



ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

Happy New Year 2015 Gong Hoy Fat Choi

Marilyn Allen, Editor at Large

Welcome to the year of the sheep! We begin a new year guided by the sign of a quietly and creatively organized animal. The sheep is the eighth sign of the Chinese calendar, supposedly bringing prosperity because the number eight is a lucky number according to Chinese beliefs. This number is also believed to bring attributes such as prosperity and peace.

People born in the year of the sheep are clever and intellectually inclined individuals who always have keen ideas for business. They cautiously and circumspectly handle sensitive business matters. These people seldom make plans for the future, but take every obstacle in stride and think before they act. Sheep are emotionally strong and even if they are caught off guard, they will manage business affairs with logic and wit. Aside from their cleverness, sheep also have an artistic side and are unconditionally loyal.

In the months ahead, we look forward to a year of promise and hope. The sheep, under the influence of the element of wood, is best known for wit and quiet genius. Sheep enjoy making others happy, but are not comfortable in leadership positions. This needs to change!

We must relate this to acupuncture and all oriental medicine. Until now, acupuncture has been flourishing under the surface and slowly growing into an international phenomenon. This year belongs to us and our profession. This is the year we, as acupuncturists, enlighten the rest of the world about this miraculous form of medicine.



Whenever the subject of politics is brought up in acupuncture circles, most are not interested and/or do not think it pertains to them. But a gentle reminder is that the people in public office and government agencies that deal with health and health care fall into this category. If the profession of acupuncture is to move forward, it needs to be represented and we must have a seat at the table. This means creating some political clout, so to speak.

The Joint Commission is a United States-based nonprofit tax-exempt 501c organization that accredits more than 20,000 health care organizations and programs in this country. A majority of state governments recognize Joint Commission accreditation as a condition for licensure and thus receive Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement.

The Joint Commission was established in 1951, and in 1965, the federal government made the decision that when a hospital met the standards they would be eligible to receive Medicare funding. This changed again July 15, 2010, when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services (CMS) met requirements to become the primary regulatory authority. The Joint Commission is the largest accrediting organization under the regulation of the CMS. The Joint Commission does play an important role in health care.

The year 2015 is already looking to be full of promise. In a recent article published by John Weeks, there is word of extremely positive news for the integrated healthcare professions. He states that, "A Nov. 12, 2014 announcement from the Joint Commission, the principal accrediting agency for health care organizations, could significantly impact access to integrative pain care throughout the United States... The focus of the change is great news for integrative health and medicine. The Joint Commission significantly elevated the potential value of 'non-pharmacologic' approaches. Among those

options directly called out are, in the terms used by the Joint Commission, acupuncture therapy, massage therapy, chiropractic therapy, osteopathic manipulative treatment, physical therapy, and relaxation therapy."

This article strikes a roar in the alternative care world and we acupuncturists need to be on the playing field! The opportunity is right in front of us and we need to grasp it with all we have to spread the word and healing power of acupuncture.

This is the time for acupuncture!

NEWS FLASH: Just before the holidays, the National Institute of Health's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) changed its name to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH). All the more reason to get ourselves in the forefront!

FEBRUARY 2015