

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary!

Dear Practitioner,

In 2015, we celebrate 25 years of success in supplying practitioners with safe, quality Chinese herbal products and acupuncture supplies. It seems unbelievable that we have been doing this for 25 years! In 1990, we started with a single formula created from a few dollars from our acupuncture practice in Austin, Texas. We were concerned about Chinese herbal products that contained undisclosed pharmaceutical drugs and other undesired and unwanted impurities. We thought that a great way to know what was in these products was to create them ourselves. What a learning experience this has been! We also wanted to work to facilitate bringing the great benefits of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine to the west using language and a style that our fellow westerners understand.

Over these 25 years Golden Flower Chinese Herbs has:

- Supported disaster and human relief efforts on 5 continents
- Provided scholarship support to students of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM)
- Supported and participated in AOM education domestically and in other countries
- Supported and participated in the development of the legal status of AOM in the US
- Participated in the international development of AOM
- Supported AOM professional associations nationally and in various states
- Actively participated in the activities of the American Herbal Products Association
- Supported the American Botanical Council and the American Herbal Pharmacopeia
- Published books and papers on OM and Chinese herbs
- Continually improved our company based on customer and patient feedback
- Worked to provide the best products and customer service possible
- Strived to be the best employer possible

We are committed to continuing this work. Thank you for your feedback and support.

Sincerely,

John Scott, DOM and Lorena Monda, DOM

Clinical Guide to Commonly Used
Chinese Herbal Formulas



John Scott, DOM Lorena Monda, DOM John Heuertz, DOM

Available now: The 6th Edition of the *Clinical Guide to Commonly Used Chinese Herbal Formulas* by John Scott, DOM, Lorena Monda, DOM and John Heuertz, DOM. If you have not already received one, please contact us for a free copy.

And check out an interview on *Oriental Medicine and Hakomi for Somatic Perspectives* with Golden Flower's Lorena Monda, DOM at this link:

<http://somaticperspectives.com/2015/03/monda/>



Many clinicians have patients or even family members who seem to be sick by varying degrees throughout the majority of winter. We give them formulas like **Gan Mao Ling Formula, Yin Chiao Formula, Minor Bupleurum Formula or Viola Clear Fire Formula** and they get better, at least for a while, but they never quite make it back to their hundred per cent and they remain more prone to re-infection than most others. Barring whole categories of an out-and-out immune deficiency from infectious agents like HIV/AIDS or chronic viral hepatitis; barring genetic and congenital disorders like X-linked agammaglobulinemia and alymphocytosis; and also barring drug-induced immunodeficiency from chemotherapy or immune suppressants, the main obstacle to full and lasting recovery for many of the patients and family members we care for are what this article will refer to as “stressors”, specifically, things that “stress” the immune system, consuming its strength faster than that strength can be restoredⁱ.

Stressors impair the production and maintenance of strong *zheng* (upright/ righteous) qi. Good *zheng* qi comes from the mutual nourishment between pre-natal and postnatal qi. If one of these is unable to support the other, *zheng* qi—and our ability to combat external invasion—suffers.

Chinese medicine teaches two different versions of how an external pathogen becomes disease. The first and earlier version is that disease occurs when the *zheng qi* is too weak to dispel an external pathogen during the crucial phase of initial exposure. A later version proclaims something seemingly similar but expressed in the form of an equation, describing illness from an exterior invasion to develop when “the strength of the external pathogen is greater than the strength of the *zheng qi*.” These two ideas have very different implications. In the first description, it is conceivable that someone blessed with a strong con-

stitution would never get sick if she took proper care of her post-natal qi; because if the *zheng* qi is strong, the pathogen cannot penetrate. In the later version, the equation states that illness comes from the relative strengths of pathogen to *zheng* qi. The sense of this formulation includes the possibility that even the strongest of constitutions coupled with the most disciplined and cultivated attention to the condition of one's *zheng* qi can still result in illness, if only the nature of the pathogen is strong enough. When it comes to illness, our modern sensibilities seem to correspond more to this idea of relative strengths, wherein we become ill whenever we are exposed to a pathogen that is beyond our present capacity to dispel it. However, this may be a modern bias and should be considered along with the teachings of the ancient sages who proclaimed it. The health environment of the modern world is very different from the one inhabited by the ancients. Their life rhythms were in sync with the daily and seasonal cycles of nature; the only food available to them was whole and organic; their healthcare did not employ drugs that took over entire physiological functions; and they did not create and expose themselves to synthetic chemical toxins. Although romanticizing of the ancient lifestyle should be avoided (they still had epidemic diseases, only barbaric forms of surgery, contaminated food and water, heavy metal poisoning, and starvation), it remains true that both terms in the equation of how illness develops were different for them than for us today: their *zheng* qi was formed more in sync with nature, and their pathogens were of purely natural origin. Their stressors were over-work or too much sex, sleep disorders, dietary factors, and internally-generated disorders (chiefly emotional), latent pathogens, and improper treatment.

We still have all of these stressors, but we can add so much more to the list of what prevents our bodies from maintaining strong *zheng qi*. New stressors today fall into multiple categories; many are the result of poor habits that weren't available to the ancients (drugs, junk food, too much screen time with computers, television or mobile devices . . .) but there is also chemical exposure, prescription drug use and much more; a compound of multiple stressors is common. With a simple inquiry, many stressors are easy to identify and eliminate, clearing the way to good health. Because most of these categories have their own unique way of stressing the immune system, we will have to address them separately. And because most of them also represent a huge study in themselves, we will have to be content here with an outline of the categories.

INSUFFICIENT SLEEP

Insomnia is one of the most common afflictions in the nation today. In fact, the CDC has declared that insufficient sleep is a “National Epidemic.”ⁱⁱ Yet many patients do not seek help from Oriental medicine practitioners to resolve their sleep issues. The bottom line is that without sufficient sleep, the post-natal qi cannot replenish itself and *zheng* qi will suffer—but we CAN help. Insomnia can come from external stimulation of a non-medical origin, such as noises, room temperature or even sleeping in an unfamiliar bed when traveling. But the medically-related causes of sleep disturbance—the ones we can help with—are hugely varied, even more varied than the causes of cough or the causes of digestive issues. A thorough discussion of the topic is beyond the scope of this article, but some generalizations can be made and the appropriate formula matched to the pattern.

There are a handful of go-to formulas when it comes to insomnia. Among the most popular are:



An Mien Formula (*An Mien Pian*) is used for insomnia when it is hard to fall asleep, but not hard to stay asleep. It is nourishing and calming to the heart and to the *shen* and is often used as general purpose formula for insomnia.

Zizyphus Formula (*Suan Zao Ren Tang*) is most effectively applied to insomnia that begins in middle age as a result of declining yin with blood deficiency. It is the #1 formula for treating insomnia when there is a pale or pale-purple tongue.

Heavenly Emperor's Formula (*Tain Wang Bu Xin Dan*) is strong to nourish yin, cool the body, and promote fluids. It is most effective for patients whose insomnia is caused by yin fire, such as Type-1 Diabetes or other auto-immune disorders with deficiency heat, as well as menopause with a scanty-coated red tongue and a thin rapid pulse. This type of insomnia is usually restlessness throughout the night. During the day,

this pattern usually manifests as anxiety from exhaustion or general irritability. Dry stools is a common sign when this formula is appropriate.

Bupleurum D Formula (*Chai Hu Jia Long Gu Mu Li Tang*) is the formula for the type of insomnia that is marked by excessive dreaming, a rapid wiry pulse, and constipation. It “frees the three yang” channels, which, when blocked, tend to build up heat leading to constipation and irritability. This excess condition is different from the irritability and dry stools in the **Heavenly Emperor Formula** pattern, which is from deficiency.

Baked Licorice Formula (*Zhi Gan Cao Tang*) is used to treat insomnia from post illness when there has been damage to the qi and blood. Typically, there will be an irregular pulse that was not present before the illness, but the pulse may also be thin and rapid.

Other factors to consider for sleep disorders include urinary weakness, where the urge to void the bladder wakes the patient up more than once a night, pain, and digestive issues, because if the digestion is disturbed, the sleep will be disturbed. These are treated not by insomnia formulas, but with whatever is appropriate to the pattern.

CHEMICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TOXIN

Because it is often difficult to determine the exit route for chemical and environmental toxins, the default formula is often going to be Liu Wan-su's 12th Century formula, **Siler and Platycodon** (*Fang Feng Tong Shen Wan*). Liu designed his formula to maximize the exit routes for heat pathogens. This versatile formula drains dampness through the urine, promotes sweating and releases the exterior, promotes bowel movements, resolves phlegm, and disperses wind. Though conceived to clear heat toxin, the formula is not especially cold-natured, so combined with the proper supportive formula such as **Six Gentlemen Formula**, **Siler and Platycodon Formula** can be taken for months on end to facilitate the elimination of deep-lying toxin.

LINGERING PATHOGENS

Due in part to its popularity in Kampo medicine, the most common formula for treating lingering pathogens is **Minor Bupleurum Formula** (*Xiao Chai Hu Tang*). Because it is balanced with tonifying and clearing substances, it is safe on its own for long-term use. **Viola Clear Fire Formula** (*Di Ding Qing Huo Pian*) contains anti-toxin herbs that can eliminate a wide variety of external pathogens whether they are deep-lying or more superficial. It is often combined with **Minor Bupleurum Formula** for a more aggressive strategy.

When the pathogen is mainly phlegm and located in the epigastrium, *Ban Xia Xie Xin Tang* (Pinellia Decoction to Drain the Epigastrium) will prove to be superior. Adding *lu lu tong* (sweetgum fruit) will facilitate the process of clearing out old gunk from the epigastrium (the stomach and region below the heart).

Many times a pathogen lingers not because of the enduring strength of the pathogen, but because the acute phase of the illness used up qi, blood, yin, or fluids, and when the pathogen was finally weak enough to expel, there were insufficient resources in the body to expel it. The most common patterns are usually related to post-respiratory infections and involve damage to the qi or yin or both. Use **Restore the Lung Formula** (*Bu Fei Tang*) if the pattern is weakened lung qi with lingering phlegm. If the main issue is damage to the lung yin, then the superior formula is **Lily Preserve Metal Formula** (*Bai He Gu Jin Tang*).

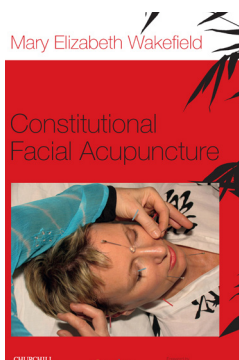
Most of the formulas in the *Shang Han Lun* were created not to treat the acute phase of illness, but for lingering pathogens and for the correction of iatrogenic illness. The strategies listed here represent only a small portion of the possibilities available to us, but, used wisely and with proper pattern identification, will prove to be successful in the majority of cases that we encounter.

ⁱ Straightforward qi deficiency is not a “stressor,” per se, and will not be discussed in this article.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.cdc.gov/features/dssleep/>

CONSTITUTIONAL FACIAL ACUPUNCTURE: THE NEW PROTOCOLS

by Mary Elizabeth Wakefield



This article was excerpted from *Constitutional Facial Acupuncture*, by Mary Elizabeth Wakefield, published by Elsevier Ltd, © 2014.

There is a growing demand for an organic, natural process of aging that involves not only the treatment of the body, but also the recognition of the mind/spirit connection

in the healing process. Constitutional Facial Acupuncture, both an ancient and a revolutionary system, fills this demand, because it links inner beauty and radiance with outer physical balance.

Therefore, by integrating these protocols into your practice, you will be able to offer your patients a comprehensive constitutional treatment which is anything but cosmetic, one which views the face as a mirror

of the overall health and well-being of the body. It is necessary for us to achieve more than a pretty face as a result of our efforts; my approach seeks to transform and renew the original essence and beauty of life.

THE THREE LEVELS OF CONSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT

What distinguishes Constitutional Facial Acupuncture from other treatment modalities is the strong constitutional component. It is not a ‘face lift’, because those words do not take into account the constitutional roots and fundamental principles of Chinese medicine.

When you utilize a constitutional approach to facial acupuncture, incorporating the Jing, Ying and Wei, you will be addressing the entirety of your patient’s being.

The Jing Level

The *jing* level of these treatments addresses the Eight Extraordinary meridians, hereditary factors, and their relationship to the endocrine system.

The Ying Level

The *ying* level, which targets post-natal qi and utilizes the twelve regular meridians in the Constitutional Facial Acupuncture protocol, is the second constituent of this three-pronged constitutional approach. The focus here is on nutrition, diet, exercise, sleep patterns, rest and relaxation, creative and emotional expression, and spiritual awareness.

The Wei Level

The *wei* level releases the exterior and is within the purview of the tendino-muscular meridians (TMM). These particular vessels are referred to as tendino-muscular because their symptoms are usually limited to muscle, ligament and joint problems.

Tight, tender, trigger, motor, or ‘ashi’ points are identified through an assessment of the patient’s symptoms, and through palpation.

After the constitution has been addressed, the face can be treated.

THE FACE: THE MOST EMOTIVE PART OF THE BODY

The face is an organic calling card that allows us to communicate and connect with our fellow human beings. This non-verbal communication telegraphs to the world what we think, how we feel, and how we react to inner and outer stimuli. By interpreting our facial expressions, our friends, loved ones, acquaintances, and even strangers are alerted to the ebb and flow of our emotional states prior to the actual voicing of anger, frustration, sadness, or joy.

The face can also indicate a healthy constitution and the emotional well-being of the patient. In my experience, in the *shen*/mind, a thought or feeling is the precursor to a facial line, wrinkle, mark or discoloration. Where these lines are formed depends upon Chinese physiognomy, the five element emotion, organ imbalances, and the movement and intensity of the facial muscles made to express these emotions.

The Origin and Insertion of the Facial Muscles

The origin of the muscle is the beginning of the muscle, because it is usually attached to the bone. This origin anchors the muscle, and it is needled first in Constitutional Facial Acupuncture treatments.

The insertion of the muscle attaches to the skin or muscle fibers, and is needled after the muscle origin. The insertion attachment supports muscle movement in making facial expressions, and allows the face to be mobile and flexible.

Each muscle has a specific function, range and direction of motion, associated emotion and specific wrinkles formed by repetitive and habitual movements.

The Grin: Droopy Mouth

This area of the face represents the corner of the mouth and the risorius muscle, which retracts the angle of the mouth outward, as in grinning.

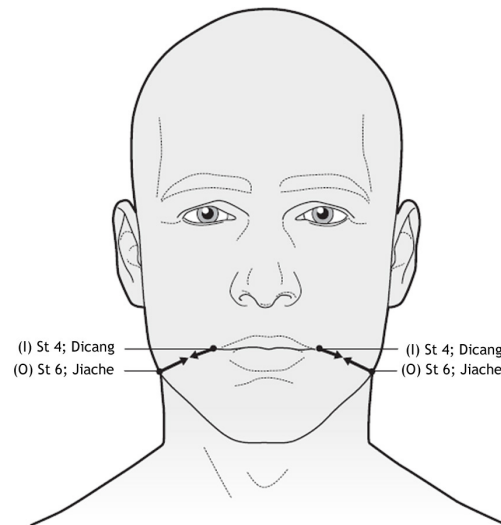


In Chinese face reading, it is well known as the courtesan's or concubine's smile. In ancient China, the Emperor only chose young women with upturned mouths because he knew that these young ladies would be more satisfied and happy with him. The downturned mouth could be trouble and definitely not as fun as their grinning counterparts, while an upturned mouth, with a Cheshire Cat grin and a playful twinkle in the eyes, radiated an aura of mystery.

Emotion: In an unbalanced state, where the mouth droops downward, the emotions expressed are unhappiness, disappointment, sadness and melancholy. The person wearing this expression is just beginning to be dissatisfied, and is not yet depressed, deeply unhappy or grieving.

Lines and wrinkles: As a consequence of this emotion, small lines, creases or parentheses form vertically at the corners of the mouth. The mouth may turn down slightly before these lines appear. If the sadness

goes unchecked, larger marionette or puppet lines could travel down the side of the mouth to meet under the chin in a virtual goatee. Usually this patient hasn't smiled in a long while, and has developed an unconscious habit of frowning. Needling the face energizes and engages the muscles, which can make the patient more aware of their facial expression and the emotions involved in those expressions.



Risorius:	Retracts the angle of the mouth outward, as in grinning
Emotions:	Dissatisfaction, unhappiness, disappointment
Origin:	In the fascia over the masseter muscle
Insertion:	Into the skin at the corner of the mouth
Needling:	30 mm; 38 (#2 Japanese) or 36 gauge (#3 Japanese), 0.3-0.5 cun

PSYCHOSPIRITUAL TREATMENTS

After seeing a patient 2 to 5 times during the course of a Constitutional Facial Acupuncture treatment series, certain emotions may arise that need to be addressed at the constitutional level. When this transpires, I use a treatment with psychospiritual points coupled with specific essential oils to address the *shen* imbalances.

This approach allows for, and facilitates, a natural transformative process within the patient, one which is accentuated and accelerated by the very nature of the facial treatments.

Three Shen Points with Essential Oils

The Three Shen Points located in the scalp are especially effective in transforming Spirit. Their names all contain the word '*shen*,' and they are used to treat psychospiritual issues, ranging from anxiety to manic depression.

I customarily apply these essential oils to the points after needling to augment the potency and efficacy of the treatment, although this is optional. Use 3-4 drops on a Q-tip (cotton bud) to ensure that the tip is wet before applying. Some essential oils can be applied “neat,” while others are too strong, and must be grounded in a carrier oil.

One of the *shen* points, GB-13, *Benshen*, is located 0.5 *cun* within the hairline of the forehead, 3 *cun* lateral to Du-24, *Shenting*.

TCM Indications:

- Calms spirit; schizophrenia, jealousy and suspicion;
- Expels wind; windstroke, epilepsy, Bell’s palsy
- Clears the brain and gathers essence back to the head
- Treats headache, insomnia, epilepsy, stroke, convulsions, split personality, jealousy, lack of will power, confusion
- Calms mood swings, psychic attacks, eases tension

Psychospiritual indications and qualities:

- Gall Bladder point; aids in courage and decision making
- Roots mind/body connection and balances emotions in the organ systems
- Balances extremes of emotion
- Represents the emotional response to one’s worldly challenges
- Supports, grounds and balances life processes

Suggested Essential Oil Pairing:

Ai Wei (Ferula galbaniflua / galbanum)

Galbanum smooths liver qi flow, liver overacting on spleen, expels damp-phlegm and wind-damp, as well as mucus in the lungs. It is also a cellular regenerator.

Properties: Nervine, expectorant, analgesic, antispasmodic, carminative, emmenagogue, resolvent, vulnerary, stimulant

Contraindications: Galbanum is an emmenagogue, which encourages menstruation, hence it is contraindicated for pregnancy

Psychospiritual: Galbanum balances bodymind and spirit, eases tension and is used to address erratic mood swings, as well as psychic blockages. It facilitates meditation and was used by the ancient Egyptians in embalming, because of its preservative properties.

In my experience, spirit points are essential and not optional to the success of a Constitutional Facial Acupuncture treatment series.

A step-by-step facial protocol integrating topical herbal masks, poultices, creams, natural cleansers

and essential oils will enhance your results threefold. Cleansing and hydrating the face is paramount for effective treatments, and the addition of the jade rollers, hydrosols and tuning forks makes this approach more effective.

CONCLUSION: A FEW INSIGHTS

Facial acupuncture seemingly targets only the visible signs of aging, and consequently is often labeled as cosmetic by the general public and many of my fellow acupuncturists.

However, without a strong constitutional component, this modality effects neither long-term change in the patient’s general health, nor does it ameliorate any significant dermatological issues. The face is the most emotive part of the anatomy. These attributes make the face a perfect indicator of physical and psychoemotional imbalances.

The patient/practitioner dynamic is a relationship that depends upon respect and clear communication. Honor your patient’s wishes, but remain true to yourself, anchored in your integrity, wisdom and good judgment.

My philosophy of facial acupuncture focuses on the idea of renewal. The patient who embarks upon a Constitutional Facial Acupuncture treatment series has made a commitment to a profound transformational journey.

MARY ELIZABETH WAKEFIELD, L.AC., M.S., M.M., *author of Constitutional Facial Acupuncture, is one of the leading proponents of facial renewal techniques in the world today, and has been awarded with the title of Educator of the Year by the American Association of Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) for her contributions to the field of Oriental medicine as a teacher, creator of innovative treatment protocols, writer for acupuncture periodicals, and advocate of acupuncture in the national media. Mary Elizabeth has personally trained close to 4,500 acupuncturists, bodyworkers and estheticians from 5 continents in her protocols, and maintains a private practice in New York City.*



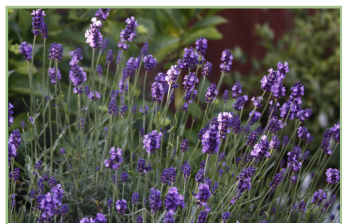
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ESSENTIAL OILS AND SHEN

By David Crow, L.Ac.



Aromatherapy using essential oils is a primary treatment for what OM describes as *shen*—the health of the spirit. There are many fascinating reasons for this, which are based

on the relationship between the breath and mind, the sense of smell and the limbic system, and the impacts of aroma on the endocrine and neurological systems. Specifically, fragrance has a strong influence on the centers of the brain related to emotional states, memory, and circadian rhythms, and is therefore a direct link to the neurochemistry underlying *shen* disturbances.



In clinical practice, the use of aromatherapy is one of the most fast-acting, nontoxic and effective ways of both elevating the mood and calming the mind. Aromatherapy, especially when used on a daily basis in the environment, can have a significant impact on regulating and improving sleep cycles, on the one hand, and supporting alertness and concentration on the other. Aromatherapy can also be beneficial in a variety of symptoms related to hormonal imbalances and the menstrual cycle, including those related to happiness or unhappiness of the *shen*, pointing to regulation of circadian rhythms through the olfactory sense.

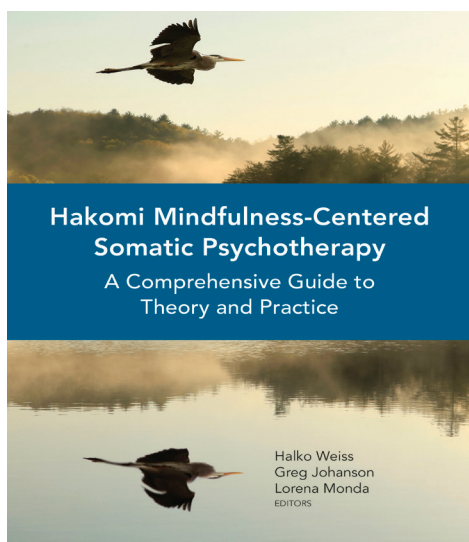
There are various therapeutic groups of oils that can be clearly associated with *shen*. These oils are known

both historically and in modern research to have significant effects on the mind, emotions, sleep, relaxation, and other parameters that describe the expressions of *shen*.

These are:

- Oils that calm and uplift the *shen* and rejuvenate vitality through improved sleep and rest (relaxant anxiolytics and nervine tonic anti-depressants). These include **lavender, clary sage, palmarosa, geranium, rose, and most other floral oils.**
- Oils that work directly on releasing repressed memories and emotional traumas stored in the subconscious by the limbic system, including **jatamansi, valerian** and oils that induce dream activity such as **clary sage.**
- Oils that uplift the mind and heart by evoking spiritual moods. These include **agarwood, sandalwood, frankincense, palo santo, rose, lotus, and most exotic florals.**
- Oils that enhance cognitive functions in general, specifically concentration, learning and memory, and oils that prevent and reverse neurological degeneration. These include oils that clear the mind such as the **conifers and eucalypti**, those that focus and relax the mind such as **lavender** and **melissa**, those that stimulate the mind such as **peppermint** and **rosemary.**

DAVID CROW, L.AC. is one of the world's foremost experts and leading speakers in the field of botanical medicine and grassroots healthcare. He is a master herbalist, aromatherapist, and acupuncturist with over 30 years experience and is an expert in the Ayurvedic and Chinese medical systems. David is a renowned author, a poet, and is the founding director of Floracopeia Aromatic Treasures.



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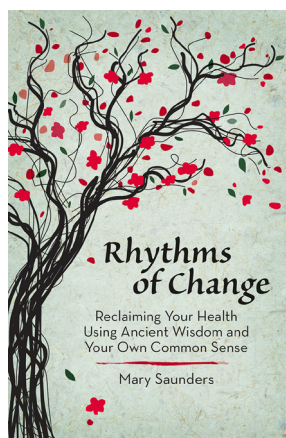
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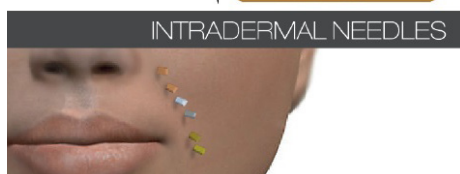
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BONE BROTH FINDS THE SPOTLIGHT

By Andrew Sterman

In the dietary branch of Chinese Medicine, cooking bones is a method to extract the essence of the animal in a way that can most easily be digested and assimilated. There is something shamanistic about it; we are trying to absorb the deepest digestible energy of the animal. Yes, high cuisine relies upon stocks for finesse and depth, but the focus in dietary therapy is on the deep resonance between the bone essence of a long-cooked stock and our own deepest level: bones, joints, blood building marrow, kidneys, reproductive system and the very special organ that resides surrounded by bone, the brain.

That's the theory, but does it do anything in practice? I'll leave the studies to others, but in my experience, bone stocks are extremely helpful for individuals who are depleted or run down from stressful lifestyle, over-exertion, travel, illness or old age. Bone stock is a bit like a dietary dose of ginseng—it's stimulating, grounding and fortifying at the same time.

According to the classical teachings of Chinese Medicine, stocks are not interchangeable. A beef bone broth strengthens our constitutional health and is very anchoring, while chicken stock stimulates our immune response and is more warming. Turkey and duck stock are somewhere in between. Fish bone stock is often forgotten but is fantastic as both cooking stock and health tonic, resonating with the skeletal and reproductive level. Fish bone stock cooks more quickly (fish bones are softer and quite skinny); 6-8 hours makes an excellent fish stock. Seafood offers a wide variety to work with: lobster and crab shell (more stimulating, for adrenal exhaustion) or oyster and clam shell (more calming, for emotional stress).

Although not bones, broths made from dried scallops, mussels, shrimp, abalone and other shellfish are also common and important, particularly in Asian cuisine. Shellfish are constantly in the process of creating their shells and are therefore seen as particularly supportive to our own bone maintenance level. All the stocks provide calcium and other minerals and the land animal stocks also provide rich nutrition from marrow. To make a **vegetarian stock**, use seaweed (usually kombu/kelp) and dried mushrooms, both vegetarian foods that resonate at the constitutional level (we make vegetarian stocks often, only partly because they are ready in 20 minutes).

HOW TO PREPARE

Buy 3-5 pounds stock bones from a good butcher shop. They'll know to give you bones high in connective tissue, such as knee joints. The best stocks congeal in the refrigerator due to collagen and such; using only femurs and polite bones will make a delicious but less miraculous stock. Always seek organic or pasture-raised meat products.

Roast the bones on a baking sheet in a 350°F oven for 20-30 minutes.

Meanwhile, roughly chop 1 leek, a few medium carrots and a few stalks of celery, toss them in the bottom of a stock pot with a tiny splash of olive oil and couple pinches of salt. Start them going, not too hot.

When the bones have browned a bit (they will also give off some fat that you don't need to use), toss them into the stock pot, cover with water and bring to a simmer. Stock must not be allowed to reach a rolling boil. A full boil will turn stock bitter and ruin its clarity, so prized in high cuisine. Stock should have a slow-rising bubble every few seconds, no more. Use the stovetop's lowest setting.

Add a good splash of cider vinegar or white wine vinegar (1/4 cup) and a half dozen dried mushrooms (optional, but a great option).

Cook on steady, low heat for 1-2 days without stop. I generally cook mine for two and a half days.

When it's done, pour the stock through a strainer into another pot to collect the bones and bits. From the collection pot, ladle or pour into refrigerator containers. Cool in the refrigerator overnight. Fat will separate to the top for removal and the stock will show its character by congealing through its natural gelatins.

Scoop some into a saucepan to melt before drinking. Some like it straight, some opened up with some warm water. Salt to taste if desired (salt is a mineral of the sea and joins the work of the stock unless a person has a specific renal

hypertension that is sensitive to salt intake). While you have it on hand, by all means explore cooking with stock in soups and sauces. For a good home cook, the addition of a great stock is what you need to match fine restaurant cooking.

FURTHER NOTES FOR CLINICIAN/COOKS DON'T FORGET FISH BONE BROTH

A good fishmonger will save the skeletons and heads after filleting fresh fish and give them to you without charge or for a minimal fee of perhaps two dollars a pound. Where I shop in New York City, the guys are pleased when you carefully select beautiful fish for dinner but they get excited if you ask for bones to make stock. Ask for white fish skeletons; avoid the high oil fishes, such as salmon, until comfortable enough with fish stock to know how to use the stronger taste these fish will provide. Include the heads and fins if you can.

As with beef bone stock, begin by roasting the bones on a baking tray in a 350°F oven for 20-30 minutes. This isn't necessary but does contribute a beautiful taste to the finished stock.

While the bones are roasting, coarsely chop a few carrots and a couple celery stalks and toss them into the stock pot with a small splash of olive oil and a generous pinch of salt. Improvise with



2 BONE BROTH

other root vegetables such as leek, daikon, burdock or parsnip, but avoid those that will overwhelm the color of the stock, such as beets.

Also toss in a half dozen dried mushrooms and a single piece of dried kombu.

Add an inch of water to soften the vegetables, mushrooms and kombu.

Add the fish skeleton (a couple if small, perhaps a half a skeleton if a large fish such as cod or grouper, a whole large skeleton if cooking for broth clients), then cover with cool water. Bring up to nearly boiling but quickly reduce heat to sustain a simmer. As with decocting herbs, the intensity of the flame becomes a major contributor to the influence the dish will exert. Classical herbalist language contains the message also for food therapists and home cooks: wake foods quickly with a soldier's flame, then reduce for long cooking with a scholar's flame.

Add 1/4 cup white wine vinegar to extract calcium from the bones (the calcium of the bones will neutralize the acid in the vinegar, the extracted calcium will stay in the broth which will not taste vinegary).

Cook the fish stock at a low simmer with a scholar's flame for 6-8 hours. Strain in a colander over another pot or large bowl, allowing ample time for all the essential goodness to drip from the solids. Cooking overnight or up to 36 hours is fine.

While beef fat is no longer seen as a disease-causing factor, fish oils are positively revered in modern nutrition teachings. In our home and for my dietary clients, I serve fish stock without separating fat, but I do separate fat from the top of land animal or poultry bone stock. There is nothing particularly wrong with this fat; traditionally it was collected and saved for other cooking or for spreading on bread. There are two reasons to separate the fat from the broth (it will congeal on top for easy skimming once the broth is refrigerated overnight). The first reason simply is that many people deeply distrust fat, and it is essential that our patients/clients trust and accept their food. The second reason is merely a matter of cook's pride. A finely crafted stock will congeal with natural gelatin and collagen; fat isn't needed for richness of flavor or thickness of texture.

DIGESTION

Digestion is more important than nutritional content; without good digestion even the best foods fail to nourish. This simple message explains why Chinese Medicine can be so much more successful with very weak patients than Western modalities, as modern thinking tends to emphasize material substance over functional capability (qi). Chinese Medicine has always been deeply interested in strengthening digestion. Here, dietary therapy is traditionally considered the highest medicine. Regarding broth, the essential idea is that the food is as close to pre-digested as possible, thanks to the very long cooking process.

Digestion can be seen as the continuation of the ripening process. For example, unripe bananas tax digestion, yellow bananas are less taxing, but brown spotted bananas are best; the stomach, spleen/pancreas and small intestine will finish the 'ripening' process as the banana is transformed, transported and assimilated. Fruits and

vegetables are said to ripen, animal foods to rot. Digestion is called ripening and rotting in classic texts because digestion of food eaten is not fundamentally different from spoiling of foods left uneaten. Digestion carefully directs and hastens a natural process. Stomach Fire is necessary for digestion (along with air from above—*da qi*—mixing with digesting food, but that is another discussion). If stomach fire (digestive strength) weakens, cooking fire becomes ever more important. Long-cooked foods tonify yang qi as they simultaneously provide nourishment that has been transformed (pre-digested) during two days of steady, gentle heat. To drink bone stock as a therapeutic tonic is to be given a gift of post-natal qi, already ripened, rotted, and (nearly) transformed. The added yang qi (from the prolonged cooking fire) helps with transportation, providing the most easily assimilated nourishment possible (and helping us shift our focus from material content to energetic function). The term 'rotting' is used in a very specific way, of course. If digestion is strong, our foods don't rot in our guts, bacteria being managed by stomach acids and other secretions (a sign of weak digestion is distention, belching or flatulence, signs that bacteria are playing too large a role in digesting what has been eaten). Broth transforms without rotting in the conventional sense because the barely boiling temperature is too high for pernicious bacteria during the two day cooking process. Again, cooking fire is replacing stomach fire in function.

Chinese Medicine sees the role of culinary spices primarily as aiding digestion and tuning internal harmonies. In this view, cuisine considerations evolved after therapeutic uses of spices and kitchen herbs. In stocks, these views often meet with the addition of aromatic spices. Strongly warming spices are often added (particular in the French tradition), such as whole black peppercorns, clove, onion and garlic. I recommend a plainer stock, but after long cooking, these herbs—classified as hot—are tempered and can be safely used to further support yang qi. For skillful use as Chinese Medicine, however, it is always important to be clear about intention. Are we aiming at *ying* (nutritive qi) in the middle burner? Grain congee seasoned with fresh ginger and scallion would be better, or stew/soup with star anise, cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, turmeric or clove (or simply five spice powder). When using a bone broth, we should be careful not to stimulate the *yuan* qi level through hot spices, particularly for those who need the stock the most, individuals with floating or leaking *yuan* qi.

Whether for dietary medicine or for making a beautiful (and deeply nourishing) dinner, homemade bone stocks are in a class by themselves. Although at first we may provide appropriately crafted bone broth for others, mastering the making of bone broths is something our patients can learn to empower their own healing. It is a key step in raising the home cook to her or his rightful place: Director of Family Health.

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