



ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

Spirits of the Points: Gallbladder Official

Neil Gumenick, MAc, LAc, Dipl. Ac.

Editor's Note: In prior issues, Neil discussed the gallbladder official as a whole ([March 2016](#), including points 17 and 24); points 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41 ([June 2013](#)); and points 1, 16, and 20 ([May 2021](#)). This article focuses on GB 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, and 13.

GB 2: *Hearing Assembly*

The assembly of officials (organs/functions) relies on the gallbladder's clarity and sound judgment to organize and decide how their tasks are to be best carried out. We are constantly faced with decisions to be made, consciously and unconsciously. Not every possible decision is right, appropriate or valuable.

At times, the internal noise of the mind can become so confusing and overwhelming that we lose the "ring of truth" and remain stuck in indecision, or choose unwisely. We often hear, "I just can't make up my mind." This point helps the wood-imbalanced patient hear what is essential and true.

GB 3: *Upper Pass*

This point suggests that above and beyond the mundane, confusing, and contradictory world of ego-dominated thought, there is a transcendent world of pure spiritual inspiration and insight. "Upper Pass" opens the gate, metaphorically, and helps wood-imbalanced patients to pass through to this high place, enabling them to see and choose what is truly good for them. There is no "one size fits all."

There are many belief systems from which to choose, ranging from religious, meditative, and self-improvement practices, to what to eat, what to do for a living, how to attract and choose a mate, how to raise children, how to care for the body, etc., and no shortage of so-called "experts" eager to tell us what we "should" do. Beyond the noise, we innately know what feels right and natural.

GB 8: *Flowing Valley*

A valley is low-lying place between hills or mountains, typically with a river or stream flowing through it. Helped by rain or melted snow, all the debris that has accumulated on the mountainside (e.g., dead leaves, twigs, fruit fallen from trees, organic waste) falls into these low places and is washed away to the sea. In the context of this official, debris includes indecision, confusion, old and stale negativity, and frustration.

If this valley is not flowing as nature intended, we tend to become stagnant, unable to release our old mental and emotional “baggage.” We become restricted and stuck in the past, unable to go with the flow of present needs, which may be very different than what had gone before.

Just as water effortlessly adjusts to its surroundings, so must we adjust to changing circumstances. This point frees up the congestion, allowing us to move forward, and embrace and follow nature without struggle or hindrance.

GB 9: *Heaven Rushing*

Returning to what is “heavenly” is a function of seeing clearly where one has missed the mark. This concept is described in Judaism as *teshuva*. It involves understanding of and repentance for wrong choices and turning back to God, Divinity, the Source, the Good, or what Taoism simply calls Nature.

Within nature is the origin, sustaining, and end of every process. We are all subject to its immutable laws. All conflicts are settled; disturbances are resolved; differences are united. This point is akin to a sudden flash of realization or enlightenment. Like the sun suddenly breaking through clouds, understanding arises; the right choice becomes obvious.

We all know the experience of a sudden breakthrough to clarity – a jump in our level of consciousness, an “ah-ha” moment. We may hear, “What was I thinking?” as the right decision was in front of us all the time.

GB 10: *Floating White*

Floating implies moving effortlessly, like water, with the flow of nature, neither forcefully pushing toward nor resisting what is. Water cannot be grasped in a tight fist, but can be contained in a relaxed palm. Things are what they are, regardless of how we may dislike or disagree about them.

White light is composed of all the colors of the spectrum, suggesting that all of our experience – pleasant and unpleasant – contributes to growth, and are treasures of a rich harvest for which we can be grateful.

This point helps relax and release the wood-imbalanced patient who may be frustrated, unaccepting, resisting, and fighting against. It can restore faith that the light of the eternal is ever-present; we need not struggle; we can always find a glimmer of the true white light of the spirit and come to remember that we are always on the path, and that the darkness is transient and will eventually be dispelled.

GB 12: *Final Bone*

With the word *bone* in this point’s name, we are reminded that bones are the deepest and most enduring of tissues. It is said that we feel things most deeply “in our bones.”

The first character in this point's name means to complete or repair. Thus, this point means to repair what has been broken in such a way that it is complete, solid, and finally made whole. Some bad choices and actions may have left us believing that there is no repair possible. When we have come to identify and believe that we are those choices, we continue to act as if broken.

This point reminds us that there is always a way back to grace. It recalls the teaching of the great Sufi poet Rumi:

"Come, come, whoever you are, wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving; it doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vows a thousand times. Come, come again. Come."

GB 13: *Root Spirit*

Roots penetrate the earth to hold plants upright and absorb nourishment. Classical Asian wisdom teaches that a human being standing upright and straight is the connection between heaven and Earth - rooted to the earth and receptive to the spiritual inspiration of the heavens. If we lose this connection, we lose our balance; our health and well-being are compromised.

In the profound internal martial art of *t'ai chi*, if one can sense the imbalance of an opponent, they can be uprooted with the force of mere ounces. Yet, if rooted and balanced, they cannot be moved by even great strength or force. This point straightens us up and strengthens our connection to both heaven and earth.

When we are rooted in what is eternal, we can't be easily shaken. We would consider this point for wood-imbalanced patients who are easily uprooted from what is true and upright; easily tempted and distracted from their path and from what they know to be right for them.

Author's Note: There are many interpretations and uses of these points in various traditions; the preceding is not intended to encompass all possibilities. English translations of point names are those taught by Professor J.R. Worsley and appear in *Traditional Chinese Acupuncture, Volume 1: Meridians and Points* by J.R. Worsley; Element Books, 1982.

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