

The Spirits of the Points: The Liver Meridian: Part II

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In Part 1 of this series, I explained the function of the Liver as the official of planning. Not only does the official plan for the functioning of the myriad systems of the body, but also for the mind and spirit.

Mentally, this official gives us the power to plan our time, arrange our schedules, to reason, to think clearly and orderly, to "see" what is being communicated by another, and to present our ideas in a way that is clear to others.

At the Spirit level, the official of planning gives us purpose and direction, orienting us toward a future with hope and optimism, and toward the good - both for ourselves and for all humanity.

The Diagnostics

In Classical Five-Element Acupuncture, we would consider needling points on the Wood meridians (Liver and Gall Bladder) once having diagnosed the patient as a Wood "Causative Factor." This means that he or she manifests a rancid odor, green color lateral to the eyes, a voice that is inappropriately making a shouting sound (or lack of shouting sound), and expressing the emotion of anger inappropriately (either over-expressing when there is no appropriate reason or under-expressing when the emotion should be present). The impact of these points is far greater when conjoined with these methods of traditional diagnosis.

The point names, translations from the Chinese characters give us insight into the gifts they are capable of bringing to the patient in need. Each point uniquely helps guide the patient toward the fullness of a healthy Wood element, described above.

Liver 6 Middle Capital

A capital is a center of political, cultural, social, artistic, commercial, and spiritual activity and power. It is the seat of government and a center of activity. Capital also means material wealth, funds, and resources for investment. "Middle" implies the center, the spirit. We consider this point for the Wood imbalanced patient who cannot perceive his inner core resources and needs access to the abundance and inspiration found in such a capital. Whatever one's plan or vision involves, it can be enhanced and clarified if infused with spirit.

Liver 8 Crooked Spring Water point, tonification point

A spring is source of water that emerges from underground and forms a stream or pool. Water within the Wood allows it to be flexible, supple, and move smoothly in many directions. This point would be considered for the Wood imbalanced patient who is rigid, fixed in his/her opinions and plans and often bossy and bullying. In the opposite extreme, the patient may be attached to surrendering and letting others make plans for him/her. In either case, the point can provide

balance. It can bring the cleansing of water, clearing out old, stale plans and rigid ideas, allowing for new growth. It can provide needed power and strength, as Water feeds/is the mother element to Wood. Further, it can help the patient find adaptability and fluidity in his/her vision.

Liver 13 Chapter Gate

We consider this point when a patient is challenged by closing the book on a previous chapter in his/her life, and moving on - opening a new chapter, with a new plan and vision for a future. In such a case, it may be this gate being stuck closed. Stuck open, one may turn the pages too quickly and move ahead before one is ready. Nature does not stall or stop, nor does it speed beyond what is appropriate and innately perfect. Nature is in a continual flow from present moment to present moment, with all progressing according to natural laws and cycles. Some Wood imbalanced patients cannot make appropriate and smooth transitions and changes in their own internal process. As such, their interaction with the outside world will not be smooth, as things are not beginning or ending at the right times; plans are unclear - not knowing when or where to go or stop.

Using Chapter Gate helps this patient "oil his/her gate hinges," allowing for an appropriate flow to life's cycles.

Liver 14 Gate of Hope Exit point

No plan can be of much use without hope. Within the patient needing this point, there may well be a feeling of hopelessness, cynicism, and pessimism: "Why bother?" or "Who cares?" Hope is what keeps us going when the obstacles seem to block our plans. People come and go; events may unfold contrary to our plans. We may be stuck in past disappointments and frustrations. If we have hope, we adapt, find a contingency plan, and do not lose optimism, for our plan is aligned with spirit and our higher purpose. Thus all is truly well. This point can open the way to such a transcendent perception. Hope and optimism are, in fact, spiritual qualities of the Wood element. Instilling hope in Wood imbalanced patients (perhaps the hope that they can become well - if, in your view, it is possible) may be exactly what is needed to turn the tide of their disease.

References

1. Worsley, J.R., (2004) Traditional Chinese Acupuncture Vol 1 Meridians and Points, Miami Lakes, FL: The Worsley Institute of Classical Acupuncture

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