

We Get Letters & E-Mail

Let's Not Throw the Water Buffalo Out with the Bath Water

Dear Editor:

I would like to respond to the November 2002 article, "Consensus Conference on Protecting Medicinal Plants and Animals in Oriental Medicine." While we must find substitutes for endangered species (both plant and animal), the statement that "all Chinese medicine should be derived from plants rather than animals" might derail the discussion. Water buffalo horn is an abundant byproduct of food production, and is very useful for some patients receiving radiation treatments. Let's not throw the water buffalo out with the bath water.

Mercy Yule, LAc
Bellevue, Washington

Do Not Overlook the Taoist Lineage

Dear Editor:

In relation to the debate about Oriental medical education in America, there is a tradition that does not seem to be mentioned.

The lineage I grew up with is Taoist. My martial arts teachers were the first to introduce me to Oriental medicine. We learned *tuina* and bonesetting early on, then needles; herbs; cooking; calligraphy; and something that we didn't have a name for, now known as *feng shui*.

Our teachers would ask, "Where is your *qi*? Where is your opponent's *qi*? How will you win this encounter?" As we came to healing, we had the same questions: "Where is the *qi*? Where is it not? Where is it yin or yang, over or underactive ...?" The technique of palpating the pulse was an eternal listening to these flows in the wrist: where the meridians go; how a channel differs on its course. We didn't start out meditating on the pulse of the patient, but with all the time that it took, that surely is what we were doing. The palpating and intuitive skills we absorbed have been with me ever since, and have certainly been expanded upon.

Is there still a place for sensitivity and contemplation in Oriental medicine in America? Are students still being taught to feel the *qi*? Is there a kinesthetic sense being developed along with the intellect? In my over 25 years in practice, it still seems Oriental diagnosis is at least as accurate as Western diagnosis, and certainly a lot more cost-effective.

Kenneth R. Koles, PhD, DSc, RAc
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Thank You, Dr. Amaro

Dear Editor:

Thank you for printing the article "Breath of the Dragon: How to Create a Successful Life" (*Editor's note*: see the June 2002 issue). Dr. Amaro has compiled many universal truths that ring so true with me. I am amazed that Dr. Amaro has put so many laws in one article, as others have written entire books and spent lifetimes attempting to understand a single premise. Thank you, Dr. Amaro, for compiling all of these incredible laws in one place and sharing them with me and others through your article.

I am a chiropractic student at Northwestern Health Sciences University and was drawn to "Breath of the Dragon" and the truths stated therein about how to create a successful life. I have been lucky enough to experience acupuncture and herbal treatments here at our acupuncture school, and have been thoroughly impressed with the results. Fortunately, I have more questions than answers about how acupuncture works, but I'm convinced that it does. I intend to learn more about acupuncture myself and am planning on having an acupuncture practitioner work with me in my office when I graduate.

Thanks again for an excellent article, and for an educational and informative magazine.

*Tom P. Spicer, third trimester student
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Acupuncture Today welcomes your feedback. If you would like to respond to an article, please send your comments to:

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