

Less is More

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We clearly live in a time when fresh solutions are needed for a myriad of pressing issues. One of the biggest is the need for more efficient utilization of natural resources. With human population now at 6.8 billion and expected to reach 9 billion by 2040, resources are being increasingly stretched. Areas of scarcity include food, fresh water, habitable land and health care. The trend toward [increasing consumption in affluent countries](#), where the wealthiest 20 percent of the world accounts for 76.6 percent of total private consumption, exacerbates the problem.¹ Without solutions based on new paradigms, these issues of scarcity for most of the human population are likely to keep worsening. Viable solutions do exist, and we can find them by observing the ecology of nature. There is incredible efficiency in the natural order where man has not interfered.

One aspect of the natural order from which we can learn a lot is often called "Less is More." This is the principle of producing maximum positive results through minimal application of resources and energy. Nature is full of dramatic examples of this. As an example, [bats and marine mammals](#) can respond to remarkably tiny sonar signals at long distances.²

Homeopathy is a medical system that proves the power of Less is More. Homeopathy offers profound healing by treating patients with remedies produced from highly diluted solutions of drugs and herbs. Many homeopathic remedies are so diluted that there are few, if any molecules left of the original substance. This system is very popular in India where it is used to bring health care to millions of people who could not otherwise afford it.

Now that debate about reforming our health care system is on the front burner in government we badly need to understand how Less is More can point the way to viable solutions in our society. Not only does the U.S. consume a disproportionate percentage of world resources but what we do consume is often used very inefficiently. This is particularly evident in our health care economics. We spend more on health care per capita than any other country in the world, yet our quality of care was [only rated 37th](#) by a 2000 World Health Organization ranking.³

In a [2006 forum](#) sponsored by the National Institute for Health Care Management and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a panel of doctors and insurers revealed some alarming statistics. By studying Medicare payments throughout the United States, they saw that in some areas of the country, costs are much higher than others for the same medical procedures. They also studied patient mortality rates and quality-of-care outcome studies.

Guess what? The areas of higher spending often had higher mortality and worse patient outcomes. In plain English, higher spending often equaled worse results. One conclusion was that there were simply too many doctors or hospitals competing for patients in the higher expenditure regions, and the system was paying for more, and often unnecessary, medical tests and procedures as a result. So spending more money on health care is not always the most fruitful solution.

The Less is More principle certainly holds true for acupuncture and energy medicine.⁴ I have often

heard that the most masterful senior acupuncturists from China are those who can heal difficult conditions with one or two needles. Beginning acupuncturists often try to cover all their bases by needling a multitude of points. Although acupuncture is much less invasive than many Western medical procedures there is still much room for application of Less is More to improve outcomes. I have extensively studied and applied the pioneering work of Yoshio Manaka, MD. He spent decades experimenting with ways to produce maximum therapeutic results through minimal needling and applications of energy to the body. After decades of research and careful observation Manaka determined that acupuncture affects the body on two main levels.

Anatomic-physiologic responses: These are measurable body functions that can be provoked by gross needling of acupoints. These include neurologic, hormonal, biochemical and muscle-twitch responses.

Subtle energy effects. These underlie and are often masked by the anatomic-physiologic effects of acupuncture.

Manaka's research indicated that the subtle, usually immeasurable, effects of acupuncture produce the most profound effects. He named this immeasurable subtle energy network the X-Signal system because of its hidden nature. Although X-Signal energies cannot be directly measured with modern equipment, its [effects can be clearly seen](#) in patients through changes in abdominal and pulse indicators, kinesiology and symptomatic improvements.⁵

Manaka developed several clinical tools to balance the X-Signal system that do not trigger the anatomic-physiologic effects of acupuncture. These include ion-pumping cords, magnets, color therapy and an ion-beam device. Manaka also realized the great power of polarity in correcting structural imbalances in the body and helping heal diseases. Most of these methods are based on placing positive and negative polarity agents on sets of master acupoints.

I have extensively used Manaka's principles with subtle energy applications and have also witnessed remarkable effects. These include rapid pain reduction, improvements in structural imbalances and facial rejuvenation. The most valuable such techniques I use are microcurrent and color light meridian-based therapies. In many cases the effects of these techniques exceed the effects of needle acupuncture in rapidity of response and overall healing rate. Needle therapies will continue to have their importance however, as combinations of subtle energy therapies and acupuncture have proven very effective for many resistant conditions such as peripheral neuropathy, chronic migraines and difficult pain conditions. Very positive therapeutic results have also been reported for stimulation of acupoints using tuning forks and [sound therapies](#).⁶

When human population levels were much lower than they are now, we could use resources in inefficient and often wasteful ways and get away with it, since the Earth's bounty was so great. That will not continue to be possible, and we will face catastrophic consequences by not changing our ways. There are many promising solutions to the pressing issues facing us, and the Less is More principle underlies many of these.

Acupuncturists can also do well to explore methods that take advantage of Less is More. We can do that by integrating subtle energy and polarity-based methods into our armamentarium of techniques. Acupoints stimulation using microcurrent, light and sound offer great benefits for improving outcomes, shortening treatment times and preventing aggravations.

The crises on our planet largely result from lack of respect for the natural order, which is based on efficient, ecologic use of energy and resources. We can help solve the world's problems and our

own by careful study of how this can be applied to our healing arts and personal lives.

References

1. The poorest fifth of the human population consumed just 1.5 percent of the world resources. *World Bank Development Indicators, 2008.*
2. Manaka Y, Itaya K, Birch S. *Chasing the Dragon's Tail.* Paradigm Publications, 1995.
3. www.photius.com/rankings/healthranks.html.
4. The term *energy medicine* refers to healing interventions using direct applications of energy to the body. These include microcurrent, light, sound, scalar waves, homeopathy, prayer and the power of intention.
5. Manaka Y, Itaya K, Birch S. *Chasing the Dragon's Tail.* Paradigm Publications, 1995.
6. www.cymatics.org.

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