

**“The Doctor is the Medicine”  
The heart & the five shen in the life of the TCM practitioner**

**Short version**

**Theoretical presentation (70%)**

- Introduction - the Doctor is the Medicine.
- Illustration through a clinical example.
- The doctor’s inner qualities through the eyes of Chinese medicine and philosophy.
- The significance of the heart - contemporary science and ancient wisdom.
- Anatomy of the human spirit - exploring the nature and the cultivation of the five spirits: shen/spirit, zhi/will, p’o/coporeal soul, hun /ethereal soul, and yi/ intention

**Experiential part (30%)**

Invocation of the five shen through guided meditation and imaging exercises and discussion, enabling participants to connect with their own subtle forces, get a direct measure of their power and discover ways to cultivate them.

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**Long version**

## The doctor is the medicine

*“By far the most frequently used drug in general practice was the doctor himself, i.e. that it was not only the bottle of medicine or the box of pills that mattered, but the way the doctor gave them to his patient – in fact, the whole atmosphere in which the drug was given and taken.”* ( Balint 1957, p.1)

A similar idea is found in the ancient Daoist text ‘The Fasting of the Heart ‘ which gives emphasis to the light of the shen/spirit as *the* healing agency that resides in the human heart. The shen is said to emanate, not through an accumulation of energy, but from a mysterious void. The void is not an absence but a potential space for communication, creativity and healing interaction.

*“ Look at this window, it is nothing but a hole in the wall, but because of it, the whole room is full of light. So, when the faculties are empty, the heart is full of light, being full of light it becomes an influence by which others are secretly transformed”* ( Merton, 2004, p.56)

Both references, one from modern and one from ancient texts refer to the ‘medicinal’ power that lies within the doctor, which Chuang Tzu locates in the heart. The implication is that the doctor’s intrinsic human qualities are instrumental in the patient’s healing journey, placing *the way* of healing before any *specific method*.

To find out what this might mean for practitioners, we will take a deeper look into this 'fullness of light', the source of healing transformation ling. Looking more closely at the anatomy of the human spirit through the eyes of Chinese Medicine, we will examine the nature of the five shen: shen/spirit, zhi/will, p'o/corporeal soul, hun /ethereal soul and yi/intention. We will explore their texture and fine mechanics, their interdependence and their resonance with the five elements (fire, earth, metal, water & wood) and consider ways in which these qualities can be cultivated within ourselves. In addition, we will examine the significance of the heart, drawing parallels between neuro science and ancient wisdom, and highlighting the intelligence of the heart as the emotional, moral and spiritual centre of our lives.

Finally we will gather together all five spirits into the centre of the earth element and look at their significance in the doctor's every day clinical reality. In service to the patient, the will, spirit, ethereal soul and corporeal soul become medicinally efficacious via the doctor's yi (power of intention). The workshop will end with a close look at Sun Simiao's famous quotes: "*Medicine is intention - Those who are proficient at using intention are good doctors*".

**Recommended readings:**

- Balint M (2000), *The Doctor, His Patient And The Illness*, Churchill Livingstone,
- Merton T. (2004): *The Way of Chuang Tzu*, Shambala Library
- Childre D. & Martin H.(2000): *The HeartMath Solution*, Harper Collins Publ.,
- Scheid V, Bensky D. (1998). *Medicine as Signification - Moving Towards Healing Power In The Chinese Medical Tradition*. *European Journal of Oriental Medicine*, Vol 2 No 6.
- Larre C. & Rochat De La Vallee E.:
  - *The Secret Treatise of the Spiritual Orchid* , Monkey Press Publ. (1992)
  - *The Heart*, Monkey Press Publ. (2004)
  - *Rooted in Spirit*, Station Hill Press (1995)

## Short version

### Wu Wei

#### **Is it essential in today's TCM practice?**

*A 'World Café' conversational process*

This 1½ hour interactive process will begin with a short introduction to *wu wei* and its different translations. Whether we look at '*non-action*', '*effortless action*' or '*action that is in accordance with the Dao*', *wu wei* is essentially a mysterious concept that is difficult to grasp with the ordinary mind. Since it is considered to be the ultimate Daoist goal, should practitioners of Traditional Chinese Medicine make it their highest aspiration? How essential is *wu wei* in TCM practice today?

The process of inquiry will be facilitated through the world café conversational model, a format that activates, opens and brings to light the groups' intelligence.

#### **World Café Format:**

- ✓ Turns audiences from being passive listeners into active thinkers and contributors
- ✓ Facilitates cross-pollination of ideas
- ✓ Facilitates thinking outside the box & taps into new intelligent territory
- ✓ Promotes new inspirations & deepened insights
- ✓ Creates a diverse perspective
- ✓ Encourages each member to contribute
- ✓ Listen together for patterns, insights and deeper questions
- ✓ Shares collective discoveries
- ✓ Enlivens and builds community

## Long version

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### **World Café – How it works**

As a conversational process, the World Café is an innovative yet simple methodology for hosting conversations about questions that matter. These conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-fertilise ideas, and discover new insights into the questions or issues that are important in life, work, or community. Today the question we are discussing is: **“How essential is wu wei in TCM practice today ?”** The World Café can evoke and make visible the collective intelligence of any group. It enables people to have creative conversations while sitting in a café-style around small tables.

Ideas which emerge from the conversation are manually recorded. After 20 min. people move to a new table and the conversation continues. This usually happens for three or four rounds. One member of the initial group will remain at the table to host the new conversation and help to build links between the different strands.

**Pre-booking** is essential as numbers are limited and the room needs to be set up beforehand

**Health Warning!** This process can seriously stimulate your Fire Element!

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### **Biography**

Gaby was born in Germany and has lived in the UK since 1972. Since 1978 she has been working in Oxford as an acupuncturist and as a UK Council for Psychotherapy registered Transpersonal Psychotherapist since 1996. After eight years of study with J.R. Worseley she was awarded Master of Acupuncture in 1984. Subsequent studies included the London *Journal of Chinese Medicine* course and the integration course at the *College of Integrated Chinese Medicine* in Reading, England.

In the mid 1980's, together with Sigrid Klain, Gaby ran the first ever *Five Element Seminars* in Germany (Berlin and Frankfurt). Since then she has been a five element lecturer at both undergraduate & postgraduate levels. For seven years she taught at the London College of Traditional Acupuncture, which included the study of *'The Five Elements and the Therapeutic relationship'*. For the last twelve years she has been a tutor at the 'Schule fuer Traditionelle Chinesische Medizin', in Offenbach, and runs

courses in personal & professional development, such as *The Five Elements & The Art of Self-Cultivation*. She practices as supervisor to both psychotherapists and acupuncturists. Gaby's personal development has included 28 years of study and practice within the vedic tradition. In 2005 she was initiated in the Indian Himalayas in the performance of the ancient vedic fire ceremony.