



## Resolving Grief – A Required Process for Healing

by Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S.

**E**motions and their effect on the physical body has been a key component of Chinese medicine diagnosis and treatment strategies for centuries. Accordingly, our emotional responses are viewed as essential aspects of life that oftentimes arise with negative consequences. While emotions can resolve themselves naturally in time, the effects of unbalanced emotions often impede Qi (vital energy) flow in a way leading to unpleasant physical symptoms.

If an emotion becomes excessive, stagnant, stuck or buried it has the potential to impede Qi flow so negatively that it limits a person's ability to live a productive, healthy life. Interestingly, lack of a particular emotion also signifies a potential problem for proper ener-

getic flow within the body. This is what Chinese medicine diagnostic questioning seeks to uncover in order to either prevent or treat a presenting symptom at its root – what is traditionally termed an endogenous cause of disease.

As an example, grief is an emotion that can often be suspect as a root cause of disease. According to The Law of the Five Elements, the emotion of grief is related to the Metal Element that is associated with the Yin organ of the Lungs, which govern both amount, and distribution of Qi flowing throughout the entire body. The lungs physically take in oxygen upon inhalation and release carbon dioxide upon exhalation and are also responsible for healthy respiratory function. Similarly, energetic function of the lungs is to “take in the

new and let go of the old” as a way of creating healthy emotional processing. An example of impairment of these functions would be someone suffering from unresolved grief while experiencing chronic, unrelenting bronchitis.

Chinese medicine practitioners offer treatment to strengthen the lungs to restore energetic health and physical well-being – including but not limited to acupuncture, acupressure, cupping, massage, Qigong and Tai Chi exercise and utilization of an individualized Chinese herbal program and/or Chinese food therapeutics. Chinese herbs and foods that nourish lung energetics include those that are pungent/spicy or white. Examples include garlic, ginger, onion, cabbage, barley, pear, radish, rice, cinnamon, leeks and cucumber. The deep, rhythmical breathing exercises combined with visualization performed during Qigong facilitates “breathing in the new and releasing the old”. This is instrumental in manifestation of energetic self-care, release of grief and forging of a Qi balanced mind, body and spirit.

Furthermore, the lungs are associated with the skin – meaning vibrant, clear, soft, youthful skin. The lungs “open to the nose” and determine its proper function so excellent sense of smell and breathing is the natural result of ample and strong lung Qi as well. Full expression of grief, as opposed to repression or judgment of oneself for experiencing such debilitating feelings is also highly recommended. Many people experience healing via talk therapy through guidance from a psychologist or social worker, especially one specializing in grief counseling. The more one can “lighten their grief load”, the greater their lung potential for maximum Qi flourishing throughout the entire body which maintains strong immunity, calm and peaceful heart, clear mind, openness, healthy body and bright happy spirit.

As a well-trained, experienced practitioner in the field of Chinese medicine for over 40 years, I offer professional and skillful healthcare services to my patients and students. As founder and director of the Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center since 1988, an extraordinary environment has been established for people to attain their health and healing goals, a place where they feel welcome, comfortable and safe with full assurance they are in expert hands.

As a health-care provider, I have been on a four-decade quest for knowledge of how to best serve my patients and students. My work has culminated into a unique expression drawing from the wealth of knowledge received from superb schools and gifted teachers. I continue to synthesize these teachings together with the many years of work experience resulting in a distinctive Chinese medicine approach designed to help others manifest energetic and physical healing.

*Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S., is the author of Qigong for Staying Young, co-author of Feeling Light and the director of the Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center in Shrewsbury, NJ. For more information, visit [www.healing4u.com](http://www.healing4u.com) and [www.qigong4u.com](http://www.qigong4u.com)*