

## How Does Creativity Influence Qi?

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What a wonderful inquiry. We can parse it out by beginning with the aspect we regularly occupy ourselves with, and that is Qi. If we agree that everything in the universe is a form of Qi in varying degrees of manifestation from material (i.e. the body) to the immaterial (i.e. thoughts, mind, Shen), as depicted by the character of Qi denoting rice as the material, and vapor or steam as the immaterial, then we can say that Qi and Life Force are synonymous.

If Qi and Life Force have the same basis of translation and the nature of the universe is expansion by way of the creative impulse, then we could easily make a case that Qi and the Creative Life Force are one in the same. Our short exchange of Qi on this page is less about proving that particular point, and more about the (re) emerging realization that when a human being considers, respects, and fosters a relationship with the creative life force coursing in, through, and around them, Qi moves.

Taken a step further, when a conscious connection with the innate creative life force, fostered intentionally for healing, Qi doesn't simply move, it is influenced in all the same ways we know our medicine to influence. It tonifies, sedates, warms, protects, raises, holds, transports, and transforms. At every level of being. Whether we are treating a patient for a physical, mental/emotional, or spiritual need, we are sending an intelligent message that supports the transformation of their Qi to prompt the natural healing capacity of the body.

Healing is a Journey

We know this medicine works. As a practitioner it can be frustrating that we have too little time to convey the depth of the medicine, or to swiftly move them to the results they seek. Just like people want Western medicine to be good at functional medicine when it is, mostly, a disease management model. People also want Chinese medicine to work in short order via a quick fix. Like how they see drugs work in the Western medical model.

Of course, we know true healing is a journey; alchemy at it's best. Our medicine has not the life-threatening side effects that pharmaceutical drugs do, though patience is necessary. I've found that creativity not only tames impatience, it makes the journey more enjoyable. Since the "transformation journey" is similar in nature for all human beings, I've broken it down into a 5 Element perspective below:

- Heart = Inspired about changing and improving, begin with enthusiasm for the result that outweighs or overshadows the pain, divine impulse accompanied by hope.
- Earth = Not there yet, path seems longer than expected, weariness may be setting in, losing enthusiasm, missing the comfort and familiarity of the old, begin to question everything, frustrated to have come this far without reward. The path feels barren, resistance is shackling, fear, stalled, discomfort of the unknown, teeters towards turning back constantly and may just

do that. This can be where people feel "stuck."

- Metal = Discovers and cultivates the wherewithal to keep putting one foot in front of the other no matter the discomfort (this is where the transformation happens). Perseverance rises and light begins to illuminate the path again, possibility of hope returns, resilience replaces resistance.
- Water = Noticeable shift and sense of arrival. The feet feel stable and planted on the other side of the bridge and there is a sense of one's stability again, only stronger and expanded (even as the old way still whispers, beckons, and entices and offers lures of return).
- Wood = the unification and free-flow of knowing, trusting, appreciating, and embodying this expanding field is solid. Can make more evolved life choices from new terrain. Dedicated to maintain focus here (vs. being lured back) in preparation for next crossing.

In a shorter version we can look at it from the mother/child cycle. When a problem arises: Wood is emotionally upset, Fire causes impulse/spark for transformation, Earth nourishes for journey, Metal inspires and activates life force, Water reveals truth, so Wood can relax and soften for transformation, so the Heart can enjoy, Earth can strengthen, Metal can release, and Water can rest.

A Creative Healing Process can be entered, like a portal or doorway, through each element to support the exact place a person is at, which keeps healing and transformation in motion, rather than the tendency to slow or become stagnant. For those who say they simply aren't creative, I gently point out the very fact they are breathing is "proof" they are alive with creative life force. Their willingness to reclaim the part of themselves, however hidden they insist it is, as a respected partner in the creative process, will open a flow of creative expression and healing. Period.

There is quite a lot to say regarding the 5 Elements and Creative Healing, but hopefully you get the general idea. What I've learned in the past ten years is that guiding, prompting, and facilitating people in cultivating creativity, alongside regular acupuncture treatments (which may include herbs, nutrition, et al), has improved their treatment results significantly. An average range of 27-45 percent increase in treatment outcome is the data I've gathered.

The research regarding creative healing is very promising. NIH, American Journal of Public Health, Science Direct, Psychology Today, all have regular publications of research that supports the connection between healing and creativity.<sup>1</sup> In some cases, adding the creative healing element has been the difference between patient retention, results, and referrals, all valuable elements to a successful practice.

One of the great benefits to bringing a Creative Healing Process into the therapeutic mix is that it tends to bypass the mind. Our mental beliefs and patterns can keep Qi in lockdown! A Creative Healing Process is able to reach past the gates of the mind, into the subconscious and release old emotions and patterns.

Creative healing is one of the most enjoyable therapeutic tools I've encountered, this process is the most gentle, joyful, and effective I've seen in my 25 years of consciously creating health. Does creativity influence Qi? I'd have to say yes, because it IS Qi, and the myriad of ways continue to be revealed. I hope you find ways to weave creativity into your personal and professional world in equally effective ways.

## *References*

1. Stuckey HL, Nobel J. "The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health: A Review of Current Literature." Am J Public Health, [2010](#) February; 100(2): 254-263.

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