



GENERAL ACUPUNCTURE

Anti-Aging With Dr. Ping Zhang

Jennifer Waters, LAc, Dipl. Ac

Jennifer Waters, TCM practitioner and writer of the Acupuncture Today column, "Talking With the Masters" sat down with Dr. Ping Zhang to discuss anti-aging with acupuncture. After Waters attended a class in New York City last year she said, "I knew right away that she's a true master, carrying on the authentic tradition of TCM while adapting it to modern-day health concerns."

Dr. Ping Zhang, whose interest in anti-aging with acupuncture was piqued 20 years ago after reading a study on non-surgical facial rejuvenation, has developed protocols based on her clinical experience and an anti-aging product line. She has also authored several anti-aging books.

JW: Can you share with us your family history and how you became an LAc and herbalist? Where did you go to school? Did you always aspire to become a TCM practitioner?

PZ: I grew up in the Anhui province of China. My mother's family were all healers and practiced TCM. My father's family were educators. I draw from both of my parents' lineages in my work as a doctor of Oriental medicine and in developing curriculum to educate acupuncturists in anti-aging protocols and other advances in TCM.



My interest in healing started when I was very young. I can remember as a young girl listening to my grandfather tell me stories of magical herbs and flowers that could make people young forever and fly to the moon. As I grew and learned to read, I was curious about the old handwritten texts that were passed down through my family; particularly the ones about how herbs and acupuncture helped to heal woman's conditions, such as muscular-skeletal, arthritic, emotional, mental and spiritual conditions. I knew I wanted to be a doctor when I grew up because the more I read, the more the principles of TCM made sense.

In China, training in TCM was less formal than it is here when I was growing up. I was fortunate to study with leaders in their clinics, where I was able to ask questions and learn the old ways through ancient verbal tradition. Then when I came to the U.S., I studied with the Pacific College in order to learn the regulations and systems of a clinical practice.

JW: Why facial or cosmetic acupuncture? What drew you into this field?

PZ: Facial acupuncture is one of the many methods that helps promote the vital flow of blood and qi to the skin and face. In my years of acupuncture practice, I also noticed that certain body acupuncture points had an unexpectedly positive impact on lifting facial contours and complexion. I began to document my skin rejuvenation treatment and then developed protocols based on my clinical experience. I also discussed my facial treatment protocol with Dr. Qing Zhang, the TCM pioneer in China responsible for the first research journal article on the subject of non-surgical facial rejuvenation (Meridional Cosmetology: Report of 300 Cases with Discussion of Underlying Mechanism. International Journal of Clinical Acupuncture, Vol 7, No 4. 1996, Zhang Qi and Zhu Lan-xiu). I was inspired to study alongside Dr. Qing Zhang in this emerging field. Eventually I gathered my research and developed my own approach, which I then published in my books, "A Comprehensive Handbook for Traditional Chinese Medicine Facial Rejuvenation" and "Anti-Aging Therapy".

JW: Can you share with us some of the down sides of Botox or other injections that are becoming quite common in the clinic now.

PZ: Although the goal of Botox is similar to anti-aging TCM protocols, in that both seek to create wrinkle-free skin, the approach is totally opposite. In TCM, anti-aging is achieved by adding life and movement to the skin and tissues of the face with herbal treatment and acupuncture to support the life force. The effect of Botox is to freeze the movement so that one doesn't appear wrinkled. The downside is that the skin does not receive the vital nutrients as a natural way to revitalize the skin as TCM would promote. From a health and safety perspective, there are certain conditions in which Botox injection has side effects. This information is available directly from the [manufacturer's documentation](#).

JW: What's the greatest discovery you have made while working on someone?

PZ: The most sacred quality TCM has taught me is that each patient is individual with his/her special constitution and life force. They are like a book with their own history and story. Treating people holistically requires respecting all of the elements of a healthy life force and not just the components relevant to their presenting complaint. It is a mystery to discover with each and every treatment of every patient the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions - so that I can serve their greatest vision of health and well being. I have learned how seemingly unrelated factors actually influence the patient's experience and by listening and being present, their life force informs me how best to help them.

JW: How can someone study with you? Where? What classes do you offer?

PZ: I currently teach courses at the Swedish Institute of Continuing Education in NYC. All the courses I teach are listed on their continuing education website. I have also developed several anti-aging educational DVDs.

JW: Are you still accepting new patients in the clinic? If so, how can we schedule with you?

PZ: I have an office in Port Washington, N.Y. and I am dedicated to helping everyone in need of healing. I always make sure I have time to take new patients and can usually see them within a week's time.

For more information about Dr. Ping Zhang please visit her website: nefeli.com.

FEBRUARY 2017