

United We Stand

One of the drawbacks to operating a print publication is that sometimes, you're not able to deliver a story or opinion as quickly as you'd like to. Although this article is scheduled to appear in the November issue of *Acupuncture Today*, it's being written on September 28, just a couple of weeks after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

September 11, 2001 is a day we will all remember for the rest of our lives. Our lives will never be the same because of the events that occurred that day. Our world as we know it has changed, and it will be a long time before the effects of what happened make themselves clear for all to see.

Originally, I had planned on writing an article about the Thanksgiving holiday and its unique place in American history. While this is undoubtedly a time to be thankful - for our families, for the freedoms we have, and for the laws that guarantee those freedoms and liberties - it is also a time to reflect, to offer our condolences for those who suffer, and to pray for those who are no longer here. Considering the circumstances, I asked the leaders of the national acupuncture and Oriental medicine organizations to join me in offering their condolences for the victims of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks. Here is what they had to say.

The Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Alliance

We are deeply saddened by the tragedy of September 11 and the impact not only on those involved and their families and friends, but the entire nation. This is a life-changing event for all of us. In order to assist, the Acupuncture Alliance donated 10% of all new memberships through November 1 to the Red Cross to assist the victims and their families.

We are also unbelievably impressed by the heroism and untiring efforts of the relief workers, including those within our own profession, who have donated their time and services to treat relief workers, victims and their families, as well as patients across the nation who are traumatized by this event. We particularly applaud the efforts of the Acupuncture Society of New York, which has done a remarkable job of coordinating site, supplies and volunteers. The stories related by our members and others who have volunteered are remarkable, inspiring and deeply moving. They have brought a new level of visibility to acupuncture and Oriental medicine, and we are grateful for their work. During the coming months, all of us may be forced to look deep within ourselves and find elements of compassion and bravery we did not know existed. We have faith that our practitioners -- and our country - can meet these challenges.

Barbara Mitchell, JD, LAc
Executive Director

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

The Board and staff of the NCCAOM would like to extend their sincere condolences to all who were affected by the terrible tragedies of September 11, 2001. Our hearts, thoughts and prayers are especially with those who lost family members, friends and coworkers; though this nation grieves together, most of us will never know your pain and anguish. The price of freedom is seldom recognized. We will always remember those who paid the ultimate price. God Bless.

NCCAOM Board and Staff

The National Guild for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

On behalf of the Board and membership, we would like to thank and acknowledge Nicole Rotondi, LAc, Guild member, and all the other licensed acupuncturists and students who volunteered and continue to give their time, expertise and care to the many victims of the World Trade Center attack. Your thoughtful and selfless giving will be remembered and returned many times over. We commend your strength and commitment.

Ted Priebe, LAc, OMD
President

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine offers its sincere condolences to the families, friends and acquaintances of the victims of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and commends the heroic efforts of New York's fire department, law enforcement and rescue personnel. The Commission's prayers are with all the many individuals and groups that were personally affected by this national tragedy.

Dort S. Bigg
Executive Director

The Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

The tragedy of September 11, 2001 in our country has changed the world forever. Our hearts and compassion go to all the people who have been so profoundly affected by these events, and to the thousands of people who have lost relatives, colleagues, spouses, parents, partners and friends in this terrible tragedy. We have been deeply moved by all the people, including our own acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners, who have come forward to support and provide such care to the people who are surviving this situation. We sincerely hope that as we reflect, carefully review and evaluate the terrible events of September 11, that we may be able to realize the importance of building a world that is saner, more peaceful, caring and compassionate. The Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine wishes to express its most sincere condolences to all those who have been so profoundly affected by this terrible tragedy.

Elizabeth A. Goldblatt, PhD, MPA/HA

President

The American Association of Oriental Medicine

Life for me, and millions of other people, has changed significantly since the morning of September 11. I was treating patients when I looked outside my window and saw the first tower was gone. It was hard to believe; in many ways, it still is. This is one of the things that makes reality difficult to grasp for so many. It's a reality that shakes the foundations of our security as a civilization.

Is this loss what is causing the national nightmare - a recognition that we will never again know the innocence of imponderable fear? New Yorkers were always proud of their street smarts and ability to meet and deal with fear when opposed one-on-one, or possibly by many, even if it was only to run away. This was, and still is, a different fear. It has shaken the unshakable; flapped the unflappable; and the ripples continue long after the aftershocks have gone away enough to bring back attempts to regain normalcy.

We need to regain a sense of normalcy, of balance, as a city and as a country, if our civilization is to continue. As Oriental medicine professionals, we need to keep strong and balanced so that we can provide support, even if we are faking our strength and have to collapse on our own support system when the day is over. In our own way, it is extremely important for everyone to share their internal balance with their patients, families and friends so that we can move ahead and not allow the darkness to drag us all down a path of war.

I want to thank all of the marvelous practitioners who have volunteered their time and energy to help those who have so direly needed their attention since the incident. I especially want to thank the folks at the Acupuncture Society of New York for their tireless efforts organizing these volunteers, and to the New York Pacific College campus for the same. My hat is off to all of you for showing that volunteering is what makes America great.

Robbee Fian, LAc, Dipl.Ac.
President

On behalf of *Acupuncture Today*, I would like to express my sympathy to the families and loved ones for the loss they have sustained during the tragedies in New York and Washington, D.C. May we never forget the heroic actions of the firefighters, police and rescue workers who gave their lives in the line of duty. And may we also never forget our freedoms and what they mean to each of us, our friends, families and loved ones.

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