



# Mind Body Healing

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

Chinese medicine is a multi-dimensional approach to healing that includes the mind and emotions. This ancient form of holistic healing has established theories addressing many facets of the interaction between one's physical health status and their prevailing mental and emotional state of being.

A main goal of Chinese medicine is to address symptoms along with their root cause. In many instances, the root cause falls under the realm of how a person is thinking and feeling. Theories of Chinese medicine employed for assessment and diagnostic purpose include the Yin/Yang Theory and Five Element Theory – both based on the energetic Laws of Nature.

A Chinese medicine provider, such as an acupuncturist, will ask questions about a patient's emotional and mental state. Each emotion is associated with a particular organ system. An acupuncturist gathers and assesses symptoms and signs which points them to a Chinese medicine diagnosis which is then used as the basis for their treatment plan with the ultimate goal of re-storing and maintaining energetic balance. It is employed to identify appropriate acupuncture points to treat in addition

to duration and frequency of treatment – which is based on a person's individual needs. It is an approach that often includes recommendation of herbs, foods, massage and right living habits according to Chinese medicine theory, in addition to Chinese exercises such as tai chi or qigong.

The energetics of the heart plays a key role in dealing effectively with thoughts, emotions and feelings. Repression of feelings negatively impacts heart energy, leading to blockage that manifests as depression, anxiety and lack of joy. It is thus essential to feel and acknowledge feelings, rather than ignoring or denying their existence. They come to the surface for a multitude of reasons and need to be accepted for what they are – rather than attempting to change or eliminate them. The following seven ways help you to better deal with feelings and emotions:

- Identify and experience them without judgment
- Experience feelings fully without shame
- As feelings come to the surface, refrain from self-medicating with food or other substances
- Be careful not to project feelings onto others
- Work feelings out through journaling, meditating, exercising and/or talk therapy
- Commit to processing emotions & feelings in a constructive manner
- Share feelings in an honest & careful manner, without harming others

This allows feeling and emotions to flow through the heart energetic system, which is built to process them in a way that results in greater emotional balance. Healing through Chinese medicine involves “working on oneself” to bring emotions and thoughts into greater alignment. This happens through insightful discussion with one's acupuncturist resulting in greater understanding of how ways of feeling and thinking impacts the energetic systems of the body. Significant healing results from such awareness, along with additional processing that occur during an acupuncture session.

Acupuncturist Lonny S. Jarrett states in his book *Nourishing Destiny*: “Insight provided by the practitioner may initiate feelings of emotional pain in patients as they experience sorrow trapped in their hearts. However, in the long term such insight may realign the heart-kidney axis of patients in a way that empowers insight and intuition. The restoration of



these virtues is paramount if original nature is restored. A hallmark of those of the fire constitution is that reaction to joy or sadness is the unconscious motivating force underlying habitual behavior. The person has long ago rejected the inner knowing of the heart in order to pursue the mind's desires and avoid pain in life”.

Adopting this approach to deal with thoughts, emotions and feelings, results in greater acceptance of oneself and others. It draws forth renewed energy – as it takes a lot of energy to repress feelings. And when old ones have been released, the goal is to continually circulate new ones as they arise constructively through the heart energy system. This produces a sense of relief and hope for inner peace. Making simple adjustments in how one approaches thoughts, feelings and emotions creates significant steps toward optimal health and wellness.

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