intense reaction to fear.

Grandiosity is another trait that can appear in the yang response. It arises as a defence against the low self esteem that often accompanies the painful lack of an inner ground of self. Grandiosity is an unrealistically positive view of one's abilities, a certain imitation of God. It is the ego self that assumes without thinking that it's the centre of the universe. There is a profound loss of connection with a higher power and the Oneness of the Tao.



Elemental Psychology (cont. from p.5)

Health Impacts of a Water Imbalance

A lifetime of living in reaction to fear places great stress on the organs and systems of the Water Element. The kidneys, the bladder, the adrenal glands, the ears and hearing, the bones, and the lumbar spine are all subjected to stresses that weaken their functions. There is an ongoing depletion of Kidney Qi, the well of our life force. Conditions that may then arise include kidney stones, kidney disease, adrenal fatigue, hormone imbalance, exhaustion, urinary tract infections, urinary dysfunction, impotence, ear and hearing problems, tinnitus, loss of bone density and autoimmune disorders.

Returning to Balance

If you recognise some parts of yourself in this description of the various forms that a fear imbalance can take, then you have already taken the first step to healing them. Winter is a great time to work with these imbalances, since the Water Element is most available and most supportive at this time of year. Imbalances in the Water Element can be effectively addressed by working with a Five Element acupuncturist or acupressure therapist.

Psychotherapy can also be very helpful in exploring the origins of these patterns. Jungian analysis, Gestalt therapy, psychodynamic work and IFS therapy (among others) can bring mental and emotional understanding that supports the energetic balancing of the Five Element treatments.

Personal work such as EFT, journaling, dreamwork, meditation, yoga, body awareness practices and Qi cultivation practices such as Qigong will also contribute to the lasting healing that results when we start examining and understanding our lives.

But the thing that is needed most of all in our journey is kindness towards ourselves. Understanding is not enough - our wounded parts cannot heal without compassion. True healing only occurs when we can combine the wisdom of our understanding with the loving kindness of the heart.



WILL
involves surrender to the truth,
which is the effortless being
of what is.
Will is actually
effortless, complete spontaneity,
complete letting go.
It is surrender.
People think
that to surrender
is to let go of your will.
This is not true.
To surrender
is to have your will
completely,
objectively.

A.H.Almaas. Diamond Heart Book 2, p 114



志室

MORE to the POINT

BL 52 Zhi Shi
Residence of the Will

志室

Bladder 52 is located in the low back, 3 body inches lateral to the midline, at the level of the junction of L2 & L3 (roughly level with the navel).

As the name suggests, this point influences the Spirit of Water, *Zhi*, translated as Will. This is not the willpower of the ego or small self, but rather the Will of Heaven, mandated to us by the Tao. When we are in balance, we understand that we are not separate individuals, but drops of Tao manifesting the Universal Will.

When we lose contact with this truth we start to believe that we have to do it all by ourselves, that it is all up to us, and that nothing will happen without us doing it. There is a loss of contact with the Ground of Tao.

There are two main responses to this loss. One is to be overwhelmed by the need to do it all ourselves, and to collapse into paralysis. The other is to take on an expansive, driven grandiosity. These reflect the yin and yang responses that we discussed in the Elemental Psychology article.



One of the translations of the point name *Zhi Shi* is Ambition Room, which brings to mind the words of Macbeth. Macbeth is one of literature's monsters and is a sobering illustration of grandiosity at its extreme.

*I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other.*
William Shakespeare, Macbeth, 1.7

Macbeth's ambition to be king drove him blindly and heartlessly to regicide. His lust for power destroyed his compassion and filled him with hatred.

At the opposite extreme, a collapse of the Will leads to an absence of ambition, fearful holding back, a collapsing downwards, and depression with no will to recover. Getting cold feet, both literally and figuratively, is emblematic of this second response. Residence of the Will helps both of these extremes return to balance, calming an insistent, relentless urgency or strengthening a fearful, paralysed impotence.

There is another important balancing function of the *Zhi* which can be seen in its Chinese character. The lower part of the left hand character represents the heart. The relationship between the *Zhi* of the Kidney and the *Shen* of the Heart is paramount in maintaining the Water/Fire balance which in turn is central to a person's yin/yang balance.

This balanced connection allows the Will of the Tao to be mediated by and expressed through the human heart. Harmonious action naturally arises as a willing surrender to the dynamic force of the Tao.

An Aromatherapy FEET TREAT

Lisa Robson



How fortunate if you have a foot bath spa!! If not, you can use a large, square bucket or dangle your feet in your bathtub for an aromatherapy treat for your feet.

It is important to be prepared for your aromatherapy feet treat because once your feet are in, you must stay there.

Set the scene – Quiet music, perhaps a book or a magazine, soft lighting, warm room and a couple of towels. Voila! A comfortable place to sit for at least 15 minutes.

Preparation – In a small glass dish (plastic will absorb the smells), mix the following ingredients for one aromatherapy foot bath.

- 2 tablespoons of Epsom salts.
- 2 drops of Atlas Cedarwood (*Cedrus atlantica*) essential oil **Avoid during pregnancy*. This oil often symbolizes fertility, to encourage abundance, to strengthen the bladder, for strength in times of crisis, helps derive wisdom from experiences, for lethargy and lower backache, for courage.

- 2 drops of Ginger (*Zingiber officinalis*) essential oil. This oil is sustaining, reactivating and rebuilding, for a depleted and cold body, an aphrodisiac, for lower backache.
- 2 drops of Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) essential oil **Avoid during pregnancy*. This oil relieves congestion and helps to detoxify, clears away the unclean, supportive under challenging situations, replenishing, stimulates kidneys.

Fill your chosen vessel with enough nice warm water to fully submerge your feet. Try adding some marbles to roll your feet over in a massaging action.

Now add the Aromatherapy salt mixture to the footbath. Have your towel close by and pop your feet in...

15 minutes later ...

Finishing touches – Remove your feet before the water cools, dry your feet and apply a lotion to your feet (the same essential oils used with the salts would be nice in a rich, unfragranced cream)

Now, start with your left foot

- Hold BL64 (lateral side of foot, inferior to the tuberosity of the 5th metatarsal) for pain and stiffness all over and full feeling in your head with K3 (medial side of the leg in the sunken area between Achilles tendon and the medial malleolus) for tonifying and nourishing the kidneys– a balancing and calming combination of source points

- Hold BL66 (lateral side of foot at the flesh connection of the 5th toe to the foot) for clearing heaviness and for support with K2

(medial side of foot at the high point of the arch) for sore and restless legs – a warm and energizing combination

- Hold BL62 (lateral side of foot inferior to lateral malleolus prominence) for calming with K6 (1 cun below medial malleolus in the groove between the 2 tendons) for calming – for balancing yin and yang

Repeat on your right foot.

Now, slip on some socks and slippers – soft feet, cosy toes, and calm water!

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## References

*Battaglia, Salvatore. The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy*  
*Kirkwood, John. Acubalance Water Workshop, July 2010*  
*Mojay, Gabriel. Aromatic Energetics and the Five Elements Workshop*  
*Deadman, P. et al. A Manual of Acupuncture*

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*Lisa practices aromatherapy in Adelaide.
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Add your event!
Deadline Spring edition
21st August 2011

Acubalance Series

ADELAIDE

In these classes you will gain a deepening understanding of the sophisticated interplay of the Five Elements within yourself, others and all of life. The course will offer you new ideas and treatment protocols, and provides a unique opportunity for you to recognise the strength or otherwise of each of the Elements within yourself. One of the benefits of this approach is that the classes themselves become a personal treatment. Immersion in the Element of the season, and inquiry into the health of that Element, allows it to come into balance. Students are frequently amazed that just attending these classes improves their health.

WATER 3rd July 2011

WOOD 18th Sept 2011

FIRE 27th Nov 2011

EARTH March 2012

METAL May 2012

Instructor: John Kirkwood
NHAA, 47 South Tce Adelaide
08 8231 4933 to register

Essential Five Element Acupressure – a NEW Series

MELBOURNE

These five workshops will profoundly support your ongoing development, both personally and professionally, from a Five Element perspective. Each workshop will focus on the Element of the season in which it is held. This will allow us to draw on the ambient energy of the season, which evokes the spirit and flavour of the Element in ways that are not available at other times of the year.

On a personal level, you will be fully immersed in an experiential learning environment with a wide range of exercises and discussions, and will learn how to contact, recognise, examine and experience each of the Five Elements within yourself. This immersion will allow the arising and development of the Gifts of the Elements within you

On a professional level, you will learn fundamental principles of Five Element Acupressure which can then be incorporated and integrated into your body-work practice. Most important, you will learn how to identify a client's Constitutional Element through colour, sound, odour and emotion. This knowledge will enable you to treat clients with great effectiveness as you address the very core of their imbalance. When the Constitutional Element is restored to health, all the other Elements tend to find balance, creating lasting change and ongoing health.

In addition to the Constitutional Element, each workshop will address one or more primary principles of treatment, including point categories and working with emotions. Each workshop will also include a review of the meridians of the respective Element including focus on locations and uses of significant acu-points in treatment.

Your learning will be amply supported by instructor demonstrations, supervised practice and extensive notes

WATER 9th – 10th July 2011

WOOD 24th – 25th Sept 2011

FIRE 10th - 11th Dec 2011

EARTH 31st March - 1st April 2012

METAL 19th – 20th May 2012

Instructor: John Kirkwood
Location: East-West College
475 Hawthorn Rd, Caulfield Sth, Vic.
Information: 0410 779 159 or
www.acupressure.com/classes.html

SYDNEY

This series of three weekend workshops will cover traditional diagnosis and treatment using the Five Elements. All sessions will include practical exercises.

The material covered will include:

- Diagnosing CF
- Elements revealed in Colour, Sound, Odour & Emotion
- The Five Emotions & the Five Spirits – guides to the landscape of the soul
- Symptoms and causes of blocks, both emotional & spiritual
- Treatments to remove Qi blockages
- Rapport exercises
- Interviewing, diagnosing and creating treatment plans
- Discussing your difficult patients

Dates:

21st – 22nd May 2011

9th – 10th July 2011

26th– 27th Aug 2011

Facilitated by:

Janet Darby Lic Ac (UK) MBAC ATMS

Yvonne Lazette AACMA

Location: National College of Five Element Acupuncture, Level 2, 487 Elizabeth St, Surrey Hills, NSW.

Info: Yvonne 0419 420 311, Janet 0437 856 381 or workshops@cfea.com.au

The supreme good is like water
which nourishes all things
without trying to.



It is content with the low places
that people disdain.
Thus it is like the Tao

Tao Te Ching 8 (Stephen Mitchell trans.)