走進觸不到的社區。

封面故事

一個頭重腳輕，一個頭輕腳重，一陰一陽，各代表中國的養生哲學和西方的心理學說。本是光譜兩端的牠們，原以為風馬牛不相及，怎料卻能互補相生、充份調和，讓你的身心靈健康飛得更高更遠... ...

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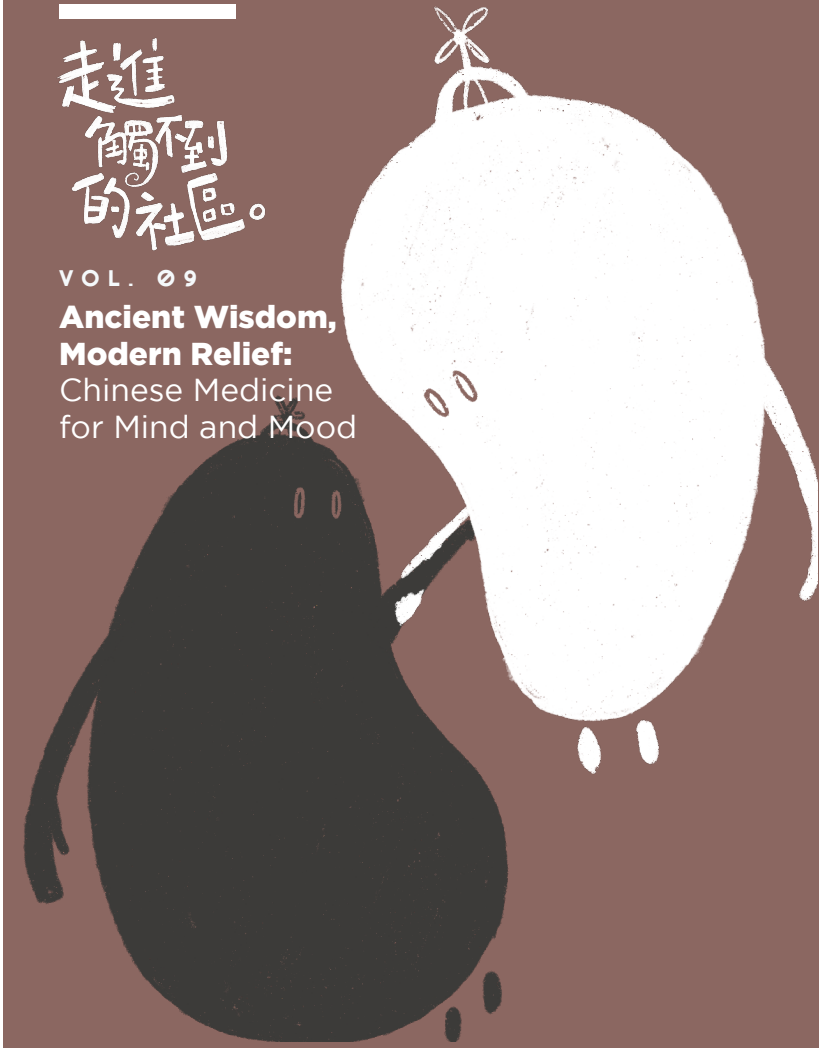
VOL. 09

Ancient Wisdom, Modern Relief:
Chinese Medicine for Mind and Mood



Take time to enjoy
a cup of tea
for yourself.
●●●

Chinese and Western Medicine in Psychological Health

QUESTION

Can a Chinese Medicine Practitioner help improve emotions?

Academic studies show that Chinese medicine practices such as internal herbal medicine, acupuncture, acupressure, etc., can directly or indirectly improve patients' emotions and sleep quality. Moreover, these methods generally have minimal side effects and are non-addictive. Research indicates that public clinics in Hong Kong extensively use Chinese medicine or a combination of Chinese and Western medicine to assist in improving emotional and sleep issues. Modern Chinese medicine textbooks provide detailed explanations and treatment directions for conditions like "depression" and "insomnia."

QUESTION

Can Chinese medicine be taken together with Western medicine?

Under the guidance of a professional physician, Chinese and Western medicines can be taken simultaneously. They can complement each other and reduce the side effects (such as dry mouth, insomnia, constipation, etc.) caused by serotonin. It is generally recommended to take Chinese and Western medicines at least 2 hours apart to avoid interaction.

Viewing Emotional Issues from a Chinese Medicine Perspective

Chinese medicine doesn't adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to treating emotional problems. Instead, it considers the patient's constitution, symptoms, and other factors to determine an appropriate treatment method. By treating the body as a whole and focusing on the overall coordination of the organs, Chinese medicine aims to avoid the use of simple suppression methods, resulting in fewer side effects.

Chinese medicine believes that various emotional problems are related to imbalances in the body's qi, blood, yin, and yang. For example, "The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon" explicitly mentions the impact of emotions on "qi," where different emotions can directly affect the flow of qi. Ultimately, imbalances, stagnation, and disruptions in various "qi" can lead to various diseases.

Conditions like "depression" fall within the scope of Chinese medicine's understanding, with meanings such as accumulation, stagnation, and congestion. Feeling stressed, anxious, or tense is categorized as "palpitations," "insomnia," or "stomach pain."

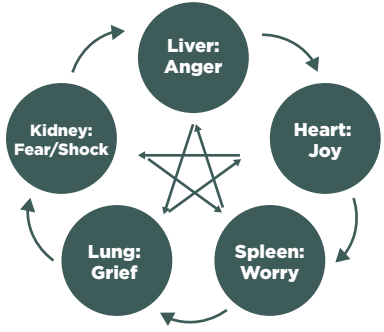
Chinese Medicine's Perspective on Depression

「憂鬱」

- **Depression and loss of interest**
- **Low mood or excitement, easily angered or tearful**
- **Restlessness, difficulty concentrating**
- **Insomnia with frequent dreams**
- **Chest and rib pain, stomach pain**
- **Feeling of foreign body obstruction in the throat**
- **Easily tired, slow reactions**
- **Impact on interpersonal relationships, work performance**

Emotions and the Five Elements

Emotions are a psychological response of the body to the external environment and are initially neutral. If the release of various emotions conforms to regulation and moderation, it leads to a state of peace and harmony without causing illness. However, once emotions are suppressed or become extreme beyond a certain limit, becoming difficult to control, abnormal emotional activities can lead to imbalances in the functions of the organs and result in illness.



The "Five Emotions" – joy, anger, thought, grief, and fear – are connected to the functions of the five organs, and different emotions can directly damage the corresponding organs. We can observe and feel various physical discomforts or symptoms associated with emotions. Here are some possible symptoms related to emotions for your reference:

Anger	**Headache, dizziness, eye problems, irregular menstruation, lower abdominal cramps**
Joy/Sadness	**Heart problems, chest pain, mental instability**
Thought	**Appetite loss, stomach pain, bloating, belching, abdominal pain, diarrhea**
Grief	**Cough, shortness of breath, blood in the sputum, wheezing, discomfort in the head and neck**
Fear	**Lumbar and knee pain, hair loss, tinnitus, genital diseases, discomfort in the lower limbs, urinary and fecal incontinence**

Psychological Health Lifestyle Adjustments

Psychological adjustment is essential for treating "depression," and it has been emphasized by Chinese medicine throughout history. "Plain Questions: Discussion of Soups and Broths" points out that "if the spirit does not enter, and the will is not rectified, the disease cannot be cured." It emphasizes that mental activities can directly affect the course of the disease and the effectiveness of recovery.

Like Western medicine, Chinese medicine's treatment of "depression" must be accompanied by adjustments in psychological aspects. Starting with lifestyle changes to nurture both the body and mind:

1. **Maintain a regular lifestyle, including a consistent sleep schedule and regular meals. Engage in regular exercise and leisure time, considering traditional Chinese exercises like the Eight Brocades.**
2. **Avoid staying indoors all day; breathe fresh air and bask in the sun in nature.**
3. **Adjust your mindset to increase life enjoyment; do things you are interested in to enhance confidence in treating the disease and improve the quality of**
4. **Follow a light diet.**
5. **Be aware of your emotional state, cultivate a mindful and non-judgmental attitude, and accept each moment.**

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Emotional Therapy

Tea therapy and acupressure are generally effective in temporarily relieving emotions. However, TCM believes that emotional therapy can target the core issues, making it a key method for curing various emotional problems.

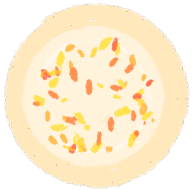
The "Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon" states the following principles: "Anger injures the liver, sadness overcomes anger," "Joy injures the heart, fear overcomes joy," "Worry injures the spleen, anger overcomes worry," "Grief injures the lungs, joy overcomes grief," and "Fear injures the kidneys, worry overcomes fear." These principles are based on the theory of the five elements and the generating and controlling relationships among them.

Zhang Zihe, one of the four great physicians of the Jin Dynasty, also proposed the concept of "Overcoming Emotions with Emotions" in his work "Rumen Shiqin," where he detailed some clinical cases. For example, there was a woman who suffered from insomnia due to excessive overthinking. After diagnosis, it was identified as a "spleen" condition in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). The TCM practitioner and the woman's husband agreed on a treatment method involving provoking anger, including excessively collecting her money, etc. However, no actual treatment was given; instead, the woman left in anger. Surprisingly, after this incident, the woman became extremely angry, had a good night's sleep, and perspired. Subsequently, her appetite improved, and her insomnia showed signs of improvement. This illustrates the application of the TCM principle of "anger overcoming excessive thinking" in practice.

The above example may seem exaggerated, but according to the theory of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) emotional therapy, we can practice in our daily lives to become decisive and reduce overthinking, using rational thinking to overcome fear, adopting a compassionate heart to overcome anger, and cultivating joy to overcome sadness.

Chinese Medicine Emotional Therapy

1 Chamomile Tea Therapy



- Materials: About 6-8 grams of chamomile flowers
- Method: Steep in boiling water for 5 minutes, then drink
- Effects: Chamomile flowers have a mild nature and can nourish the heart, invigorate the spleen, and relieve depression, promoting qi circulation.
- Suitable for individuals with liver qi stagnation, emotional depression, symptoms such as easy insomnia, nervousness, and forgetfulness.

Note: It is not suitable for those with heavy internal phlegm-damp or those who have difficulty sleeping due to external influences.

Trivia about Chinese medicinal herbs: Mimosa flowers and evening primroses are often confused, and their functions are completely different. They should be distinguished in their use.

2 Rose Tea for Depression Relief

- Materials: 5 roses, 3 grams of wolfberry, 2 longan fruits, a suitable amount of honey
- Method: Put the ingredients in a cup, steep in warm water for about 10 minutes
- Effects: Promotes qi circulation, relieves depression, activates blood circulation, and alleviates pain.
- Suitable for individuals with liver qi stagnation, such as emotional depression, rib or stomach pain, premenstrual breast pain, and belching.

Note: Prolonged use or warmth-inducing properties may have drawbacks, and it is not suitable for individuals with yin deficiency or those prone to heat and excessive internal fire.

Note: Medicinal herbs all have specific properties, and incorrect usage may have adverse effects. If you have any questions, please consult a registered Chinese medicine practitioner promptly.

Self-Acupressure Points

Here are some commonly used health acupressure points. Each point can be massaged with the thumb or forefinger, applying slight pressure until a slight soreness is felt. Massage each point approximately 60 times per minute, three times a day, or when symptoms occur.

1 Baihui (DU20)

- Main Effects: Treats depression, headaches, dizziness, insomnia, and forgetfulness.
- Location: On the midline of the head, 5 inches directly above the midpoint of the anterior hairline or the midpoint between the earlobes.

2 Yintang (EX-HN3)

- Main Effects: Treats dizziness, rhinitis, and insomnia.
- Location: On the midline between both eyebrows, at the focal point of a line connecting the two eyebrow tips.

3 Neiguan (PC6)

- Main Effects: Treats heart pain, palpitations, stomach pain, vomiting, insomnia, and migraines.
- Location: On the palm side of the forearm, 2 inches above the wrist crease, in the middle.

4 Shenmen (HT7)

- Main Effects: Treats restlessness, insomnia, headaches, and dizziness.
- Location: On the palmar side of the wrist, above the transverse wrist crease, in the depression on the ulnar (pinky finger) side.

5 Shanzhong (RN17)

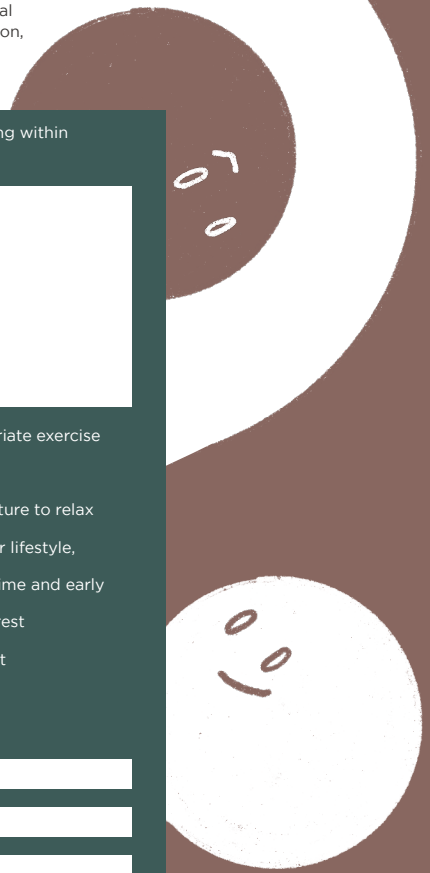
- Main Effects: Treats chest tightness, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, cough, and low mood.
- Location: Between the nipples, on the midline, at the level of the fourth intercostal space.

Self-Acupressure Points

Set your goals for the next month to promote physical and mental health through Chinese medicine practices, including time, location, content, and any companionship.

I, _____ [Your Name], aim to achieve the following within _____ [Specify Month]:

- ○ Drinking chamomile tea
- ○ Drinking rose tea for depression relief
- ○ Taking a tea break for myself
- ○ Massaging acupressure points (DU20, EX-HN3, PC6, HT7, RN17)
- ○ Being mindful of my emotions and body
- ○ Engaging in appropriate exercise and sun exposure
- ○ Spending time in nature to relax
- ○ Maintaining a regular lifestyle, including early bedtime and early rising, and daytime rest
- ○ Following a light diet
- ○ Doing things I enjoy
- ○ Other: _____



For more scientifically validated information on the relationship between Chinese and Western medicine and psychological health, visit the "Integration of Chinese and Western Medicine" website at The Chinese University of Hong Kong:

For more information on Chinese herbal medicine, you can visit the Chinese Medicine Regulatory Office of the Department of Health, Hong Kong

Additionally, if you are interested, you can read the book "Toward Healing," where the author, Dr. Li Yuming, provides detailed insights into the relationship between