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HELPING YOURSELF TO HEALTH AND VITALITY



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All information in this book is tempered by the opinion of the author.

If you wish to make health and lifestyle changes I recommend you do so under professional care. I will not be held responsible for any loss or damage of any nature occasioned or suffered by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of reliance on the material contained therein. Second and third opinions are often necessary, and even then, please remember that it is YOU who is bearing the consequences of your decisions and actions.



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It is not intended that you substitute the information contained within for appropriate medical advice. Helpful hints and self responsibility must be tempered with common sense and a respect for the highest good of all the participants.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Heather has been involved in acupuncture education for nearly three decades. After graduating in 1978, she realised it was more important to teach people what they were doing to disturb their balance, and how this was contributing to their problems, rather than just trying to fix things for them.

So, she co-wrote a very different kind of undergraduate acupuncture course, teaching at her university for several years, while writing and delivering postgraduate seminars.

Since she is also a naturopath and herbalist, Heather combines many different approaches and responses to people's conditions. More than 20 years ago she gave birth to a seriously brain-injured child who was severely autistic. She spent

the next eight years turning over every stone to help her daughter live well and achieve functionality.

This gave Heather first-hand experience of the suffering we inflict on ourselves when things seem not to be going 'our way'.

Altogether, she had four children, who contributed additional practical experience to her wealth of knowledge and skills in her clinic work and teaching at all levels of acupuncture.

Drawing on this experience and expertise, Heather has created websites, books, life manuals, meditation CDs and posters. She also produces DVD sets for acupuncturists and midwives/doulas, and has branched into spreading her wisdom through eBooks.

Her passion is providing people with the means to help themselves. She believes strongly that there is always a different way to view any issue. She aims, through the Internet, to spread inspiration /heart connectiveness and knowledge, so these can work together to create new 'takes' on life and thus allow hope where there may have seemed little.

She envisages that her eBooks will reach out and enlighten far more than could be accomplished through just her work as a busy clinician.

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Foreword

This is not your average eBook. It is a professional, practical document, bristling with information you won't find elsewhere. It translates my decades of acupuncture experience into usable form for a layperson. The degree of motivation you have for reading and learning will probably be proportionate to the result that you desire and how this impacts on the life you would rather live.

Origin of Information

What I have written represents a lifetime of healing experience - both on myself and family and a considerable patient base - accumulated during many decades of intensive professional practice.

My work as a dual-trained practitioner - in both naturopathy and acupuncture - produces an interesting blend of theory and advice that is not normally available. Most practitioners stay on one or other side of the continuum below. But I feel a more complete picture is gained by attending to all aspects of this representation of being-ness.

I do not repeat work from other texts. At times, you may wish to read further. A great place to start would be two substantial works: *Nourishing Traditions - the Cookbook that Challenges Politically Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats* by Sally Fallon and Mary Eni, and *Healing Through Whole Foods - Asian Traditions and Modern Nutrition* by Paul Pitchford.

If you want to lose weight.....

Jon Gabriel's *The Gabriel Method* shows how he lost 220 lbs by changing the way he thought. After trying every way that DOESN'T keep weight off, or make anyone feel well or good about themselves, he discovered that by altering the programmes he ran within himself, anything was possible.

He uses a very different approach that is totally complementary to my material. I strongly recommend you buy his book and incorporate his personal learnings with my time-proven clinical approach.

If you wish to become more responsible for your own personal global footprint - there are many books. One stunning one is "Vegetable, Animal, Magical" by Barbara Kingsolver, Stephen Hall and Camille Kingsolver. It tells the tale of one family's decision to cut food miles, to grow their own and to eat locally.

MY PERSONAL STORY

When I was twenty years old, I arrived in Australia to visit my grandmother. I met the man who was to become my husband, and stayed there. He was living in the hills, eating and behaving unconventionally, a 'hippy' type if you like, and I adopted this lifestyle myself.

Through this, I encountered a great number of very different perspectives - particularly about food. He was following a book called ***Survival into the Twenty First Century*** by Viktoras Kulvinskis. In this, the author advances ideas about raw food and wheatgrass. My husband also was trying to follow a macrobiotics programme as promoted by George Ohsawa and to practice the Iyengar method of yoga. As a result, he was considerably underweight but also very strong. He was motivated by trying to escape a lifetime of chronic severe asthma.

Almost without thinking, I followed suit. This transformed the girl from kiwi-land, who had until then lived on milk, cheese and meat!!! My body - being very young and resilient - completely changed. All excess (of which there had been very little to start with anyway) dropped off. I noticed a disappearance of all body odours, and my menstrual blood became very clean and fresh. I felt invigorated and very clear.

We ate only what we grew in the garden plus brown rice and I felt fantastic!! Leeches, which were very common in that area, would not touch us. I imagine this had something to do with the raw garlic we chewed, as he believed this would strengthen our digestive system. It definitely made us unattractive to pests!!! Visitors were always besieged by leeches, so I suspect there is something in a cleansed-blood body that does not attract this attention.

When I became pregnant though, I began to crave animal protein. Sometimes I gave in. I suspect my use of protein combining - as per Frances Moore Lappe (***Diet for a Small Planet***) - made all the difference to me. I was possibly also craving fat. Salad vegetables and brown rice are deficient in this, and I would not recommend this as a healthy way to start a baby.

By the time I was ready to breastfeed, I was in deep trouble. My diet was maybe 20 oranges from the fridge daily, a 44 pound bag of carrots, juiced, between us a week, and a tray of mangoes - again from the fridge. It meant, as you will see how later on in this book, I completely wrecked my digestive fire (**Spleen Yang**). I couldn't digest protein without the help of ox-bile extract tablets - not a great thing for a vegan macrobiotic to be consuming!!!!

This experience sparked a lifetime interest in both low metabolism/thyroid activity, a disorder I'm sure I created by mismanaging myself in those early, misdirected years. I also told myself I would write a book to help those inclined to follow the next 'bright idea' - as my mistake did such damage (albeit with the best of intentions) to my own life and my then fetus/newborn.

When my new baby was six weeks old, I started an acupuncture course and then naturopathic training. I followed this with western herbal studies, then Bach and other vibrational flower essence learning. Along the way, I picked up a wide spectrum of energy healing techniques. I was like a sponge, absorbing anything that might help my husband and son, focused on being the best mum I could be.

Once I began to learn, I realised that what lay at the core of these two modalities - acupuncture and naturopathy - was as polar opposites. Everything I had done in good faith to help myself following naturopathic precepts had actually damaged my body. At the time, a grape juice 'fast' had been popular, supposedly for the solving of all problems - especially cancer - so our bodies were continually inundated with sweet, cold and raw foods. All of this was totally contrary to the notions of good health from the Chinese medical and macrobiotic standpoints.

I felt such a strong desire to help those who were treading or about to tread the same path to ruin, obsessed or self-righteous about what they ate, about what was 'bad' and what was not - all leading to a state of unwellness and a stubborn determination to remain stuck in a situation that was not helping them.

So - what was health?

Eventually I started teaching others how to become better acupuncturists. I found that I needed a working definition of health - and this time out in the hills behind Mullumbimby (hippy haven back then) was my initial training ground.

I saw many young people who had opted out who were actually really ill, especially with tropical ulcers - a bacterial infection that eats away the flesh. Some were determinedly eating only what they grew. Describing it as organic would have been a joke. It may have been their intention, and they personally may not have added any extras to mother nature, BUT the area was a heavily farmed banana and dairy region, where aerial spraying was prevalent and water was laden with toxic crop chemicals.

WHAT DID I LEARN FROM THIS?

1 - Moderation in all things.

2 - What I had been brought up with, contrary to my adolescent ideals, was actually a great template for balance in living. It had stood the test of multiple generations and, whilst it may have needed tweaking a little, was proven to be able to sustain life.

HOW DID I LEARN THIS?

By wrecking myself and having to rescue first my body, then my patients and finally my children. Along the way, I learnt even more through teaching healers for over twenty five years. Teaching patients is also a great way to reinforce my belief - each and every day - that we just need to follow life and nature. Everything else follows naturally.

THE MAJOR ISSUES

1 - Chinese medicine is for maintenance and good all-round balance. The target is to develop a metabolism that STOPS causing damage rather than having to identify and work with a very deficient metabolism when it is down and struggling. This has to be done in tandem with the hectic lifestyle most people lead, going to work and doing far too much to just hop out of their lives to heal.

2 - Naturopathic approaches are to be used when a serious misalignment has happened, and a short term treatment - especially a cleanse - may be in order.

3 - Rebuilding strength and vigour in some very weakened cases is more vital than detoxifying. In my early years, fasting - as in nothing but water (a la Bernard Jensen and his bowel/colonic notions) - was the way to go.

It is still valid but should be done under supervision from someone who has both the experience and wisdom to apply to your specific needs, rather than what a book or protocol suggests. I say this because I constructed my own cleansing fast a few years ago and found that sticking to a set 'textbook' programme - without listening to the individual - is a dangerous thing.

SUMMARY

OVERARCHING EVERYTHING ELSE - the body has an imperative to heal and to be here, if we get out of the way and simply let it direct us.

When we are in a state of balance - not just looking for sweet/salty/fatty fixes - we are bound to be in a state of nutritional grace.

All animals instinctively know what to eat and what to do when feeling unwell. All we need to do is to stop thinking consciously about it and follow what nature intended. And to do this, we may first have to consult with the manual - see below.

1. Common Life/Dieting Pitfalls

Often we forget what complex organisms our bodies are. Changing just ONE thing (like what goes in your mouth) can have far-reaching consequences. By adjusting something, we could get different results.

Tuning in to the next bright idea from the latest research - like the idea that eggs were bad for us - or the next advertising fad, you could be forgiven for forgetting that humans have been eating and living on various types and amounts of food for a very long time.

The 'natural is best' mantra is not just a 'green' anthem; it's what all of us were designed to follow. Organic and self-grown often DOES taste much better than store-bought. Buying only local allows you to not only feel empowered and less wasteful, but also gives you back what is vibrationally from where you live - eating also only with the seasons allows our bodies what naturally is intended.

The increasing success of local farmers' markets attests to this.

Our forebears ate these natural foods, including eggs, with gusto. They lived long lives - if accidents did not intervene - and were very active. They ate sparingly and slept in a natural rhythm according to the sun's hours. Electricity and all the 'mod cons' were not part of their lives.

Has so-called progress helped us? The amount each nation provides for its health budget suggests that modern life is not creating wellness. Consider a country like the South Pacific's Nauru Island, which in its heyday attracted massive inward investment. Everyone, including the indigenous population, was eating imported and processed foods.

The previous diet, built on the bounty of fishing and tilling the soil, was abandoned, and the rates of diabetes became the highest in the world. The local Nauru Island airplanes were fitted with dialysis machines as complications of modern eating (kidney failure and diabetes) took their toll.

Then disaster struck!!! External funding dried up and the locals faced starvation - foreign-owned fast food outlets closed down and the people had to call on neighbouring islanders to teach them how to use again what was surrounding them - nature's bounty. The rates of modern diseases plummeted. A combination of more energy expended (to gain food) and a far more nutritious diet was all that there was on offer.

There is a similar situation in Samoa, where locals are suffering from previously unheard of health and mobility problems. Wheelchairs are in heavy demand for villages where amputation rates among middle aged people have soared. Why?

Because Western 'aid' packages and money sent home by Samoans overseas have encouraged western style diets. Chemically-laden, fatty turkey and beef byproducts from First World countries arrive by the container load. Whilst the fat may seem to taste wonderful, it is killing the population with Western-style degenerative diseases that were never part of their culture.

Cuba, after the USSR collapsed in the mid 1990s, had suddenly to stand on its own feet, with no more foreign aid was coming in. Cubans suddenly had to fuel themselves. Bicycles and walking became the only travel mode. Guess what?

The diabetes rate plummeted. So why is it that we, as First World residents, seem so keen to believe we need outside help to lose weight? Why do people seek drastic solutions like gastric banding after years of so-called dieting has not given them the svelte body they believe is hidden inside the Michelin Man look?

Before you think about changing the body you live in and losing weight, think about how it happened in the first place. What are you doing differently from your ancestors? How can you reverse this process? Will your real quality of life change through your efforts? When you're ready to shed all the illness/pain/depression and general misery you know needs go - and possibly acquire a new shape and allow yourself to heal - what you really need to do is **WORK WITH YOUR BODY!!!!**

Sometimes the greatest effort seems to net the least results. We all have to eat but we all seem to have ideas that may actually be keeping us unwell. I recall, thirty years ago, trying to get people to continue eating butter when the new American craze - plastic look-alike margarine - was touted as the saviour for all our health woes. But think: What did our forebears do and eat?

Learning from this rather than blaming our genes would surely be more productive. They unquestionably had the same genetic predispositions for the same diseases we are now discovering in the young. Could it be that, rather than succumbing, they kept themselves busy and ate just enough? Regardless of what they ate, it had to be simple. Loading up with extra fats and sugars and then being persuaded to buy more didn't happen. The home was the produce store, with own-grown veggies and eggs and, possibly, dairy and meats.

What do you yearn for? To feel better/become well/lose weight? To get pregnant /avoid or correct gestational diabetes? To prepare for a special event, or get your former self back after years of being on the diet wagon? Perhaps you are trying to overcome depression, chronic pain, or just escape from being 'fed up' with everything. Whatever is driving you; this is the book that allows you to actually WORK **WITH** YOUR BODY instead of trying to impose what you think it needs.

If you prefer a plan that allows you to eat more moderately, anywhere and for the rest of your life, regardless of how your supposed condition or need might be labelled, this is the book for you.

Read carefully and thoroughly, thoughtfully digesting each point as you encounter a radically different focus from anything you have previously seen.

You may need to read a section at a time to let it sink in and perhaps go through it several times to be sure you have understood. You may also need to commit a lot more intention and place less reliance on a quick 'fix'. If you do, you will gain the health and vitality that have eluded you through trying to win against your body.

In your old ways, you may have thought all your answers lie in becoming magically thinner, overlooking the fact that whatever fad, gimmicky pill, idea or plan you are pursuing must be able to sustain your regeneration and healing long-term.

You need to retrain yourself to see food as nourishment, rather than a reward.

Eating for vitality does encourage weight-loss, if required. However, at the outset it is quite likely you have forgotten to fuel and rebuild yourself during dieting, and your body, accustomed and wary of your past efforts, is several steps ahead, fighting you every step of the way.

My radical suggestion is: LET IT WIN.

YOUR BODY IS PRESET TO KEEP YOU WELL – IF YOU LET IT.

All you have to do is return to natural, sleep more as the sunlight hours dictate, use your body as your forebears had to, and make food choices - seasonal and local - that they were forced to.

NOW - THINK OF THE COMMONLY HELD 'BRIGHT' IDEAS WE TEND TO CYCLE THROUGH INSTEAD, IN OUR EFFORTS TO GAIN CONTROL OF OUR SHAPE...

Missing Meals

(See also *Making Friends with Your Gut/Food Factory*)

Regardless of your focus and aims in reading this, you will probably have done many of these things. What you should realise is that to get the best from your body, and hence life, there are rules to be followed. If you continually break these, you create problems which must be dealt with.

The body works best when it has regularity. When you skip eating, it can go into semi-starvation mode and you may find yourself craving foods - especially fat and sugar - that give quick fixes to the shortfall of energy you need to keep going. Low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia) creates energy troughs and mood swings (often grouchiness). This fuels a desire to eat something fast and inappropriate, especially something with a high sugar load.

Even lying in bed doing apparently nothing calls for fuel - the brain and all your autonomic systems still tick over, and if left to semi-starve, your system finds its own way (not necessarily the best way) to continue functioning.

This means the usual ways of seeking weight loss are doomed to fail. What results when you stop the diet is a see-saw effect, with more depression after the resultant bingeing and more weight gained is over.

Answer

*** If you have been skipping meals, look to the *Eating Plan* and start eating small but frequent amounts of food. I am not suggesting sitting down for a meal five times a day, but taking little nourishing protein snacks - maybe a few rice crackers with a little roasted cashew (never peanut) paste, half a stick of celery with again a little nut paste or soft cheese, a small piece of cheese, or a modest handful of raw, mixed nuts and seeds (again, not peanuts).

You are looking to give your system something to be going on with, thereby allowing the normal bodily processes to be fuelled, regardless of whether you have more conventional meals or not. Protein doesn't need to come from something that breathed if you are a vegan (true vegetarian).

Protein combinations are imperative for those choosing not to eat animal products. Without the necessary quantities to rebuild ourselves, we falter. This is especially true if you are pregnant or breastfeeding as baby is MADE from protein - as we all are.

This may be just a matter of looking at the prevalence of the essential amino acids (protein blocks) tables available elsewhere. (See '*Diet for a Small Planet*').

Meal Substitution

Food is essential. We need it for regeneration, fuel, healing, heating and to live.

Besides assuaging our appetites (often with far more than is needed because of other reasons, such as eating for comfort, as a habit, to swallow down feelings) we need something the body recognizes as nourishing. If this doesn't happen, the **Spleen/Pancreas**/digestive 'fire' becomes stressed. This initiates craving that drives our behaviour, rather than allowing us to be at peace with our body.

It behaves like an unruly, undisciplined child - demanding, and keeping the tantrum going until we satisfy it. Give it no reason to be upset with you. Ensure there is enough Zinc in your diet (a vastly important micronutrient - go to www.foresight_preconception.co.uk to see its role in developing babies - hence ourselves). This is best absorbed in liquid or powder form. It is a crucial catalyst for enzyme reactions in your gut. Insufficient Zinc compromises digestion and assimilation.

Also, go to my site, www.heatherbruce.com.au and search for Zinc, to see how this simple micronutrient can radically benefit living well and mothering.

Similarly, balanced amounts of Selenium, Chromium and Manganese soothe the cravings, especially for sugar and carbohydrates. Your geographic location may mean that foods just do not have sufficient amounts. For example, New Zealand and Australian soils are very deficient in these elements; even veterinary medicine in these countries has greater need for supplements (sick or weakened animals do not make as much profit for the farmer) than seems to exist in the general medical world.

We are what we eat

When drinking a shake - often made with very cold water - you are semiparalysing your digestive 'fire' /Spleen Yang. When that happens how is normal processing going to happen? We need to do a certain amount of chewing - the hypothalamus, deep inside our brain, needs to know that there has been enough food - and its signal is the chewing - modern food melts in the mouth - start munching on a mouthful of cooked brown rice or a raw carrot. This is where we really run into trouble in our busy, modern world. Without adequate roughage (hence chewing), we suffer the effects of internal miscommunication. Little or no chewing makes the brain conclude we haven't eaten or taken enough nourishment.

Answer

You need a sense of satiation to avoid becoming food obsessed. If you must use meal replacements, cook some **brown** rice (lots of roughage), leave it in the fridge and take a mouthful every now and then, chewing it 100 times before swallowing. A few of these will signal the 'full' feeling in the head 'computer' - the hypothalamus.

Cutting Out All Fat

One of the big health problems arising from our culture becoming dependent on science is that too many half truths and incomplete pictures lead to digestive distress. If we do not eat fat, we die. It's that simple. Fat provides the basis for all hormones and neurological growth and repair (essential in babies and thus for lactating and pregnant mothers). It is what we use for insulation and for quick and ready fuel.

What did our ancestors eat? Please get a copy of 'Nourishing Traditions' by Sally Fallon for illumination and start being sensible about your diet.

If we don't get enough fat (especially during intensive growth, as with a baby or young child) we do not achieve normal brain/neurological development.

In later life, fat/cholesterol is the raw ingredient for the hormones we need.

Lack of it leads to depression, a symptom of low thyroid activity, and inability to lose weight, despite your best efforts. Because fat provides the raw ingredients for hormones, an under-supplied thyroid cannot keep you going. The result: depression, and all manner of bodily inadequacies. There is simply not enough of you - quality raw ingredients - (regardless of how big you get!) to work well.

When we are cold, we automatically seek fat because it is easily converted to fuel in our bodies. That's fine, but we also need nutrients with it; chocolates and fast foods are not designed for nutrition but to keep us coming back for more. Discard them. Fat has its own rewards - it feels wonderful in the mouth.

Answer

Cut back on fast food. But you need 'good' fats, such as those found in nuts/seeds, avocados, fish and eggs. They are perfect fuel and building blocks without which you will end up trawling the kitchen, even if you have had enough QUANTITY of food. Your body has wisdom, and you, as a conscious being, are not necessarily in charge!

Eating SOME fat will radically ease your obsession with foods that have been running your life. Your body is TRYING to tell you it needs something of what they offer.

You just need to choose differently: a salmon steak, an omelette, a piece of cheese are all good options that will help you rebuild; a chocolate biscuit may taste good but it will make you want eat more and then feel bad about yourself.

This is because the chocolate biscuit has NOT contributed nutrients and didn't really fool your body - it was telling you it needed FOOD when you made the decision to stock up on comfort.

Cutting Down On Eating Until Evening

As mentioned above, your body works best when it has regularity and cutting down on eating until evening does not represent regularity.

In fact, if there is one meal that might be cut, it is the last one before sleeping. Our most important meal is breakfast because this is when our digestive system is prewired to fire up, to fuel us for the day. (See the **Chinese clock**)

When the day ends, we are preparing to regenerate. If the major fuel of an evening meal arrives, it gets priority. Rebuilding and self healing are forced to take a back seat. As a result of this 'out of synch' refuelling, we awaken feeling not good, as if we have a hangover. Then, we do not feel like having breakfast and the whole bad cycle repeats itself.

Answer

It's best is to nibble all day, cutting back with no large meals after 6 pm.

Breakfast/ early morning eating are essential to get the metabolism going.

Using 'Diet' Pills

Many of the issues I have already discussed apply here. You need to actually determine what you want from your life and your body.

Everything is not miraculously 'fixed' when you reach a target weight or fit into a certain clothes size. Battling against yourself is unlikely to produce the result you want.

Even if you lose weight short term - and this may have 'worked' before - review what your body is really trying to do.

If you are a young woman, or one still bleeding your body strives to support you

well in baby-making, and through menstruating. It needs the ingredients to do this.

In our reproductive years, periods are a preset event, and we are plundering our later life's mental and physical health if we do not look to keeping our youthful foundation going well. Later life resilience and health are at stake.

Answer

Review the eating plan and reread this entire book several times. It is dense; it is different; it is not what you will see anywhere else, and it is the answer: live within your body's requirements for good functioning, and it will pleasantly surprise you.

Using Cigarettes or Substances to Kill Appetite

We need food to live. We need to draw from particular food groups. My Eating Plan is founded on decades of working with women 'at war' with their shape, their gender and their sexuality. I have used it for years.

"Research" is gradually coming up with the same conclusions. Sometimes we feel everything will be 'better if only' (fill in the blank). Being happy inside your skin, within yourself, is the best policy. Good health can then just flow through every pore.

Cigarettes are effective at smothering the hunger you might otherwise feel.

Another smoke instead of a bite of comfort food may seem to work. But all you are doing is running away from yourself. The root cause, what you are hiding deep within, will only chase you as long as you let it fester.

Answer

Establish why you need to be more slender - instead of pursuing health and happiness. Do you actually not LIKE yourself? Are you concerned about your femininity? This is always a big issue. But trying to control your inner self through countering what biology must do is a war you are unlikely to win.

Working with your body, as advocated throughout this book, may never net you slim a figure, but inside will live a happy person, who loves life and who is loved.

That is probably what you really want. Eat for life and health, not shape, and the shape will take care of itself. (Please also review the thyroid issues).

Also, read my eBook [Getting Out of Your Own Way](#) for further assistance).

Going on a 'Fad' Diet -

My own experience of fad diets, outlined in the Introduction, provides a practical example of the potentially serious consequences.

Our bodies have a certain requirement for all their basic building blocks, not just as fuel but also to keep body structure in good condition. Eliminating foods you are allergic or addicted to is always difficult. It is your security and sometimes your best friend. So, we often choose what appeals - rather than what's sensible. As you will see in my Eating Plan and why it works, sticking to NO gluten and a little of everything else is the way of good health.

Eating Raw/Salads

Please read the 'food factory' section, and about why Spleen energy needs our attention and support.

Calorie Counting

My comments above about fat apply here. Choosing a wide variety of nourishing and interesting foods - a little often - and in moderation will always allow you to have a little of what you fancy - and makes your heart sing!

Questions to ask Yourself:

- * With all the effort I have invested over the years - why is it so tough?
- * What is it about what I have been doing that makes me less well and more fat?
- * Could it be that Heather has a point - I have been at war with my biology?

**What if you just try my programme for a month,
and then pass judgment?**

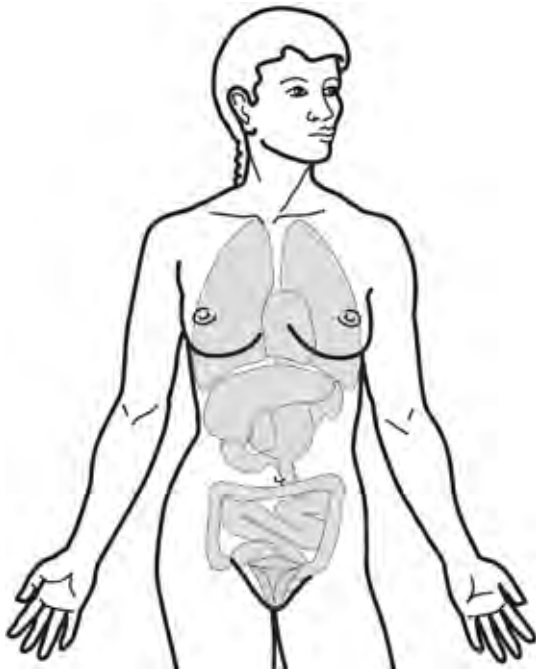
**After all, it is so different from anything else
out there - you are bound to have a response
that is quite different from the previous 'same
old, same old'.**

What do you think?

2. Why do we Eat?

Working WITH not AGAINST your body, and understanding how it was designed both to support life and heal itself, is the focus of this series of eBooks.

Our digestive system's health and functionality is what enables us to live. If we take care of our gut, we are essentially well and happy. Most modern degenerative ills and woes arise through not understanding this. This means YOU are in charge of whether you are ill or a picture of health.



The gut, or alimentary canal, is essentially a tube that is 'outside' the body whilst being within it.

What does this mean? What is within the whole length of the gut is external to you.

It is encased within your structure, but everything in your stomach, colon, and intestines is actually being acted upon and actively being selected for amalgamation within your blood/inner being or is being discarded.

Continuing our past behaviours and expecting a (paid) therapist to help us may not be as effective as learning how to do things better for ourselves - and then actually DOING IT. Change, ultimately, is the only way forward.

If we change our behaviour and do something differently, this will itself initiate further change, causing something else to behave differently.

If we obsess about losing weight, or getting better in some vague way, we are ignoring the fact that our whole system was actually designed to support us.

DOING MORE OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PAST, AND EXPECTING DIFFERENT RESULTS, IS PROBABLY A WASTE OF TIME.

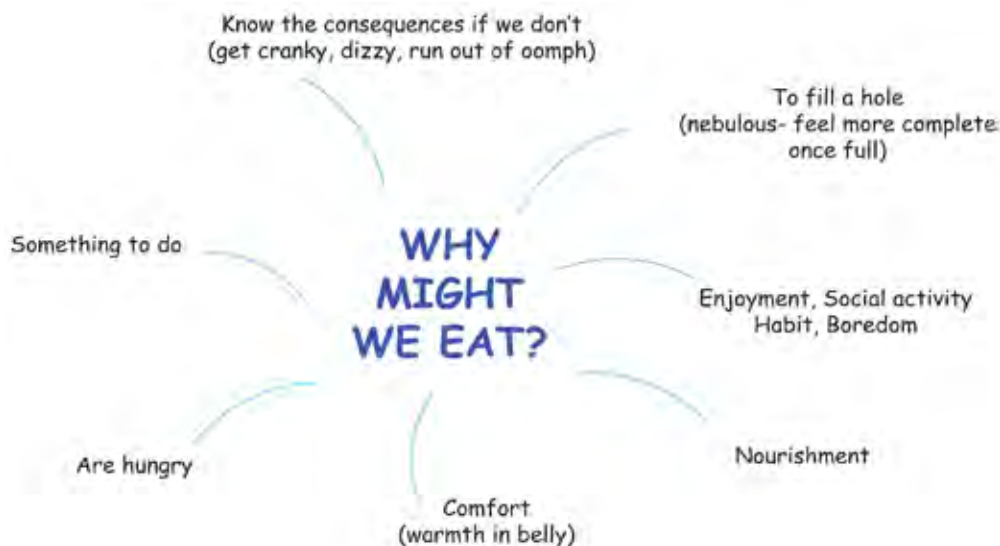
Why We Eat What We Do

WHAT GOES IN is usually a mixture of what you feel like eating and why you feel like eating. It is not always what would be best to support your vitality and your healing. Here's a diagram that represents some of the influences on our eating choices - the 'what':



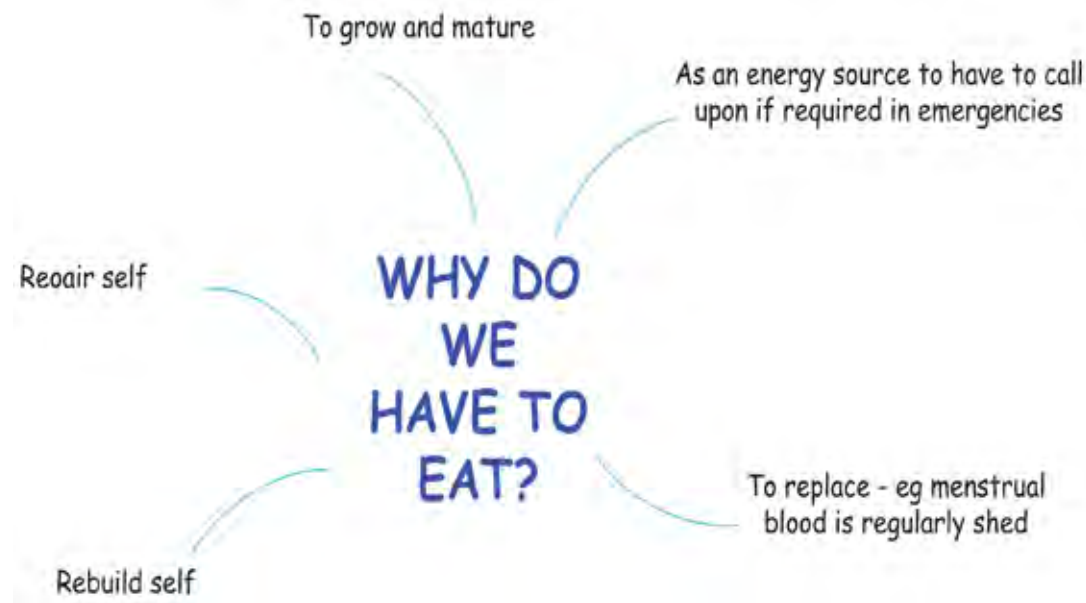
Why We Also May Be Eating

We very rarely eat specifically for the preservation of health and vitality. We are so patterned into just filling our mouths. No 'diet' in the world will work against what our inner voice advances as perfect justifications - so these tend to run us.



Why We Actually Do Need To Eat

Why do we need to keep eating? Or, put another way, what happens when we don't, when we starve ourselves in order to lose weight? The body has to work in starvation mode - handy for when you are fighting on the battle front of a major war or dealing with external issues like sieges and no food at all in the Middle Ages. The thyroid and other systems switch to a 'save-from-dying' mode and may not be triggered into getting back to normal when you decide it's OK to start eating again.



DiETING does not allowing your body to get on with the business of living – and starving it creates all the other problems, PLUS the weight that is still there.

Your body protects you against the possibility of starvation recurring, and hence your possibly dying, by storing more and by slowing the metabolism right down to take advantage of whatever you do eat from then on.

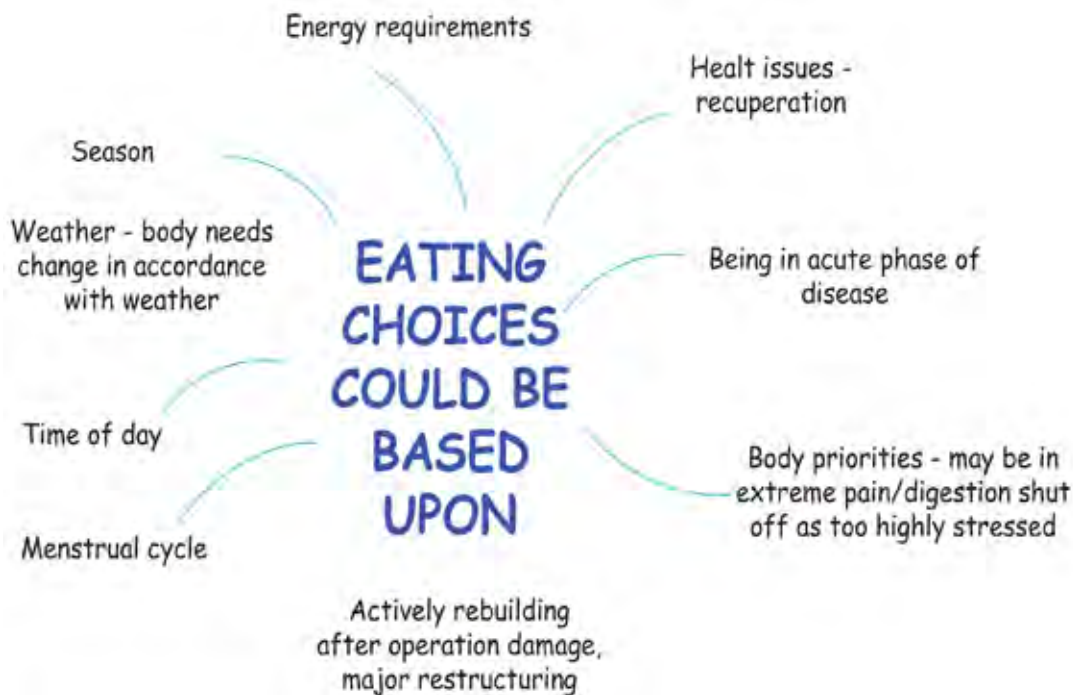
You may have noticed how it gets progressively more difficult to lose weight as you go through successive cycles of dieting and feasting-up as a reward. You may also have noticed that, as you age, it seems progressively more difficult to do what you used to and get the same results. Or, that over the years of having this or that bright idea, there seems to be less commitment to the decision - as though part of you knows in advance this new approach is just not going to work.

Maybe this is why people end up either giving up on diets and exercise regimes or trying surgical answers to the flab. They forgot to work with their body.

How To Break Out Of This Destructive Cycle

The key question about weight loss or health gain is actually: How can the body still support itself and thus you? By altering your focus from losing weight to being as well as possible (not as 'not being unwell'), the constipation, weight, pain, IBS, depression, low metabolism, and so on, will take care of themselves.

Remembering why we must eat, and the effect our choices of what and when we eat have upon us, we have more control over what we are doing to ourselves. Your body may have a different priority than your taste buds have!



Ultimately, the reasons behind why you have been putting foods in your mouth are more the major issue than the choice of what type of foods.

As you travel on your healing journey, you will actually discover that you have been **CHOOSING** to eat the way you may have thought apparently virtuous thinner people do. You may not realize that they are eating and looking the way they do because they worked out they prefer to feel vibrant than weighed down.

By the time that you are choosing to eat for life, you will also notice those chocolate, sweet things cravings and whatever else has been running/ruining you and your life up to then fade away.

It becomes vastly easier to eat what your body wants and needs, not what you think makes you feel whole or better in some way.

Why We Might Think We Need To Eat

We see all the bright advertising that those in control of food retailing put in front of us. They load up the goods with salt, sugar, fats and other 'flavour enhancers' to convince our taste buds that we want more.



Consciously Eating

If we were to embark on a very different eating programme, not a variation of what we already do, but a complete break from what we previously thought of as 'normal' - all condiments, all beverages, all ingestibles - and introduced a different set, once past the possible culture shock, we would become less allergic and less unwell within a week.

This has already been done very successfully over twenty years ago. I suggest you find a book *Arthritis - the Allergy Connection* by Dr John Mansfield. He was so unhappy about the state of his patients that he put them on what he called a 'cave man' diet.

Everyone on his programme ate according to a rotational model (not eating from the same food group, let alone food substances for a few days). The diet was full of foods such as common weeds, rabbit, venison and the like - food that would never grace a supermarket shelf. Within a few days, not only was his target disorder - rheumatoid arthritis - clearing up, but so were all the other apparently chronic 'hereditary' issues of his patients, such as skin and gut diseases, asthma and all forms of autoimmune issues.

Within a few days of returning to their previous diet, most conditions had recurred. So, the saying "You are what you eat" takes on new significance. Do you want to keep feeling sick and tired, or do you want to change everything to become more of who you always could have been?

Why do we keep eating what is not fuelling us to the optimum? There is the awkward issue that what we are allergic to we are also addicted to. Just stop a minute and think about what you could not do without in a day. In my own case, it would be dairy foods of all kinds. Whilst, as a kiwi, I grew up dependent on milk, butter and cheese, today these are not the products I would depend upon.

At least in NZ, we still have cows eating grass and in the paddocks, although now it is super-phosphated. The goodness from natural farming methods does not earn large profits so farmers cut corners to deliver cheap products. What is this doing to our own gut?

Starting with milk, calves may have been lucky to suckle even once from their mothers, as the colostrum is collected for health food supplements for humans who want more from THEIR bodies. Colostrum, or first milk, full of all sorts of 'start-up' ingredients for all mammals, is designed to protect and enhance babies' digestive system. Yes, it will help yours if you take supplements stolen from calves, but what happened to your own supply?

What about the calf who will, if female, grow into the beast who gets to manufacture milk for the dairy products we consume - and how much less able is she when HER gut was not given the start it needed?

Oh Dear!!!!

This is before we speak of antibiotic usage and all the drenches and other chemicals directly used on animals, or whatever is in the pasture (such as pesticides). All of this is in the fat cells - in their bodies and in our bodies. And we pass these onto OUR children. Nature stores toxins in fat cells, which are what eggs/sperm and especially breast milk are full of.

Just Google 'toxic breast milk' and see how much FIRE RETARDANT (did any of us ingest this?) gets into it.

So, ANYTHING around losing weight is best done well before you choose to conceive, or left until well after you stop breastfeeding. The first baby, and the younger it is, gets the biggest dose of whatever we previously stored in our own bodies.

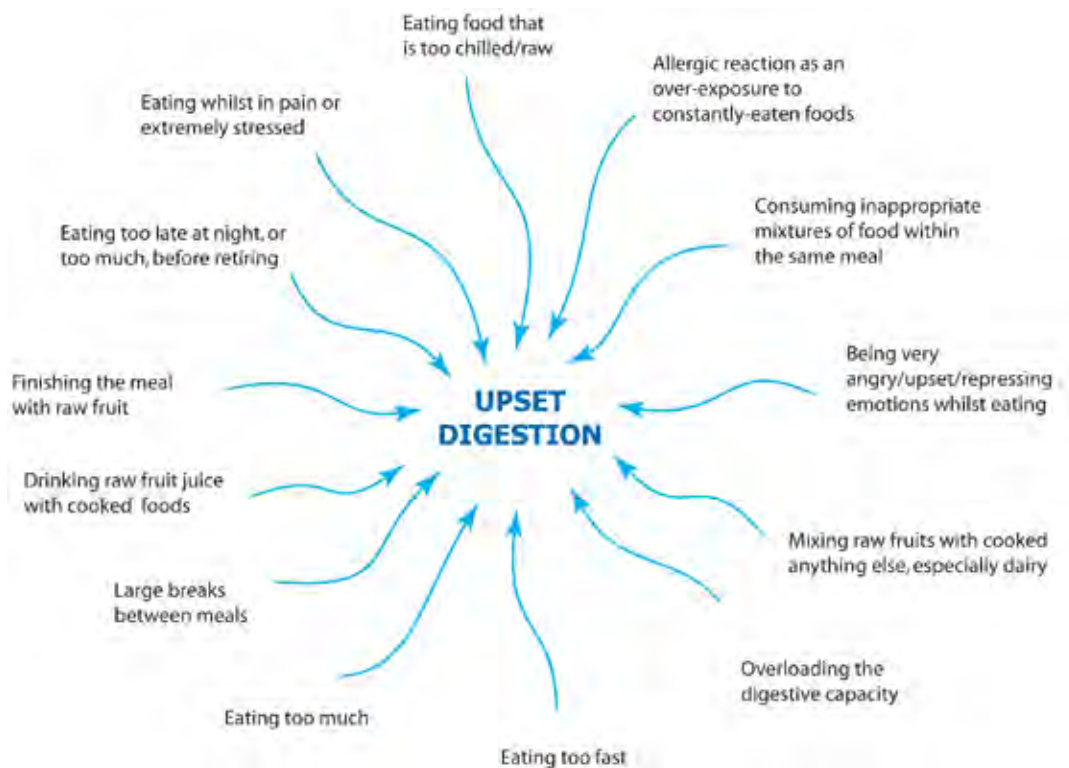
This supports the case for some form of detoxifying well before embarking upon making a new being (baby). For more on this, see my other [eBooks](#).

How We Unconsciously Damage Ourselves

Often, by simply following a few rules, as if by magic, the body can work smoothly again. Please look at what you may be doing to create the very things that trouble you.

To an orthodox, trained dietician, what is below may be outside their realm of understanding. As a trained naturopath, I know that some of my comments may even make little sense to some naturopaths. This may be because some issues are straight out of the average acupuncture text.

Depending on how long ago a person was trained, some may appear (as doctors sometimes say) 'old fashioned.' Yet the body does have optimal conditions under which it operates, and if we understand these, we experience far less problems. It is a matter of energy; we are not just a physical body, or subject to just physical rules.



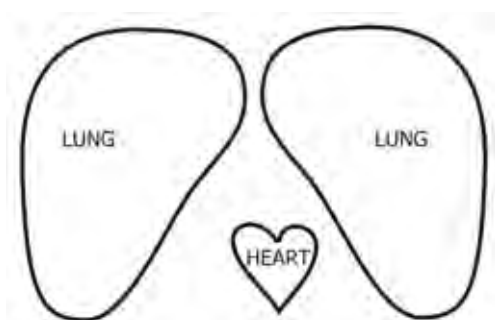
Why did we never think about all this when we were young and well? Because it wasn't until things got a little broken that they began to alert us - through pain /reflux/heartburn/gas/bloating/discomfort and general non-functioning.

Even if you think you have a 'cast iron' gut, be aware that it will not allow mishandling forever. By changing the operating conditions BEFORE you inflict any more damage upon yourself, you may be able to avoid some of these gut worries.

A Brief Journey Around The Body

Physically

The upper part of the body contains the heart and lungs. The lungs are open to the outside world, picking up oxygen and releasing carbon dioxide and moisture into the air. 70% of our breathing is done by the diaphragm; the rest is done with muscles, particularly those around the neck and shoulders. The heart sits between the lungs and controls blood flow to all the tissues. While not directly involved in digestion, the heart and lungs are responsible for the intake of oxygen and the delivery of nutrients to every tissue in the body. Wastes are carried by the blood to the eliminatory organs for excretion. Energy levels and toxicity are directly related to the health of these organs.



Within this book I will be speaking of the Upper Heater. This is the space above the diaphragm - the chest organs. Here - from an acupuncture /Chinese medical perspective - is where we circulate the qi (energy) and blood, and where these two are actually created.

Energy Model - Upper Heater

In the top third of the trunk, the diaphragm marks the division between the upper and middle heaters. The pure essence of food energy ascends into the chest cavity where it is mixed with the prana/cosmic qi, and, in physical terms, oxygen, to form the qi (energy), which is circulated in the meridians and the blood that circulates in the blood vessels. The lung organ complex also is involved in fluid metabolism; thus enhancing upper heater function will also improve the quality of all raw materials of the body, the circulation of qi, blood and fluids.

RESONANCE**SUBSTANCE**

Cosmic qi/prana

Oxygen

(From Chapter 3 onwards, when you see lines drawn across the page, the left hand side of the page will always hold the more vibrational aspect, while the right hand side represents the one that we, from this culture, call 'real' - the tangible, palpable, the structural.)

Considerations For Healthy Life Expression

Structure - Are the organs and spine aligned correctly?

Posture - A well-functioning chest needs plenty of room.

Air Purity - We are the sum of that which we create from our environment.

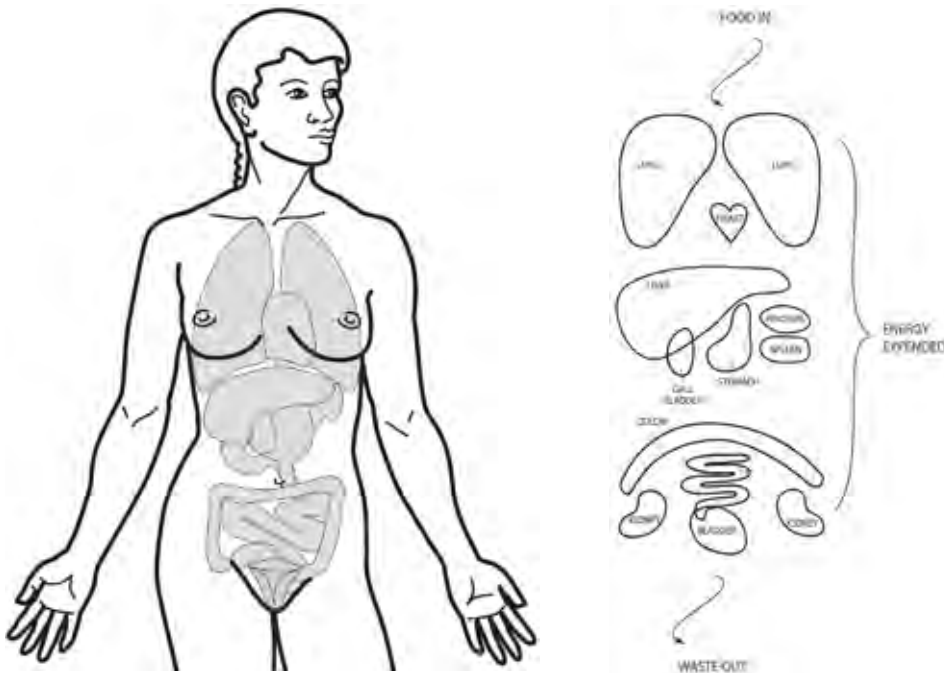
Complete Breathing Cycle - Energy and physical blockages often impinge upon the full range.

Healthy Lungs - Freedom from tar (from smoking), phlegm, cold, damp and grief.

Heart Chakra - Open and resonating, as designed to be. (Broken hearts, hurts and grievances stop us from fully living).

Liver Qi Stagnation - If there is unresolved, suppressed and/or Stuck Liver Qi, there will be a sense of fullness as the energy pushes up against the diaphragm. This may lead to sensations of breathlessness, smothering and oppression.

Straightening up physically, releasing emotionally and allowing oneself to feel, will all allow greater use of the food that is often lovingly and thoughtfully prepared.



The Actual Placement Of The Physical Organs

Middle Heater

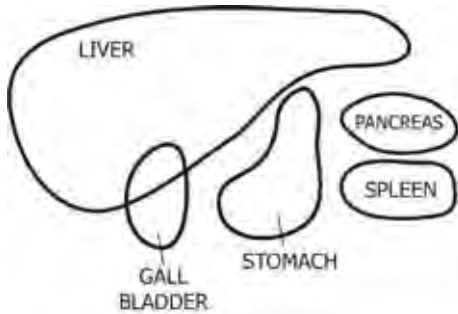
The middle part of our body houses the digestive system. The liver and gall bladder sit around the lower level of the ribs on the right side, just below the diaphragm. The stomach sits at the same level on the left. The spleen and pancreas are tucked between the two, towards the middle. The large bowel circles the abdominal cavity, starting at the lower right hand corner, just inside the front of the hip, rises to the level of the liver, lies across the body at this level, and then descends to the rectum on the left side.

When food is swallowed, after being mixed with saliva by chewing (saliva moistens the food to start the release of water-soluble nutrients and contains enzymes which help break down carbohydrates), it is propelled to the stomach. The stomach wall secretes hydrochloric acid which breaks protein into its amino acid components. Amino acids are the building blocks for all tissues and substances made of protein. The liver and gall bladder are involved in the digestion of fats - one of the best sources of energy for the body.

The liver stores vitamins A, D, E, K, B12, iron and copper and is involved in vitamin D metabolism (necessary for calcium absorption). The liver is the largest gland and the most complicated organ in the body; it is the only organ that can regenerate itself if injured. It is important in maintaining blood glucose levels

(blood glucose is the fuel of all the cells in the body).

If the liver is not playing its part in protein metabolism, we would not last 3 days!
Drugs and hormones are removed as well as other toxic, metabolic wastes.



The middle section receives the raw ingredients to be processed. Our gut can be likened to a cooking pot. The fire of digestion is supplied ultimately by the Kidney Yang Qi via the Spleen Yang.

The pure essences are driven upwards to the upper heater; the more solid components begin their journey downwards, to eventually be evacuated.

Energy Model

These organs are where we encounter the bulk of our digestive worries. Through being too constrained/'nice'/polite/civil - whatever we were taught in order to be accepted and pleasant - we CREATE all the gut dramas - by not being true to our inner selves.

Eating

We tend to eat for a variety of reasons, very rarely paying attention to the rules of the body. Our food choices say more about our personality than about the needs of our body.

From the energy framework, these needs could be seen as:

1 - Regularity

Eat at least every three hours - not a huge amount, but sufficient to stop the blood sugar dips that create mood and energy swings and sugar cravings.

Eating a little often, snacking on high quality foods, will provide maximum opportunity for healing.

2 - Temperature

The spleen/pancreas energy that forms the foundation of our digestive and metabolic strength is required to heat all incoming foods and fluids to body temperature to begin digestion. If our Spleen Yang Qi is over-taxed, we do not transform foods correctly, creating fat, cellulite and fluid accumulations.

3 - Timing

Our Yang Qi is strongest in the daylight hours. Our digestive strength is strongest in the morning. Parents of babies are aware that colic is not generally a morning activity, and those with weak digestive systems have greater difficulty with bloating and pain as the day wears on.

Note: It is important to eat only a small meal to end the day, which then allows one to feel hungry and not hung-over at breakfast time. (See Chinese Clock)

4 - Quality

This is usually where well-intentioned writers give their opinions. It is far more important for the body energy systems to be regularly nourished than to spend time obsessing over the relative merits of organic versus microwaved nutrients. That said, it is highly desirable to eat as simply, purely and naturally as possible, as we ingest with our food an unknown cocktail of unintended chemical additions - some writers say up to FIVE extra kgs a year.

5 - Moderation and Variety

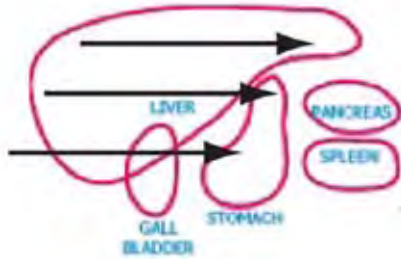
'A little bit of what you fancy does you good'. Filling our bodies with large quantities and/or a total lack of food variety can create overload and allergic responses. For example: the same breakfast EVERY day, the reliance on gluten and dairy, or whatever else you think you cannot be without.

6 - Choice of Type of Food

The body requires a balanced, moderate amount of nourishing substances, particularly as, when we have a spleen/pancreas energy imbalance, we rigidly obsess with what we believe to be 'right'.

Considerations

1 - Solar Plexus Chakra - This is our key self-nourishing centre. It can shut down due to shock. This may explain why many diabetics trace the onset of their disease to a specific traumatic event.



When upset and holding on enough, we attack ourselves. The Stuck Liver Qi being very mobile, has to move, and it goes horizontally, giving rise to all manner of painful and often burning feelings.

Eventually medicine enables detection of the physical results of this. Then ulcers, IBS, reflux or at least 'indigestion' are diagnosed

2 - Stuck Liver Qi - Emotional issues left to fester stop our energy systems from correctly functioning. Loosely, this is called stress.

3 - Chronic Stress - The primary role of the Liver Qi is to allow all substances to flow freely throughout the body. This is impossible when we choose not to say, act, feel, or acknowledge our own needs and our own truths. Our entire digestive system is thus at the mercy of our honesty. Inability to move on - holding on to an emotional account balance with retribution and payback on any level - is guaranteed to block your own life force.

4 - Gall Bladder and Liver Toxins/Stones - Gallstones often take decades to develop. They are a sequel from the issue outlined above. Solidified bitterness, resentment, frustration and hatred may be in the background. Also they become solid - cholesterol, calcified cholesterol and other impurities. Modern styles of eating and living, combined with our being polite and 'nice', swallowing our resentment and bitterness, (STRESS) usually lead to the formation of this excessive solid material.

5 - Rules of Eating - If these are not followed, all digestive disturbances will interact with the other considerations outlined here.

6 - Co-habitants - Parasitic life forms, besides leeching out essential nutrients, may also create toxic by-products. Re-colonising one's gut with healthy bacteria to assist, is part of any good health dietary plan.

7 - Posture - A well functioning digestive system requires room to move. Slouching over computers after meals is unlikely to allow good digestion. Similarly, placing a well-fed baby in a baby capsule, especially with the jarring of a car motion, is likely to create reflux, colic and other baby digestive disturbances. Their bodies are too unstructured to cope with the position.

8 - Structure - Correct spinal alignment and integrity of the abdominal organs allows optimum digestive health.

9 - Breathing - The diaphragm, when fully inflating the chest, massages the liver and colon. If we persist in shallowly breathing, we do not allow our bodies to work to their potential.

Lower Heater

The small and large intestines break down and absorb most of the nutrients we ingest. Malnutrition and malabsorption syndromes often start here. It is important this area is healthy, well-supplied with blood and appropriate micro-organisms, and the gut wall is intact and healthy. Otherwise systemic health will be compromised.

The body secretes approximately 7 litres of digestive fluids daily, (the small intestine producing 2 litres) most of which is absorbed through the intestinal wall, carrying nutrients with it. Most vitamins and minerals are absorbed here, except B12, which needs to be combined with a special enzyme called intrinsic factor that is made by the stomach, and is absorbed by a different process closer to the large bowel.

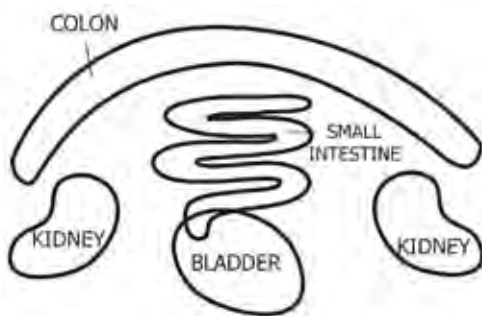
General fluid levels are influenced by the state of the intestines. Abdominal bloating and discomfort are signs all is not well in this area. They should be treated before energy levels and health suffers.

The pancreas is a gland that secretes digestive juices and enzymes to help the body break down starches, proteins, triglycerides and nucleic acids into usable units. It is also involved in regulating blood sugar levels - this is where insulin is made and secreted.

The actual physical spleen organ is the largest mass of lymphatic tissue. From a traditional eastern medical perspective it is not regarded as being involved in digestion. It is involved in keeping the blood stocked with adequate levels of immunological factors and free of bacteria and worn out red cells. Stomach acid also plays an important role in killing ingested bacteria. This is thus of great concern if you are compromising your health and nutrition by taking antacids as your gut is unhappy. (Stomach Fire). The digestive system is an interface with the outside world. As such the spleen helps ensure only the useful and nourishing components of the food and fluids we consume are absorbed.

The kidneys are tucked behind the lower ribs, at the very back of the body, connected to the bladder by tubes called ureters. The bladder sits at the level of the pubic bone; the uterus sits directly behind it. (Hence uterine prolapses, surgery, etc., can have a direct effect on the bladder.) The kidneys filter blood, regulating volume and composition (including red blood cell content). They reabsorb necessary substances such as proteins, glucose, etc., and eliminate acid wastes, certain drugs and chemicals and excess potassium, sodium, ammonia, etc. The bladder stores urine and concentrates it until the body is able to void it.

Energy Model - Lower Heater



Although everything in the energy model depends upon the Liver Qi flowing properly, the organs here are very important.

The kidneys are said in acupuncture to be the root of our life energy. Other organs also on the energy levels do much more than just store and release materials as needed.

In energy terms, the assimilation of nutrients is effected by the action of the Spleen/Pancreas Yang Qi. If the Spleen Qi is weakened, everything and anything has a tendency to fall down and out. Within the digestive context, this is seen as poor digestion, leaky gut syndrome, food intolerances and allergies.

Candida overgrowths, diarrhoea, prolapses and haemorrhoids.

The more solid components of the digestive process gradually travel to the bottom. The integrity of the Liver Qi (see Considerations below), and the availability of **Yin Qi** (lubricating energy, seen physically present as fluids) are the key points in ease of solid waste exit.

If the reproductive and sexual organs, the pelvic girdle and the lower back area, contain energy or structural blockages, these will impact upon the Lower Heater's smooth functioning. The role of the Liver Qi and whether we are actually allowing ourselves to be real, or holding back, are important in all of this discussion of digestion. When we suppress or repress our Qi/emotions and ourselves, we build up a force that is real and has to go somewhere. If we are not aware, it starts attacking ourselves .

Considerations

Actual Spinal Alignment - Correct spinal alignment allows correct flow of nerve, blood and energy circulation to the appropriate organs.

Posture and Movement - Being more solid, physical wastes need physical movement to assist their downward passage.

Breathing - Full abdominal breathing cycles assist in the release.

Sexual Expression - The Liver meridians pass over and through the inner and external genital areas. Stuck Liver Qi in the form of sexual frustration can further add to the unresolved and blocked Liver Qi.

The Root Chakra - This is responsible for survival issues. Any fear felt and stored creates blockage here.

The ability to let go, to experience and truly be present in this now moment is a gift all of us have when we begin our journey as babies. For all of us, at some point, some aspect on some level shuts down. The body attempts to recreate its blueprint. If we listened to the early warnings and sought to find the cause of 'the problem', we might actually heal.

Using the definition of health as “the ability to adapt to change” we can see that whilst we carry the energy splinters/blockages/shocks, of our past experiences, our present and future are also affected. We OURSELVES have the keys to change back to what it could be.

Understanding internal organ relationships provides insights into the importance of maintenance and care for the body. Diet, lifestyle and exercise all directly affect the body.

Nothing in the body is static; everything, from cell-tissue-organ level, is constantly moving, as are we with our heartbeat, breath and physical movement.

Growth, reproduction and repair are facts of life. We need the building blocks (nutritious food and fluids) and the physical fitness of optimal wellbeing to maintain our body.

3 - Changing Gears

Sometimes we see ourselves as a being residing inside a head, and being carted about by a body. Depending on our religious family background and our mother-culture, we may have a more enduring perception of self, beyond this life and in this body/form.

We may wonder why we are here at all, but most of us are totally consumed by the seductive notion of being busy and having an identity - rather than pondering the question.

In this case, you feel more comfortable on the known/'safe' (rational) right hand side of any line I have below - where our culture trains us to seek answers. But often, we forget that ALL of that linear representation carries aspects of other elements of ourselves.

Acupuncturists, dealing in energy and resonance, automatically are far more interested in what appears on the left hand side of any line I show you. This can be crucial when the obvious fails to answer our big questions. When we need assistance, where do we look?

The obvious/easy too common thinking tends to be well patronised, but the likely answers are usually to be found elsewhere - where we are stuck, and choose not to look. Will we allow some other framework to assist us in our blockages? (Please see Heather's eBook "[Getting Out of Your Own Way](#)"),

If we consider seeking help outside the orthodox medical route (which sits at the far right of the line), we find there are still choices within gradations. We may have been brought up to believe that we always had to ask an 'expert' - but think about which position they hold. What are they 'expert' in?

This eBook is called "Helping Yourself- to Vitality" because, regardless of the type and calibre of the practitioners you consult, their advice and support are dependent on your ALSO looking after yourself.

This may be something you think you already do. In your mind you are already doing whatever is best for you. Or you may think that what you could be doing/pretend that you will do when is perfect

Often this 'best' way is assumed to be similar to your health care practitioner's own version of 'what everyone knows'. This can result in an assumption may not be helpful in inspiring the changes to create the healing you want.

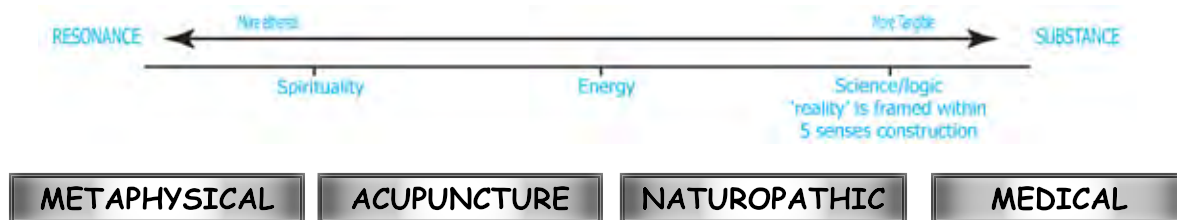
To this end, please study what I have written and reflect on the differences to what you have seen before. Taking the body and how it works into account provides more options on why things have not shifted (especially weight) in the past. As most of us believe we **are** eating well already, and that we are fairly healthy, some of what you will read may surprise you.

The Framework We Run

The medical model (to the extreme RIGHT of the line below) tends to focus on body mechanics, reporting what is happening PHYSICALLY, labelling and looking at the most obvious 'cause' from a rigid set of physical variables - a report on the mechanics as though that is all that is to be factored in to a person's life.

The **naturopathic** model (further left than the standard medical one, and to the right of ENERGY) - always uses information based on 'facts' as delivered through the physical body. It also uses the western medical model to 'prove' through the right hand field, but applies it slightly differently.

(Reading these lines from right to left allows you to appreciate how we are fixated at the END result rather than the PROCESS that sets us up).



The acupuncture side (more towards the central position on the line - the ENERGY point) focuses more on the instructions that actually drive the physical, giving the flesh the specifications to follow to function.

MORE RESONANT APPROACH

(Vibrational/resonant/spiritual)

(Digestive fire/food factory energy)
to do something useful
with what goes in)

MEDICAL/DATA BASED MODEL

(More mechanical/science based)

VS (Calories and food groups) (Ability
(Ingestibles)

As an example - **we try to control our body shape**. We assume it's all about what we put in our mouths. We learn about calories and 'good' and 'bad' foods. We do all and more - everything precisely.

We may lose some weight; we may feel better or worse; we may reach a plateau. Then we become discouraged again, and, six months later, we possibly end up heavier than when we started. Do we stop to think why this might not work if we start the diet craze again and try it all over again with another version of what is best to eat?

Did anyone think to mention/include metabolism, and how, if (like in an automatic car) you tweak the running programme, it uses more or less fuel?

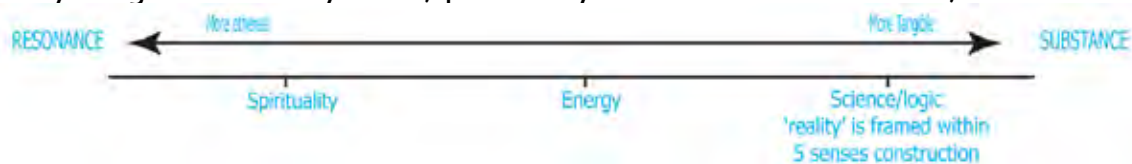
If we stop obsessing about what we eat, how much and how often, and what we do with the food once it is inside us, we may see other answers. If we consider what has been happening, to us, we may realise that we often didn't actually change our diet or exercise regime to **INSTIGATE** the weight gain - our thermostat or furnace settings within may just have been altered.

To help you grasp more of this, I invited you to open your mind to possibilities, and resist the natural tendency to prejudge. Yes, this is very different from how everything in our culture is normally presented. As we go on, you will see why this is, and how everything **CAN** fit together.

Throughout my teachings and work, I use a line drawn on the page or along a whiteboard. This represents the two forces in Chinese medical thought - **Yin** (on the right) and **Yang** (on the left). They really just mean that we live in a duality and everything can be placed on a continuum - with the extremes at each end. To explain this, imagine our universe to be represented by a line.

In life we tend to see everything as though there was just one position - the logical/'scientific' one (the **RIGHT** hand side of the line). In other times in human existence, or in contemporary more primitive cultures, the more spiritual or intuitive elements are considered to be more relevant. At present, science and evidence based data prevails.

Everything that is very solid, previously considered to be 'real', condensed in



form, and able to be 'proven' through investigation with our five senses, is seen on the extreme **RIGHT**. On the **LEFT**, is everything that is less tangible, that

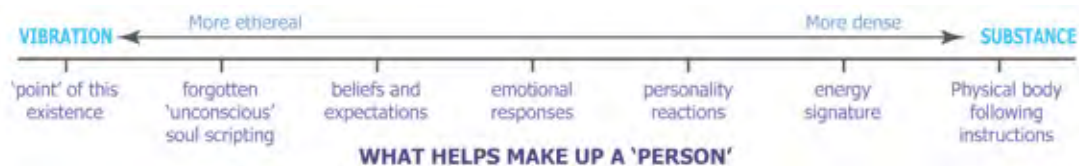
has more of a vibrational, resonance or feeling /intuitive sort of tone, and possibly no physical substance - thus NOT being able to be discerned through our five physical senses.

This illustrates how we categorise everything in our lives. We may wonder why we want to do this - forgetting that everything always goes at least through a subconscious 'good/bad ' filter. Here, I am offering a visual teaching tool to support a more inclusive understanding of some very central, though very different, concepts in this book.

The more OBVIOUS, substantial/dense and tangible is always going to be at the right of the page. The less so, the more ethereal/energy/vibrational and subtle/spiritual, are in the left. Following from this, when considering the nature of ourselves, we tend to only see the HUMAN part - where our brains and beliefs run who we think we are. We forget that we are within a mammalian template (body has instincts and these run us), and that we have a soul (even a ?karmic template/script for being here that may be running whatever happens).



Let's look at it another way: (start where our culture defaults to - the RIGHT)



Generally, we automatically start categorising. We think about what seems 'real' or 'unreal', relative to what we already regard (from our culture/upbringing/inner beliefs) as 'real' or 'right'. Then we start judging something new as either 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong'.

Here, I present ideas from a different perspective. So please, just bear with it, as it will help you understand the very different energy concepts that are at work and why 'winning ' against ill health, lack of oomph, and being overweight have failed you so far.



Also, when considering belief frameworks/world views - the way we see the life we live - we are inclined to forget that we are vastly more than our physical components.

Where to Start When There Seems to be a Problem

Often seeing a medical doctor will be pointless, as the major physical decline is not yet evident; you just feel unwell and not as vibrant as usual. By the same token, if you broke your leg, seeing a naturopath/herbalist first would not be the wisest choice - the urgent need is to attend to the physical.

In the past, in other cultures and times, all manner of wise men and women were given the position of 'healer' and dealt with the more emotional and spiritual aspects of what happens and how it affects us. A broken heart/wounded soul needs more than a five minute consult for a sleeping pill. These days, unless something is 'found' in the blood or is quantifiable from some other testing, there seems to be an assumption that things can't be too bad', and that relaxing, sleeping and stopping worrying will all help.

If you know there is more to this than being placated by chemicals- drugs, recreational or prescribed, if you realise that who you are needs a shift, if what you are experiencing seem too difficult to resolve, what can you do?



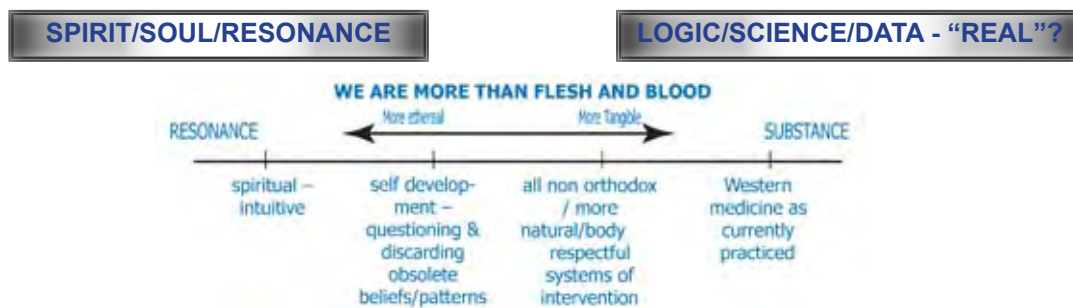
These solutions may all seem a little unconventional to someone used to taking drugs from a doctor. But looking differently at your upset often helps you see hidden within the symptoms what you are actually hiding from. Usually what we think is the problem is actually just an indication that something else is awry.

This explanation, through the linear breakdown of every position we hold, then allows us to see why, although we thought we were doing everything 'right'/ everything possible, weight was staying put, illness kept occurring, depression was not being resolved through medication, energy was not returning even when taking vitamins. And so on. This is also the food in/fat on equation in essence.

Gaining Vitality

Possibly losing Weight

Everything you have so far read or believe about eating (or anything else attached to body function or life in general), probably comes from that extreme RIGHT hand side of the line. All is written from the latest 'research' - all data based and all validated through logic/science and the latest ways of reporting the mechanical aspects of identifiable being. But is this all we are?



We have a dominant science-based culture. Numbers - calories/GI etc - are considered important rather than what the body does with the food when it arrives.

This approach does not ask: Are you too stressed to have a system actually cope with eating? Everything must fit in to logical, rational and measureable criteria. We validate with numbers, rather than what feels right.

Anything that does not fit with this is often considered to be 'alternative', because it is not from the mainstream perspective. Dismissing other viewpoints is a big leap from there. Judgements become enhanced with labels like 'unscientific', 'illogical', 'irrational' - and are all then considered potentially suspicious.

Anything outside the 'norm' is also subjected to far more scrutiny than that which is a little off-centre. That is why you may view elements of this book as odd. Actually, it may be odd to you - where else do you find an author combining both the more left (resonant, more spiritual) and right (more substantial and bound by the physical sciences) sides of the line?

Our Inner Digestive Fire

Looking then at our body, its response to food, and how we feel, we begin to see a broader, more inclusive picture.

By using (from the standard medical model) information about food groupings relative to digestibility (raw with cooked, and whether they ferment, rather than digest) and the **temperature** of the food when eaten, we see a remarkable change in what happens within us, and how hard or easy it is for our body to respond.



We have a fire within. The pot in the picture represents our stomach. This is what keeps our digestive furnace going. If we put in ingredients that are cooler than body temperature, we are asking our body to expend far more energy than we may gain from eating in the first place.

If it costs us to digest it, we will start to experience weakening in other (apparently unrelated) areas. This is never discussed within conventional science, yet all mums and grandmas are tuned in to things like this.

We all know to heat up a baby's bottle before presenting it. If not, the baby's stomach, being very new and delicate, would bring the contents straight up again, or precipitate other major dramas, including very bad colicky pains. Our adult bodies also do not welcome chilly foods or fluids, though this may be overruled by some other considerations.

When you want to change, you must first realise that what you have done in the past has created the very situation/condition you want to heal.

To get better, change has to happen.

New ways have to be trialled.

Habits must be broken.

The fire within is like the oven in the kitchen. If you don't follow the operating instructions, or set the temperature lower than the recipe states, the finished product will be not be what you expected.

The amount of difference will depend on how much you lowered the temperature, the type of baking you were doing, and compensatory factors (perhaps leaving it longer in the oven etc).

It would be easier just to follow the instructions and cook at the right temperature. In the same way, if you are unhappy with the results of your eating, you can change what you are 'baking' (ie, the food you eat). But, a more effective approach is to follow the body's needs. After all, if you were having a problem with a kitchen appliance, consulting the handbook/manual usually helps.

Here I am providing some of the 'owner's manual' information you may have been missing. By including BOTH sides of the eating equation, you may see how, previously, 'doing everything RIGHT' was only focused on ONE side of the line.

We have varying 'realities' to follow in eating. Everyone seems to be producing a different version of diet or a self help book that says it will revolutionize your state of energy/wellness/shape/health /life.

How do you choose who to listen to? You could start by choosing whatever assists your body - in respecting your inner fire and the machinery that actually does the digesting, rather than focusing on what you consume.

KEY POINTS - there are more than just the physical mechanics to consider in being human.

We have a fire in our belly. If we keep it stoked up, everything will work better.

4. Understanding the Energy Framework

There are two important concepts to grasp here:

* Digestive Fire - as already covered

* Free Movement Of Everything

(Looking at stress and how it clogs up everything) ,

Please take the time to reflect on this. It is THE core essence of why most people do not get the best from their lives and the changes they try to make. (Also see my eBook *Getting out of Your Own Way*)

If anything upsets either of these aspects, your 'default' setting for overall perfect body functioning suffers. Remember that this is from an energy perspective, one that has been used for countless years in another culture, so it MAY appear a little odd; we only tend to see the mechanical from our viewpoint. This energy/acupuncture model incorporates a more inclusive approach.

In a Nutshell . . .

Food goes in. The inner fire is stoked and starts a distillation process where the most pure essence is driven off; rising to the chest (we will cover this aspect later on). The rest of the raw ingredients/meal travels through a gradual separation journey - the purer aspects being sent elsewhere, the lesser components gradually travelling downwards, for eventual removal/discharge.

As the meal is processed, the **Liver** energy's function - allowing free flowing of every aspect of self - swings into action. Smoothing the digestive operation is part of the role of Liver energy. When we are in any way stressed, upset or annoyed, this impacts our system's ability to operate. This then sets in motion quality issues with every other aspect of our very being. Every nourishment detail, every circulatory event and all life is impacted when the body is unable to process as designed.

Simply by 'putting it behind you', being civil for the children's sake, or keeping quiet because you don't want to make a scene actually gives you more internal festering to wage war with, in yourself.

The internal war creates a gradual 'head of steam' that keeps building. As it intensifies, it starts to 'short out' minor body systems, eventually gaining your attention.

It might do this by making you feel off-colour, not having the regular bowel movement you are used to, feeling a bit run down, or feeling more tired than usual. You may try to self medicate. A cup of coffee always perks you up in the morning.

Then you begin, almost without noticing, coupling it with hot chocolate and the odd sugar hit to keep you focused. You can easily miss not eating nutritiously, being 'so busy'.

That this is recognized up to a point is reflected in the fact that prescriptions for anti-depressants are running at an all time high.

Those following medical training know that everyone feels stressed and that this stress impacts on all levels of being.

Altering brain chemistry by artificial chemical means, to try to enforce a more normal pattern, is a little like getting better salvage/towing operators outside a tricky intersection, so a speedy traffic flow recovery can be affected after an accident.

More sensibly, we might redesign the intersection.

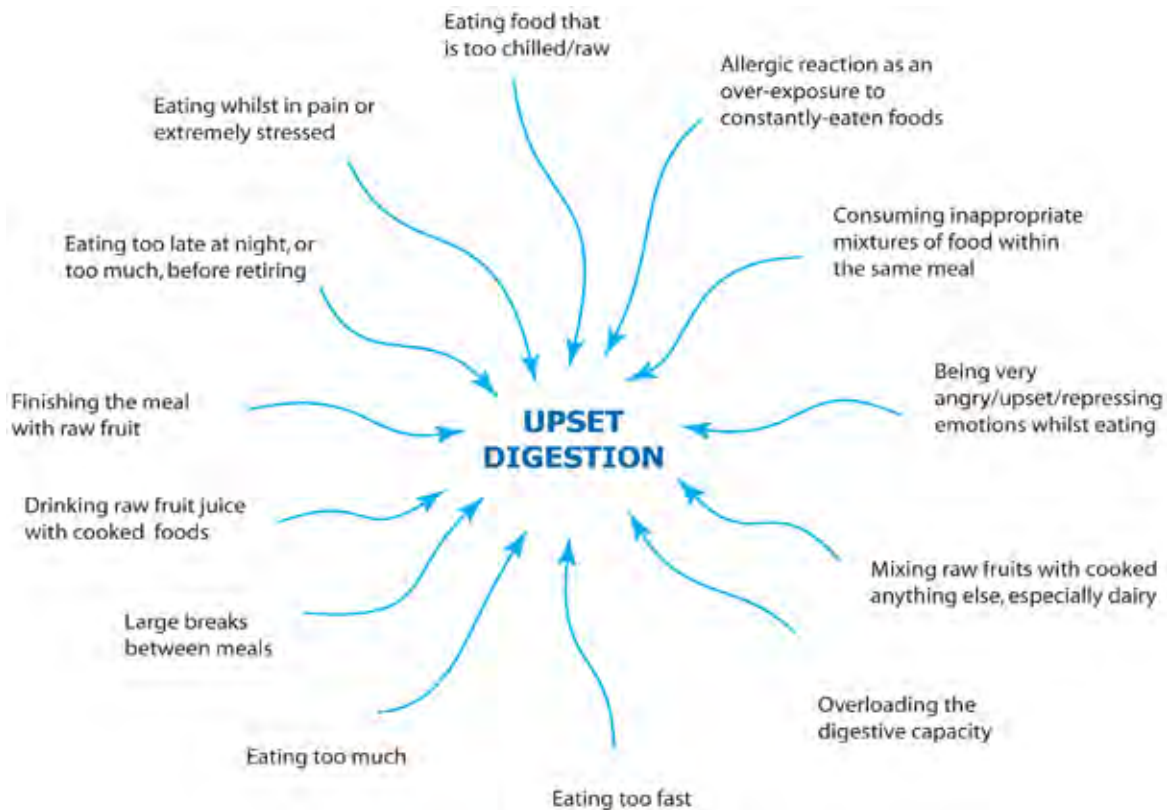
Change may take time, but pushing yourself past optimal loads always creates overuse and stress on all parts of you, leading to blowouts and breakdowns.

These degenerative and expected aging conditions are little more than a symptom of our pretending we are invincible. Our bodies are not, and, as we age, at some point we start to get this message.

Throughout our life, the strength of the inner fire determines how well we live and age and how much we enjoy the journey.

If we consistently put foods in that upset the inner workings, we can expect problems to arise, as only so much flexibility is afforded us.

As An Example - how to damage yourself



We all know that citrus is acidic. If we mix it (outside our gut) with dairy, we instantly see it curdling. So why would we combine the two together in our stomachs? The same result can be expected, producing gas, or bloating and discomfort, to say nothing of the odd windy occurrence, or outright need for comfort medication, to calm down the resultant turbulence.

Yet many years ago, doctors and 'experts' told mothers to give orange juice (which actually has very little of what they were doing it for - Vitamin C) to babies, a short time after feeding them with milk. You still see this in child care centres. Snacks include glasses of milk PLUS orange and other raw fruit slices.

You can better help yourself by avoiding the behaviours shown in the diagram above. Otherwise you are just breaking the rules. And trying to fix something you repeatedly break is just too silly.

After one woman read this, she asked: "Does this mean I can't have raw pineapple after my main meal?" Unbeknownst to me, she had decided that was a great desert/gastric aid – every night. I had been wondering why her recurrent gastric problems were not improving with herbs and needles!

This also becomes an issue when we believe we have covered everything. We must ensure the message gets through, that what you eat and how often, and at what temperature, all have a bearing on what happens next.

We have to look at every part of the line that represents who we are, not just the mechanics. This is nowhere more important than when suffering a very distressed gut to begin with. Morning sickness is a great example.

Carol started treatment for morning sickness, feeling she had tried all remedies possible. She was having to stay at work for financial reasons, and could just not function.

After a few treatments, she improved but not stunningly so. Therapeutically, everything 'right' was being done - the results were just not there.

She had heard in our first session about the potentially adverse role of cold and raw and sweet things and the Spleen Yang. Knowing that this is an alien idea to some, I repeated it in our second session, and she assured me that she was not eating anything cold.

Pondering on how we were going to make more progress - I asked her in the third session to explain everything that she had put in her mouth that day.

She revealed that orange juice (which is specifically forbidden because they are overly sour/toxic/heating in vibration to the liver), and two litres at that, and FROM THE FRIDGE, was all that she felt like drinking.

To eat, she could only face apples - also from the fridge. As it was fruit, and juice (not 'food' as such) she didn't think this counted.

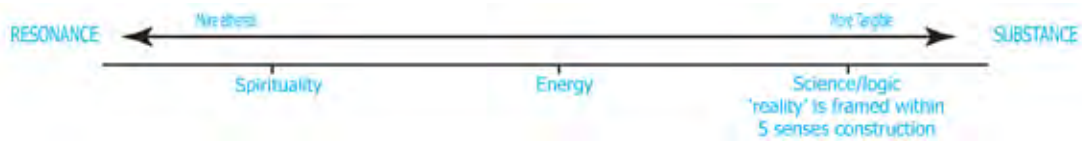
We could have had a quicker resolution of the problem. What she chose to do was not aiding her recovery. Once she stopped, the treatment could work and the benefits meant life was easy again.

Whilst not everyone would have this response to cold and raw and sweet, she did. She was overworked and needed rest, to become stronger for later pregnancy rather than having to go out to expend more energy working.

She was under a lot of stress, as she did not want to leave the house and her first child, and she knew intuitively that her body needed rest.

This stress translated into self medication of the cold to put out the inner emotional fire from the Liver Qi invading the Stomach - so she 'felt like' eating that which helped resolve the inner energy war.

The real treatment she needed was to resolve her angst and thus strengthen her digestive ability.



ENERGY MODEL

What operates beyond the obvious Inner operating energy programmes - what CAN be done with the food once eaten - metabolism/digestion

MECHANICAL/MEDICAL MODEL

Physical manifestations
Organs and their workings (physiology)
Food chosen to be eaten

New and improved diets may supply 'healthy' food choices as shown on the RIGHT hand side of the page, but the combination of these together may produce a reaction totally different than intended. Weakening your gut usually has consequences - often distressed tummies that create excess mucous, lowered resistance to infections and inability to bounce back into real wellness.

ENERGY MODEL

Strength of the Digestive Energy

DIETICIANS'/ MEDICAL MODEL
(Wise Food choices - one aspect)

Candida overgrowths and leaky gut syndrome magically leave if you raise the digestive (**Spleen Yang**) capacity. Radical change in HOW you eat not WHAT you eat may be easier and more effective. This is something that is never understood by those who see food as discrete and separate from what it does once INSIDE them.

The key question is:
Is the system still working well enough to digest properly?
Most people just assume it is.

In looking at behaviours through this model, more becomes clear. Missing pieces of the jigsaw of life start emerging. You MAY be eating everything the diet gurus say yet, if anything, you find losing weight more impossible, forgetting that it is your FOOD FACTORY that is doing the processing - or not.

Another experience: Sometimes eating something gives you heartburn or reflux, and other times there is no problem. It appears mysterious. Without more pieces of the puzzle it remains unsolvable, and your gut remains at war with you, as you keep doing whatever it was that is creating the drama.

Free Flowing - Free Movement of Everything

I begin with the area that is said to represent life and birth and growth in acupuncture - the **Liver**. As I have previously said, in studying the body and how it works, the physical mechanics are represented on the right hand side. This is what our orthodox Western medicine sees exclusively.

As an acupuncturist, I focus on the programmes that maintain the physical in perfect health. These are found by moving your attention to the left. Focusing on the final stages, when objective data finally picks up problems, is less useful.



NATURAL HEALTH MODEL

MEDICAL FOCUS (ILLNESS/DISEASE)

Within acupuncture and Chinese medicine, the named organ is only the extreme solid presence. There are lines of energy that travel throughout the physical body, spheres of influence pertaining only to this energy, and spiritual and material aspects which are named within it.

Hence, an acupuncturist's reference to the Liver is not about the actual physical organ. It has multiple meanings, just as the Inuit have many words for varieties of snow; our English single word 'snow' does not cover it. To be reading this, we need a different system that allows effective communication.

Here I have used a system of capitalising and linking what may need to be enhanced. Hence **Liver** is distinct from liver (the organ). Clicking on any red word as it appears the first time, will take you to the glossary.

What Is 'Health'?

The ability to adapt to change - and thus to RESPOND rather than REACT.

A key point to understand about the natural energy framework is the concept of Free Flowing Energy. Health is the free movement of everything.

The **Liver** is the energy that allows everything to move. It is our sense of being irked, frustration, irritation, angst and unresolved feelings in general that block its ability to sustain our natural state of being healthy - at one with ourselves.

A reaction that you never feel that makes it more difficult to deal with - it has been somatised (going through your body):internalised and this then permeates into the body upsets you seek to solve - as though the physical is not attached to the energy and emotions you would feel if you didn't try to repress them.

Hence, a doctor will suggest antidepressants or muscle relaxants. Magnesium in large quantities with Vitamin B and more pure water would be a more helpful non-prescription/pharmacological solution. PLUS lots of exercise.

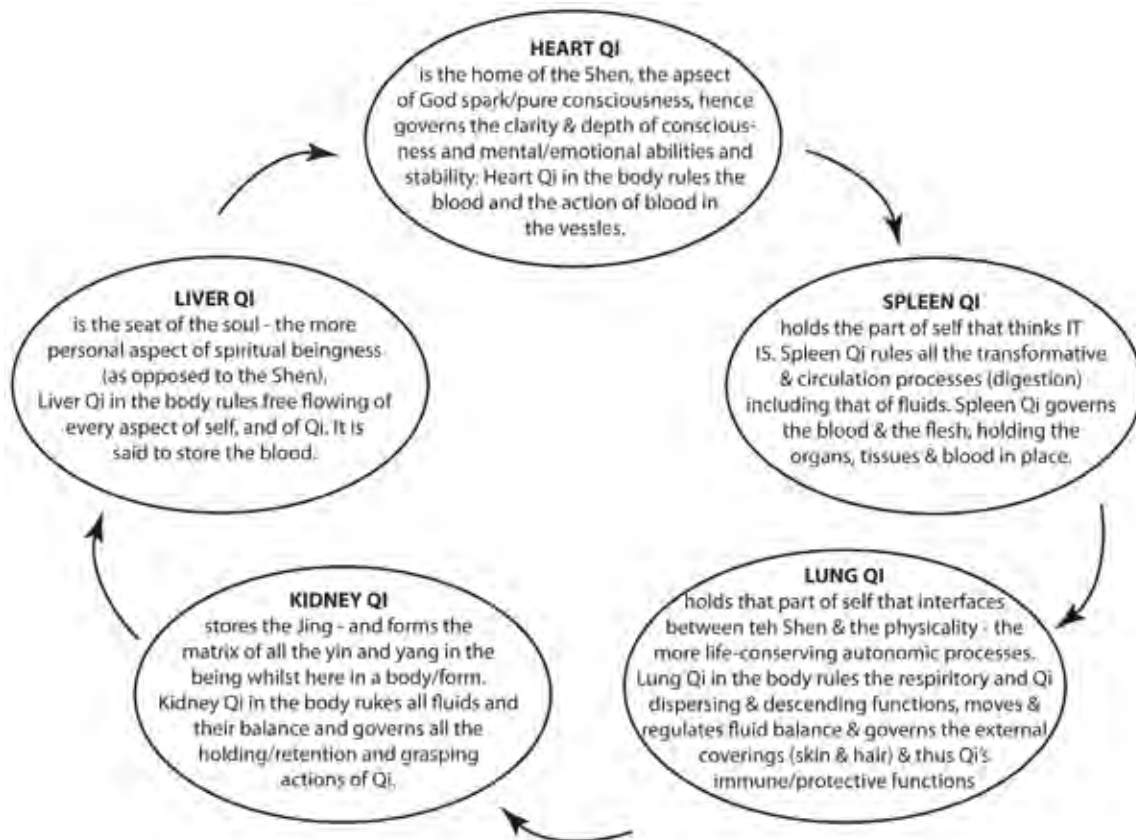


Fundamental to this concept is that when an acupuncturist talks about an organ they mean the 'energy' of the body that the organ represents. For the body to work well, it has to be able to sit as designed at rest and to move well and often.

Our energy also has to move freely. The **Liver energy** directs this free movement within all aspects of the body. Reviewing what the energy model /acupuncture views other organ systems doing shows there is a substantial difference between western mechanical approaches and the more inclusive natural and traditional oriental models.

Acupuncture Model of Organs and Their Roles

An energy model follows a different framework to the mechanical, so some of this will seem rather strange if you have a conventional medical background. Please remember the left and right hand sides of pages discussed in the introduction - here I am on the left more . . .



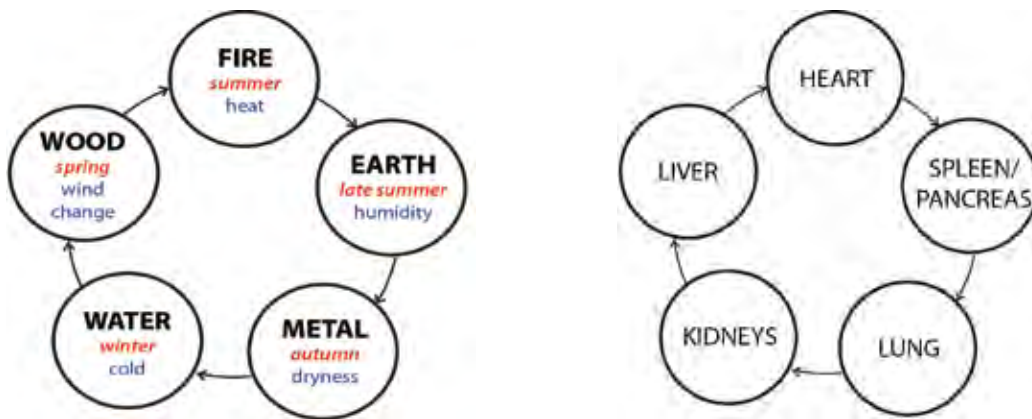
What Does What. .

To explain the difference: This is far more than the actual medical PHYSICAL being expressed through the words on the page. Unlike the standard current orthodox western medical focus, acupuncture and energy medicine are more holistic. The body and its mechanics are seen as just a part of the entirety of being a person.

Looking at ourselves slightly differently, we can see that all aspects of who we are can be structured into a different format. Then we can start to see how the acupuncture model helps understand what is happening in our lives.

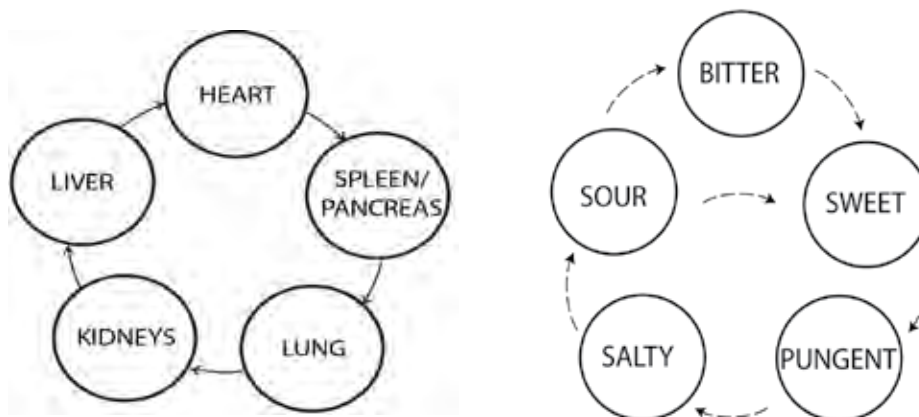
Five Elements Model

Acupuncture theory sometimes can look quaint. But remember that it has stood the test of time, and does actually follow a logical system. Above all, when you apply it, it works!!!! To help explain this, I now present something that may look a little unorthodox. One model that aids understanding of how a body, indeed all systems within the known universe, works is that of the FIVE ELEMENTS. It is loosely inspired by an agricultural / life model. Here, each of the five seasons are ascribed a position, following the diurnal/seasonal/lifecycle changes.

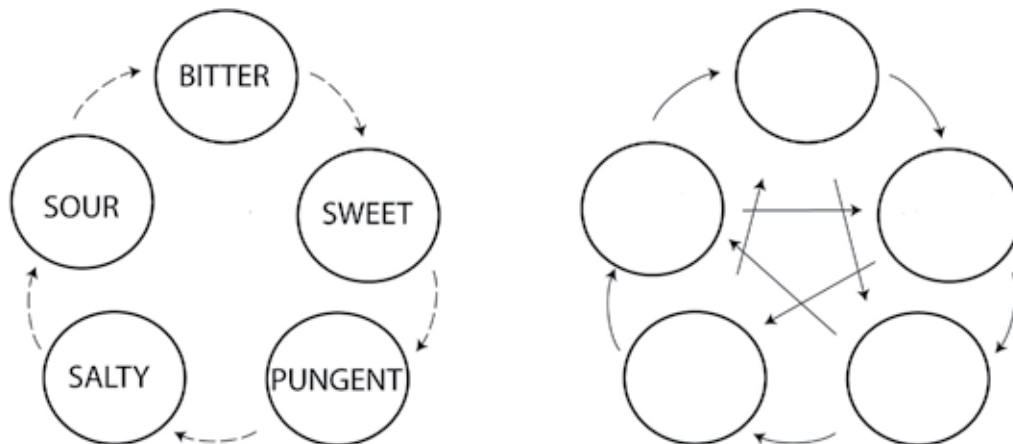


The organs of the body can also be placed in this structure, having a set of concordances that may be helpful to follow when attempting to understand how we are designed. (The expanded version is above).

(TASTES)



Each one of the circles represents a body organ and a related taste. Each nurtures the others - in a clockwise motion. They also constrain/control each other. Thus, if the sweet cravings get out of hand, using the one that controls it (sour) will rescue you from the previously continuous, driven eating habits and behaviours.



If we keep focused on one taste, usually sweet or salty, heading there at every opportunity, we actually set up health imbalances. Merely changing what we put in our mouths may explain why nothing therapeutic SEEMS to be working. We have to stop hitting our finger if we do not want a painful digit.

Finishing off each meal with a sweet - be it dessert or a 'treat' - and by even needing to have that experience, creates an imbalance in the actual digestive **Spleen Qi**.

To correct that easily, squeeze some FRESH lemon directly into your mouth - the after taste is a sweet note - and the craving for sweet will be banished.

Taking protein every three hours and Zinc supplementation as a liquid or powder will also remove this issue. Biochemistry not behavioural science, triumphs.

What has this to do with Gaining Vitality/Losing Weight?

If the whole unit is under stress, unable to work properly, it can only do its best. Returning it to perfect level will allow the metabolism and thus food/energy balance to resume.

KEY POINT

Understanding how your body works and staying within its guidelines will radically reduce your discomfort

5. Eating

A - The Energy of Digestion

Understanding how we fuel ourselves often begins our healing journey. Our digestive system is what keeps us here and functioning. It allows us to be here. It governs our energy, tiredness, recovery, and basic living. It is the essence of **Yang Qi** and **Spleen Yang** is usually what it is presented as being.

Often our best and most earnest efforts to improve our health through altering diet do not give the expected rewards. That's because most of the guidelines on the digestive system - our internal food factory - are based on the physical or mechanical workings. But this is only one piece of the puzzle.

We usually have information presented to us via the currently accepted model used in the medical world and hence the diet, health and fitness and all other allied industries. This model explains digestion based on the anatomy (how it looks if you open up a person, and where all the bits lie), and the physiology (what these bits do).

Understanding and improving digestive system functioning		
Energy framework		Medical Model
The indefinable		The measurable
What acupuncturists also see in operation	How naturopaths work - adding to the medical model	What we are used to seeing 'life' defined by, and through
What are the individual's unique circumstances? How energy completes the picture - generally & for this person in particular. What 'Qi'/energy is; what drives it, where it fits in to the more physical picture.	Medical model plus a general understanding of conditions for improvement How it fits into the medical model - it uses the same words/concepts & expectations. Differs in approach	Based on anatomy and physiology; asks how everything is and whether it is working - via tests; 'actual' mechanical workings. The physical placement of various bits & what they do.. Corrections according to this box/model only
Based upon observing what is directing the physical - the instructions for 'life' come from elsewhere - alterations here change everything	Based upon observations using a health focus, rather than disease focus - how the body repairs itself in health/optimal conditions	Based upon what we can see & cut up/into and quantify ('facts') as though this is all we are - flesh and bits of tissue

A naturopath uses the same medical model as a base, and then will add into this picture the optimal conditions (those under which it works better) from their own slightly different to orthodox medical viewpoint. This gives a more inclusive picture for understanding when the body and its systems break down due to neglect and inconsiderate usage.

By looking only at this physically oriented model we can overlook what is really bothering the body, because we are missing what steers the ship - an ENERGY understanding. An acupuncturist will look to the energy that lies behind the physical structure and workings. Energy covers the ability to be and to do. And of course when we are STRESSED - everything works very differently than in perfect/optimal health.



If we factor all of what we are into the equation, we may then understand that there is nothing random about why different diets, different foods and the different ways of being sometimes work for us or others, and why they sometimes mysteriously don't. Changing things around beyond the directly obvious - doing what we don't think will work or haven't tried before - may hold the key. Alter what you do and there is a good chance different results will follow.

Eating

As this is a central activity and as we all think we tend to eat pretty well - (except when we know we are off the rails), I am going to go over some really basic information, so we are not at cross purposes.

Ayurvedic medical and other more complete frameworks also see life very differently. Here, however, we are concentrating on energy via Chinese medicine, acupuncture and the naturopathic models, since they fit well with the Western-style modern lives we try to function in.

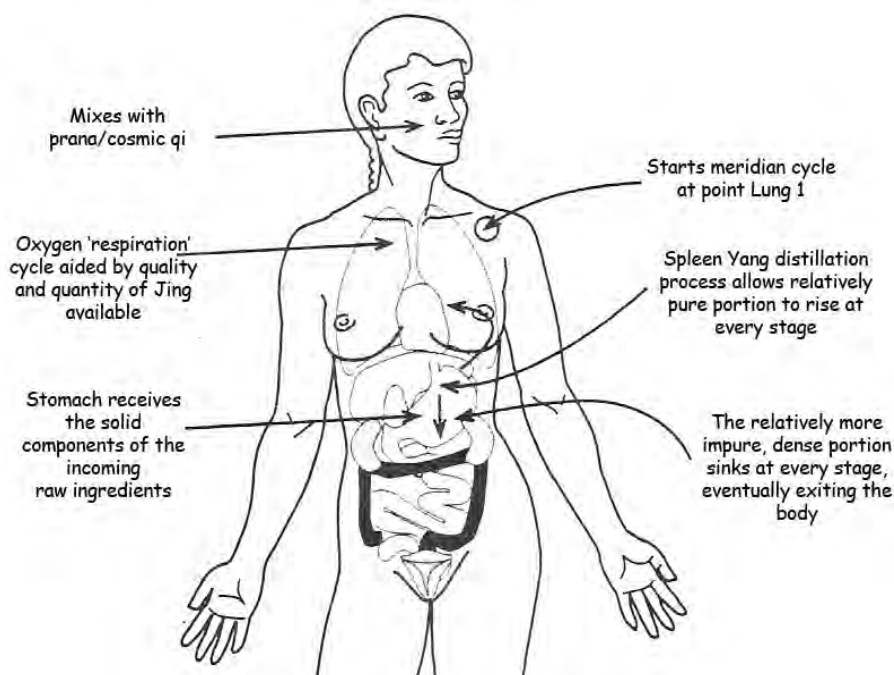


From an acupuncture perspective, the digestive strength / inner fire is known as **Spleen Yang**. It is represented here as the central flames. The little flames leading to this shown in the picture represent the constitutional fire that we all need to live - from our **Kidney Jing/Yang**, supporting life as we know it. This also helps the digestive fire to work.

If you do not want energy fluctuations, mood swings, and cravings for the substances you are trying to wean yourself off, and if you want to improve your state of being in some way, looking after your inner fire will allow your body to support you.

This would be in place of trying to cope with the bright ideas you move in and out of, all the while wondering why you can't lose weight or feel better.

What Happens when we Eat?



Spleen Yang, fuelled through the **Kidney store of Yang**, fires up to begin transformation processes, allowing the more resonant/pure components to rise, and the more tangible and thus denser ones to travel downwards.

Qi is formed by the action of the **Spleen/Pancreas** and **Stomach energy** with the assistance of the **Kidney Jing**.

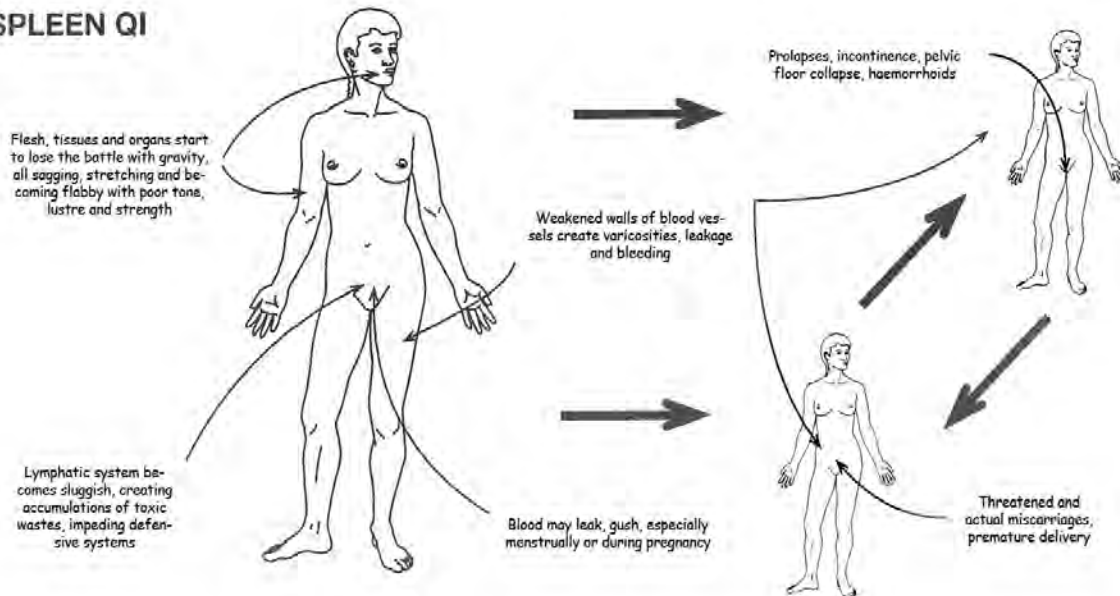
The combined action of the **cosmic Qi** and **inherent Qi of the chest** upon the energy components from initial digestion, forms the **meridian Qi**.

This starts its external circuit at the acupuncture point under the collarbone (Lung 1), at the junction with the shoulder.

What exactly has the 'spleen' got to do with it?

Please remember that I am speaking of the **Spleen Qi** - the acupuncture manifestation. I know that the PHYSICAL SPLEEN is where we store red blood vessels etc, but I am speaking of the energy model, and it includes the organ of the pancreas. So, anyone with diabetic /blood sugar concerns would also do well to actually support their systems, rather than taking the random 'who knows what causes it?' approach.

SPLEEN QI



It is usually just a matter of changing a framework . . .

You can see that upsetting your **Spleen Qi** has far more consequences than just digestive. When considering **WHY** we eat at all, this should not be too difficult to understand. Major issues are -

1 - Not enough or sufficient quality raw body ingredients (**Qi, Blood, Jing**, as well as the actual components that keep us ticking over). This will have consequences; exhaustion takes many forms. Eventually degeneration follows.

2 - **Weakened Spleen Qi** - if this happens, it means NOTHING in the body is held in place properly: blood in vessels (hence easy bleeding); organs and tissues can weaken (prolapses/veins and babies can all fall down/out); fat/fluid and cellulite coagulates - especially in the lower half of the body.

The strength of the digestive fire is not enough to keep everything (including your body shape) trim/taut and terrific . . . and the metabolism (thyroid) becomes underactive deficient and lower than optimal.

Thus over time, everything becomes harder to achieve. It is all often put down to aging, when really self neglect and abuse through not knowing any better are at the root.

Sometimes we miss the obvious because we are so driven to find an answer in a certain direction. A case from my clinic illustrates the very different Spleen issues that can all happen at once - and how, without an understanding of energy and how it fits into our body picture, we can inadvertently harm ourselves, being medicated in the standard way, and not improving.

Claire, heavily pregnant, arrived in clinic with a new haemorrhoid. As these do not usually occur without reason, I questioned her about recent past activities. She had spent a day in strenuous gardening activities. On further reflection, she also remembered taking a very cold dip in the swimming pool.

I explained what had happened. The Spleen Qi was not holding as designed to due to both the over-exertion whilst very pregnant and then the added insult of the invasion of the cold.

She needed to avoid all cold in future - and to ensure that she ate and drank only warm ingestibles.

She also needed to keep her feet warm, rather than walking on cold tiles. The Kidney meridian starts on the soles of the feet and goes straight into the uterus, and can then create further problems.

I sent her to her obstetrician, as I was not sure if birthing vaginally was going to be an option. He sent her to another specialist who told her to pack the haemorrhoid in ice - which she did.

Both said that they had seen anything like it and neither could tell her why it had happened. This is the pure mechanical medical model at work.

She couldn't bear the ice for the 24 hours he had recommended. It was just too painful after 6 hours. Next morning she was horrified to find that now she had **three** haemorrhoids!!!

I asked her whether these specialists had been able to work out why it had happened, and what they thought would make it worse. They did not know.

I asked her, after having had the whole issue explained, and guessing what she must have done to herself, why she had not at least rung me for clarification.

It may SOUND like old wives' tales but Chinese medicine is grounded in observation and actually does have a solid theoretical foundation - it just doesn't sound scientific.

She said she had spent so much money with both of them, they **MUST** have known what they were doing!!!

I strongly suggested she had a C section, as the **Spleen Qi** also holds blood in place, and with that degree of cold insult, I was not sure that hers could hold sufficiently to ensure she didn't have extensive blood loss at birth. Also there would be the potential pain involved in attempting to push out a baby through that distress.

As the Spleen energy holds the Qi/blood/tissues and organs (and babies) in place, it seems obvious, when this model is explained, why traditional tales were passed down. Without having the framework, they may sound peculiar alongside microscopes and modern medications but they have squarely stood the test of time. They also tend to point us to where we need to go when science fails us.

B - Digestive Fire

When you know how your body works best, you can adjust your actions towards optimal functioning. This in turn allows you to actively aid your own healing, rather than continuing to be the reason it is so difficult to change.

Digestive fire is the oomph that keeps us going - our inner oven, our power plant.

What an acupuncturist sees	Medical/naturopathic model sees
Energy framework	physical manifestations
Digestive fire	enzymes, stomach acid
Liver Qi flowing	peristalsis

We need our inner food factory - our digestive fire - working at the correct temperature to process efficiently. It's a lot like the kitchen oven - if the temperature is set wrongly, and we do not this into account, our baking doesn't turn out the way we expect. Too low it's undercooked, too high it's burnt.

Getting this balance right is what the body attempts to do - but often we get in the way, especially after reading the latest best seller on diet and the food selection trail, or consulting the next health care professional who has yet another take on the physical possibilities.

Is it more productive to focus on what goes IN the mouth, or the processes and metabolism that need to transform and use what we eat?

By adding this to the equation of the diet/eating/food metabolism, shifts attention to the temperature of the water and food consumed, and the importance of looking after the fire within. Putting extra stress on the digestive fire by effectively trying to extinguish it through drinking chilled waters and fluids, and by eating cold chilled foods, means we must heat up what is now inside our stomachs before we can start to break down the chosen foods to use them.

This is a great deal of extra work. When we are very young, ill, weakened by overwork or stress etc, or just super-hungry, it will lead to disorder and dysfunction. At worst, we weaken ourselves for good, and at best we feel off colour. Maybe have a bellyache . . . We may even feel the cold in ourselves; touching our belly, it may feel cool, and we may vomit or feel remarkably weak till it has passed through. Some people automatically do not stress their bodies like this; they do not like cold inside and always choose not to ingest it with fluids and food.

Digestive Fire Origins

The digestive fire of newborns is very delicate and requires active assistance. We instinctively know to feed babies milk (preferably human, and from a well, healthy mother), and at body temperature. All young mammals need milk - it is simple to process. It must be an easily digested substance, in liquid form (since they don't usually start with teeth) and as close as possible to what nature intends - through their own mother's innate wisdom, through nature's gift: breast milk.

As babies develop into toddlers and then children, they can gradually tolerate different temperatures, textures and substances. We start feeding little ones a more varied diet, leading them to what we would chose for ourselves. We do this in stages, as their gut is still forming and delicate.

Temperature of food chosen governs your inner fire's strength

Despite knowing all of the above, we still need to understand the major effect that altering the temperature of food/fluids has on their digestibility. This missing knowledge alone often underlies gut ache, bloating, and mucous formation. This leads to sinus and hay fever, Candida, food sensitivities and inability to lose/gain weight, heal or feel revitalised after eating. Changing what you put in is of no use, if you still cannot use it well.

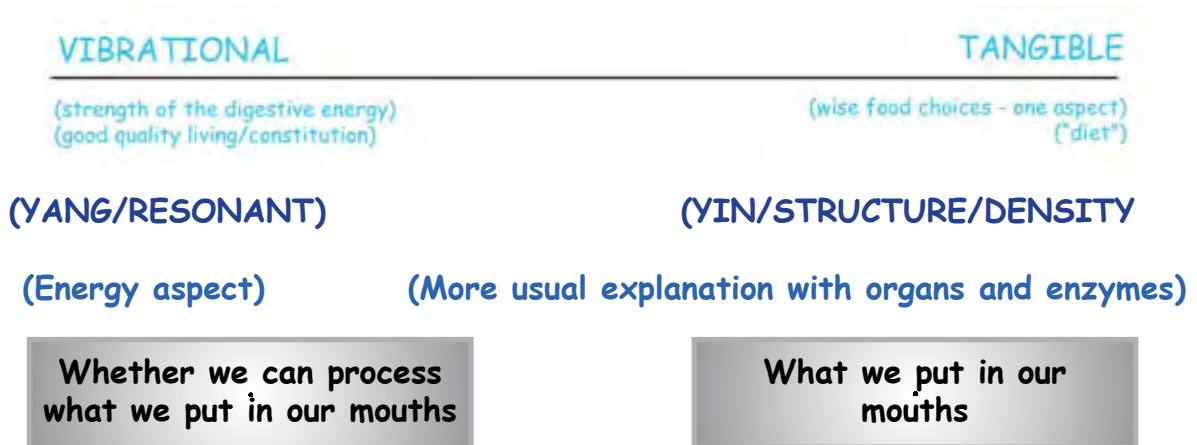
This missing piece of the puzzle may be all that separates you from the figure you wanted or the energy that is missing, regardless of the thyroid medication, exercise and organic ingredients you choose, and your best efforts to follow the directions you have been given. Doing everything you can is only as good as the 'everything' you included in the 'understanding yourself' package.

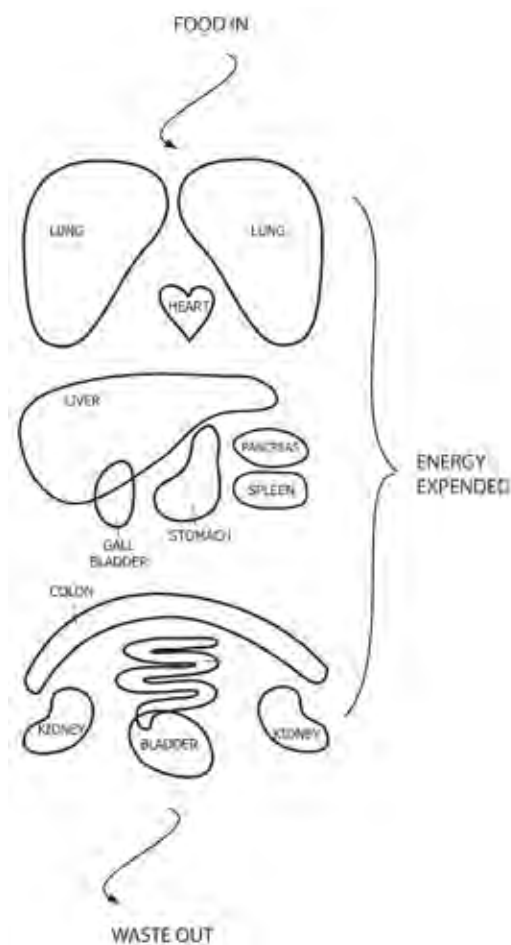
C - Our Food Factory

This is a simplification of the acupuncture model of energy and blood production. Put another way, it is the energy side of how we function as a self-fuelling unit. From the physical model, the story line is simple: we put food in, process it, and, in time, discard the dregs at the other end.

The basic acupuncture model speaks of the organ names, not as their anatomical functions, as seen from the physical world, but also referencing the energy tasks and responsibilities they hold.

These are outside and separate to the western physical model. When speaking of an organ sphere of influence, remember it is going to be seen as **Liver** as opposed to the organ liver.





So, beginning with the energy model, we put food in. What happens next is a complex sequence of operations entirely dependent on the strength of the digestive system that received the food.

If the system is very new, old, weakened, under great stress or in any way compromised, it will behave very differently than expected. Thus, what is before us here is the standard model.

When discussing weight gain/loss, or regaining health and vigour, nothing is usually said about whether the digestive capacity is up to the challenge.

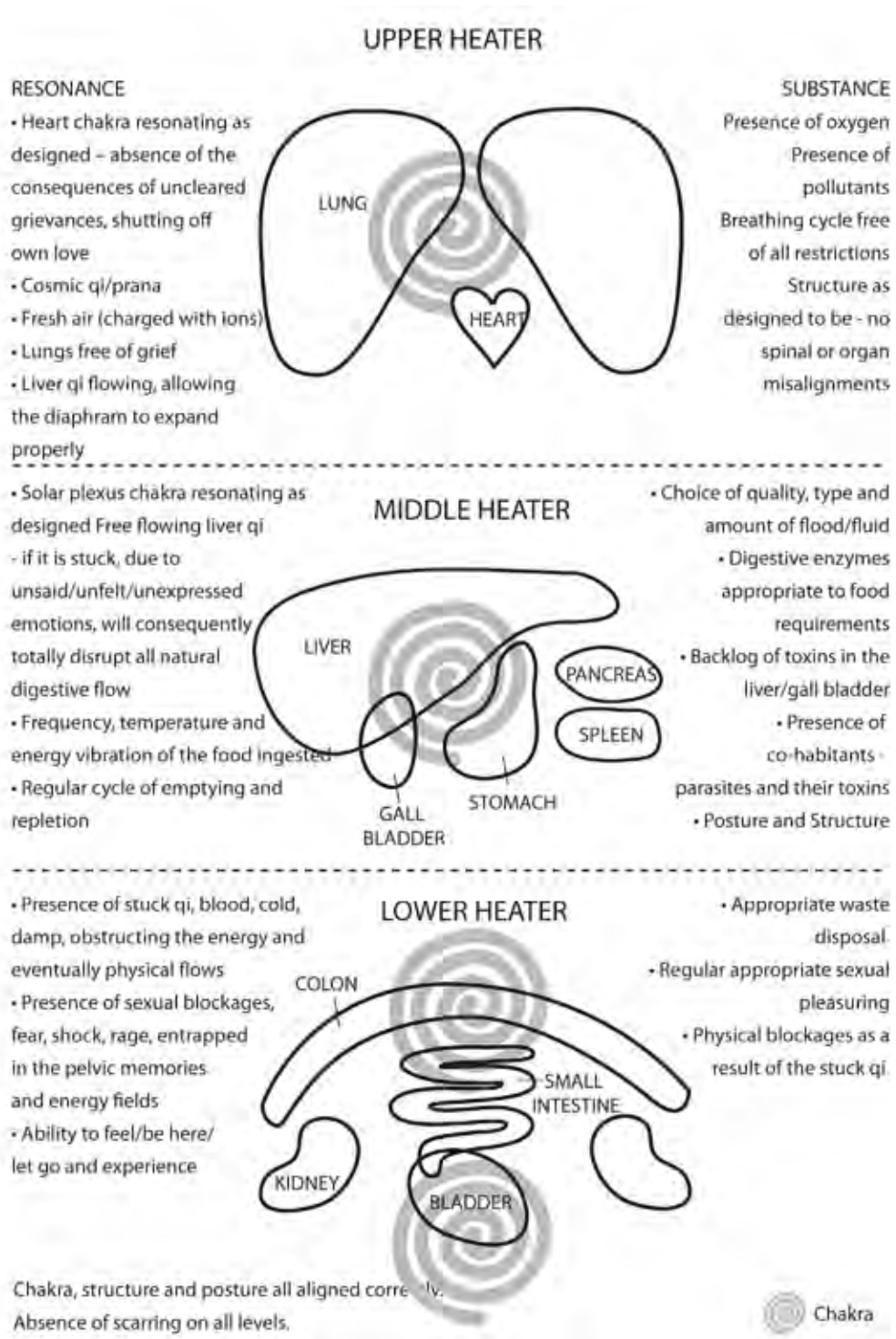
It is just assumed that your inner oven is ready to go and smoothly process whatever has been ingested.

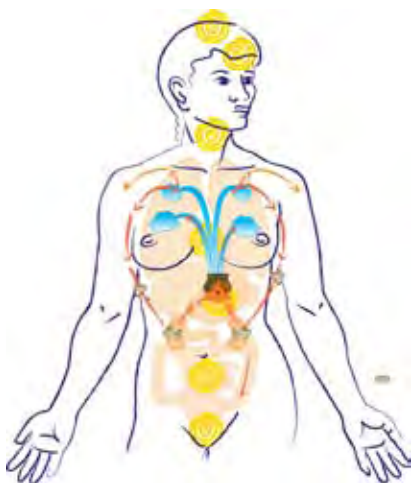
But this is obviously not the case. The raft of continuous digestive ailments needing medication attests to there being more to the picture that would counteract the resulting apparent neglect and self-abuse.

This missing information becomes crucial when you try to get more from living within your body - more energy and 'oomph' instead of feeling so tired and worn out all the time; or, perhaps there is so much mucous and distress in your bowel that the weight just will not budge regardless of what diet is followed.

Even with all the supplements and special care the alternative doctor or naturopath offer - perhaps something is just not harmonizing as you might have expected for the effort expended.

The Energy Model Of The Food Factory





So Perhaps Change Your Focus

The energy model provides a representation of the energy (actual instructions) workings that sit behind what is taken as 'reality;' for those following the physical 'facts'.

It is a little like not paying so much attention the computer screen so much as the folders that need to be opened, or the actual operating system that allows you to see anything.

VIBRATIONAL

What operates beyond/drives the obvious energy model
What CAN be done with the food.

TANGIBLE

Physical Manifestations
Organs and their workings
Actual food chosen to eat

The ENERGY model is more like the computer's operating system, with the actual mechanical workings (the Western medical framework's anatomy and physiology) likened to what appears on screen - the RESULTS of what lies beneath, not the REASON it is there. Seen in this way, the messages in this eBook start to fall into place.

The yellow circles represent our various chakras /energy centres.

The actual physical organs are shown in faint pink outline.

Digestive fire (little cauldron) is the hub of the whole process. (**Spleen Yang**) and is itself fuelled by our **Kidney Yang**.

The blue lines represent the 'steam' rising from the process of distilling the pure essence from the food as it first arrives.

The **red lines** represent the energy flow around the circuits, which dictate what the physical side actually does. Acupuncture works on the energy blueprint that precedes the physical. It is a more elegant way to undertake any alterations - since we are closer to the source.

The **coins** you see are the representation of the **Jing** that I speak of elsewhere. When our digestion is able to work really well, we store a highly valuable type of **Qi** in the **Kidney** complex, which can be activated when need is greatest. It is like a specialised emergency reserve tank, if you like. How well we live dictates the amount and quality of what we have here.

This is another way of saying that if we do not look after ourselves, we are 'living on the edge'. If we do not live well and have an orderly eating and sleeping regime, our resilience is doubtful.

The **faint white lines** delineate the 'three heaters', dividing the energy centres of this process. As an example, the UPPER one deals with the circulation of **Qi** and **Blood** (LUNGS and HEART).

In the energy model, these are very different from what the mechanical elements on the physical side do, and are reported to be concerned within Western medical thinking.

Below is a more thematic explanation of what each heater and organ does in the acupuncture energy model. What is written in the left hand side reflects the more energy/Yang influence. The usual explanations that may be recognised from a mechanical approach are on the right hand side.

VIBRATIONAL	TANGIBLE
What operates beyond/drives the obvious energy model What CAN be done with the food.	Physical Manifestations Organs and their workings Actual food chosen to eat

You can see how, without this knowledge, there seems to be no energy dimension in the eating/losing weight debate and why the various solutions touted are often not helpful.

You can also see how easy it is to extinguish the very fire that is there to help you process foods, by following a raw food/ or all fruit or juice diet - especially if everything comes out of the fridge as you like it - cold. (More on this and why it happens later . . .).

Without understanding this, trying to improve your metabolism (most people having a sub clinical, under-the-radar low thyroid function as they do) is bound to be very hit and miss. It will be frustrating too since you 'do everything' right within the framework of the right hand side of the life equation.



Losing weight is a major issue. Unless we respect our food factory, it cannot assist us. We tend to make drastic dietary changes, forgetting it is our digestive capacity that actually fuels our ability to be here.

If we really distress our metabolism, we can end up in a worse situation than before we began trying to help ourselves.

This helps explain why once you start dieting, there seems to be a never ending array of things going wrong/not working the way they used to - when you THOUGHT you had troubles ...

Why Do We Eat At All? (Recap)

It is not just to fill up and feel more comfortable. We need the raw ingredients to remake ourselves and to FUEL life.

It costs us energy to run the digestion process. The energy expended physically is a part of the metabolic equation.

The MIDDLE HEATER deals with the active digestive issues (SPLEEN/PANCREAS/STOMACH/ LIVER /GALL BLADDER).

The little flames rising via the arrows to the cooking pot (stomach) from the kidneys represent the origin of all heat in the body - the **Kidney Yang**.

The coins shown in the kidney organs represent our constitutional vigour (loosely our **Jing**), stored and enhanced through sensible and stable eating and living/sleeping habits.



The **stomach** can be seen as a cooking pot, heating up and boiling off the most pure and least dense by-products, and allowing the passage of the more solid components to sink and eventually discharged. More subtly, the essence and pure vibrational aspects are distilled off - energy provided by the (**Spleen Yang Qi** function, from **Kidney Yang**).



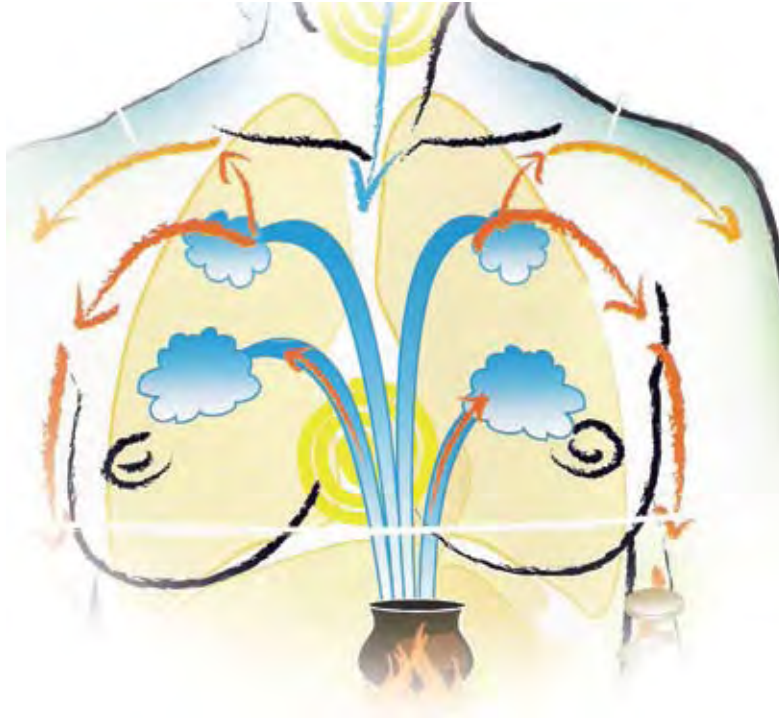
The steam travelling upwards represents the purest essences we extract through the beginning of the digestion process. This essence includes the energy components of tastes and the vibrations of nourishment.

The energy of the **Spleen Yang**, which itself originates from the **Kidney Yang**, fuels the pot (stomach).

What Actually Happens to What We Eat?

The purest of the actual physical gains from digestion are processed at the higher ends of the alimentary canal - and the relatively more coarse ones are sent successively further down the line.

The ENERGY model from acupuncture is very different from what you will find in any standard medical anatomy and mechanical physiological text.



ONCE FOOD IS IN THE STOMACH - the process of digestion begins. We send the purest components upwards (the blue puffs of steam seen on the previous diagram). The **Spleen Yang**, providing the inner fire, sends this to the chest. Here, the action of pure air and **cosmic Qi** start to replenish the Qi that courses around our bodies within the **meridian system** that acupuncturists use when placing needles at the **acupoints**.

In the physical, this translates as the purest residue coming down through the tube that is our gut, from the stomach and the small intestine, through the portal vein to the liver, which gets the first 'grab' of the ingredients. Eventually what we need - deemed the purest of the more impure - is taken away from the colon (large bowel), leaving the solid wastes to be excreted. The LOWER HEATER deals with this.

Fluid is used partly by the body to keep chemicals in solution, and is discharged through the bladder. The heat energy that the body has no other way of removing is also dissolved in the liquid wastes. From then on, unless there is an issue, it is not in the forefront until the system signals it is empty and needs a refill. Then we search for more to put in it. Unfortunately, we tend to do what we feel instead of what is needed. When we end up with discomfort and pains, we may eventually seek help.



Why Not Add All the Information into the Equation?

Rather than exploring what you did to CREATE a problem, it is very easy to just follow standard medical logic and pop a pill that acts as a temporary fix. This may have to be taken for the rest of your life, since you are masking a very important body message. But the immediate disturbance is silenced and you can keep going about your day - there may be no pain - but there's no resolution either.

Modern medicine tends to follow the easy option of making us feel better, rather than looking at preventative strategies and educating for wellness recovery. If you do not know why something is happening, you do not know what to STOP doing. Yet, that may be all you need to settle the dispute your gut is having with you.

Naturopathy used to try to change people's habits, through education in consultations, but now some practitioners go down the route taken by doctors - pills in exchange for time and money.

Lawrence, who normally came in for panic attacks and depression-related complaints was passing the clinic one day. He was on his way to the next-door pharmacy to fill the prescription the doctor had written for an acute gout episode.

As acupuncture had been so helpful so far in the treatment of the other long standing issues, he diverted into the clinic to see if there were any alternatives to taking anti inflammatory pills for the rest of his life.

While he recalled how his life and/or diet had changed recently, I reminded him why kings and 'noblemen' of old suffered so tragically with this complaint and explained what it actually was in medical terms. With prompting, he remembered that his orange tree was heavily fruiting and he was tucking in liberally to these delicious fruits.

I suggested he got an alkalising agent, (similar to those taken when cystitis hits) from the pharmacy next door plus having a balancing acupuncture treatment.

He never heard a protest from that toe joint again; he had STOPPED creating the problem.

A little bit of appropriate information like this is often all that is needed - and the wisdom to see what is actually happening, rather than simply overriding the body's attempt to alert you to danger.

When you do not listen to the message your body sends you by way of discomfort, and if you persist in masking the message, with various pain killers and other self-deluding medications, whatever you are doing to upset the system will eventually ratchet up a few more notches and DEMAND that you do something.

By then, real structural damage may have occurred. (Means also your illness may then be validated as its progress is showing up on a screen or in tests of gross problems/actual medical makers in disease).

To think that ill health and diseases are a matter of luck is to buy into the idea that acting irresponsibly has no consequences. You are in charge of everything that happens to you.

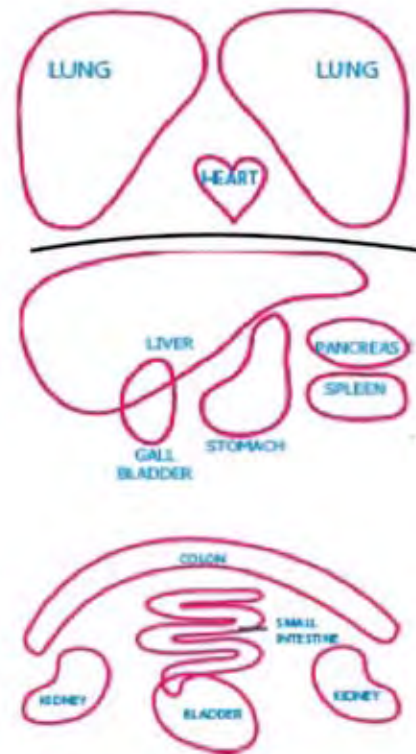
It is just that until now perhaps the relevance of some of these apparently unrelated things has escaped your attention.

Returning to the energy model (which obviously can explain a lot more than just the workings of **Qi** and **Blood** production from eating) we can divide the chest organs into three component areas - or 'heaters'.

Each has a vital though different role in the overall picture of health.

To operate appropriately, we need to have the **Liver Qi** flowing. That is the key movement agent in the energy body model. Stress (**Stuck Liver Qi**) - including the effects of holding onto past hurts, grief, anger etc - impedes the ability of your food factory to actually support you at all.

TO RECAP - we need to include the energy model if we want to 'win' at gaining health, vitality and energy and/or losing weight.



KEY POINTS -

The programme **BEHIND** the physical is what controls life - this is the **Qi/life force**.

Digestion is thus about **HOW** well we process the food, not just **WHAT** we eat.

SPLEEN QI (otherwise known as digestive fire/strength) needs to be respected at all times. It is the source of our life fuel and helps everything to be where it is designed to be.

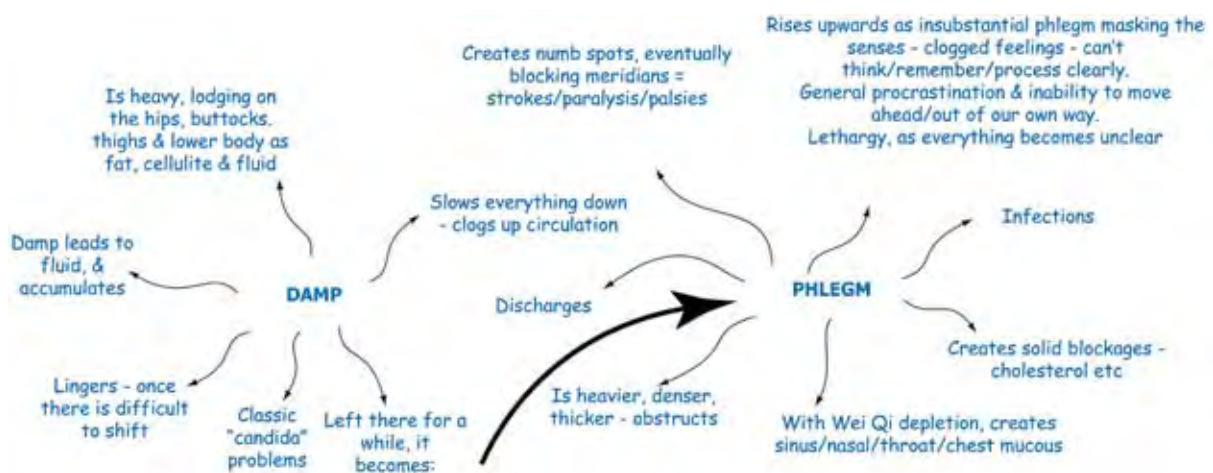
6. What IS Fat?

We all are aware of the flab, wobble, the dimpling and the extra weight we carry. What brings this extra cellulite/fluid and fat? Surely if we get our body into better condition, it will be able to deal differently with itself? Some women notice their bodies losing solidity, turning to a more floppy feel. Sometimes this is especially in the lower body, sometimes just on the thighs, but often it's an all-over coating - regardless of exercise or food abstention.

Energy of Damp

A possible cause is that the Spleen energy is struggling. The inability to heat sufficiently leaves us with residue. This is collectively called 'dampness' in acupuncture. It clogs wherever it sits and so is said to obstruct. Like anything - on the extreme right hand side of the lines I draw - mucous, discharges, pus there is more solidity and lack of movement. **OBSTRUCTION TO NORMAL FLOW.**

Towards the middle of the line, we have general fluid where it should not be. There is fat and cellulite and, over on the extreme left, the ENERGY of dampness. That means we have a foggy head, can't think, and can't get out of our own way, maybe with or without all the more solid right hand side symptoms/manifestations. This 'dampness' is caused by something upsetting the Spleen energy perhaps all those cold, raw and sweet ingredients with apparently few calories - and is not understood in the more tangible/scientific medical model. **The key point is that the energy of dampness obstructs.**



When there are more fluid and accumulations from a slower or cooler metabolism, this gets in the way. It moves downwards, often leaving the digestive fire struggling. (Hence if you have a different dress size top to bottom, you now know why and what to do to fix this - look after your **Spleen Yang Qi**).

We may get digestive warnings like reflux and heartburn. We are told it is the result of TOO MUCH acid and we mistakenly try to put the fire out more with COLD drinks - milk is the worst as it is also cold and greasy - or antacids).

Other warnings might be aching relieved by warmth and made worse by cold, and/or other uncomfortable wasting or not thriving conditions or clear-cut fat, or low energy/metabolism states.



The constant need to take food and process it means the best way to help ourselves recover the resilience we once had is to follow the eating plan and tips further on.

All conditions - even of they appear to be contradictory - will improve if the **Spleen Yang** is allowed to return to its original blueprint. This, after all, is what supports our existence and fuels us.

What happens if we ignore this?

We start to be bothered by all manner of apparently unrelated issues, often the smelly discharges (sinking to the bottom as they do and as we have extra orifices being women). We can have no end of problems that no one seems able to resolve. This obviously affects how we see ourselves, especially in intimate situations, and can lead to lifelong misery - in addition to the fat.



Increase the Inner Heat – the good fires of digestion

A hotter oven purifies. Think of pastry and its need to be in a hot oven.

Candida overgrowth is a misunderstood condition. As a naturopath I know the theory behind not feeding it - avoiding most of what you previously regarded as food.

But taking the left hand perspective, why not just lift the digestive fire/temperature of the oven?

Then the disagreeable organisms, will be naturally defeated.

All aspects of yang are diminished when the digestive fire is lessened. The protective/immune response and your ability to hold blood/organs/babies in place are notable here. It may appear that from where you are sitting it sounds good to have more fire in your belly -but it has to be not being driven from emotional and inner turmoil, but from actually useful inner body heat.

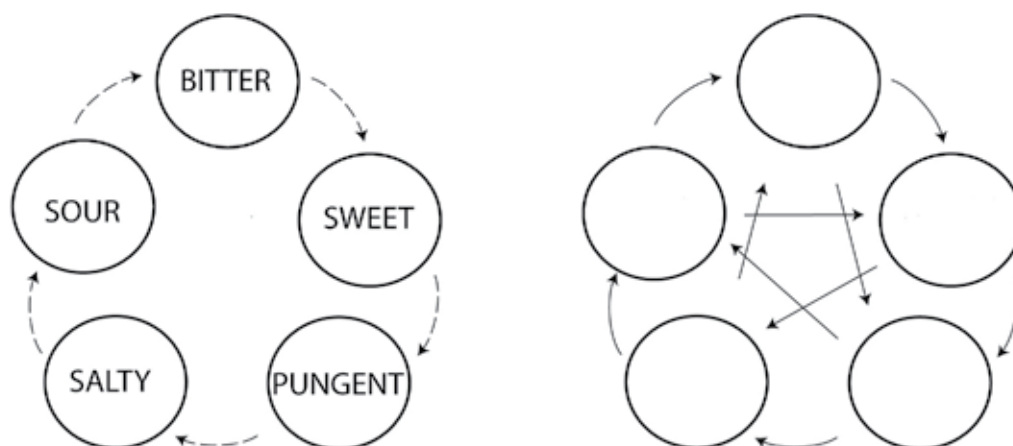
Increasing the metabolism is often all we have to do to become well again. This allows the fluid to move again. There really is no magic pill for most of us. The more lethargic we feel, the less we do. The more comfort eating we indulge in - the more depressed and possibly disgusted we feel with ourselves, and where is that chocolate? We do need to move the **Stuck Liver Qi**. Caffeine hits it well - but temporarily. All those who are no good until their morning hit could do well to address the frustrated and irked issues that are running them .

EXERCISE is a good alternative – to get the Qi moving.

This means that a lot of apparently unrelated problems may be within your power to change with appropriate dietary attention. As previously mentioned, I am talking not so much about just the calorific but more about paying attention to temperature, frequency, and absolutely stopping the sweet taste, because this knocks out the Spleen qi's ability to process all your food.

You might argue that 'I want it, so I must need it'.

This may be true in a natural state, but the result of the modern diet and the tendency to sweeten EVERYTHING is that we cannot taste natural sweetness. I remind you: **desire for sweet is controlled by the sour taste**. Squeeze a lemon in water or, better still, straight into the mouth.



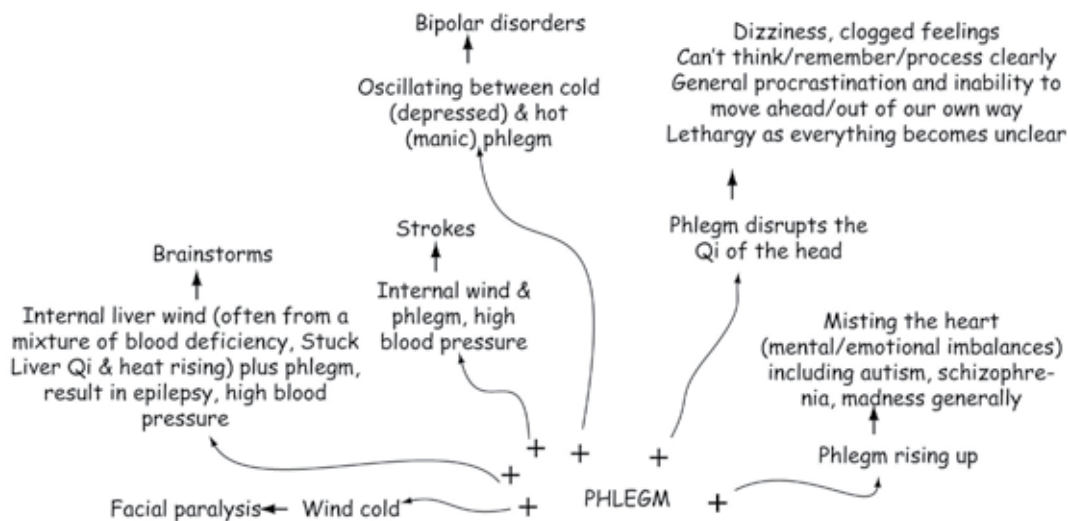
Also follow the eating plan ensuring that you have Zinc as a liquid or powdered supplement to enhance your digestion.

Dampness eventually can become more serious, finally manifesting as PHLEGM. This too has both a more solid (right hand side) and more energy state. The more solid attributes are represented by named conditions such as cholesterol deposits, arteriosclerosis and so on.

More worryingly, it interferes with mental and emotional functioning, becoming a driving force behind a lot of disorientated thinking, through to **epilepsy** and **dizziness**, and finally **schizophrenia /bipolar disorder** and **autism** at the extreme.

When Phlegm Energy Accumulates (Not just in the chest/nose) . . .

We become more seriously unwell and may start to be medically interesting because we can be labelled/'diagnosed' as having a real problem.



What To Do

Pay attention to everything I have written here. The answers are as simple as taking charge of yourself and what you choose to eat/drink (think soft drinks for starters -and all the poisons that are added to make you want to choose one brand over another to eat.

My eBook of the same name, **“Getting Out of Your Own Way”**, can help you understand the inner processes you must undo - emotional responses and hurts we store away that drive our lives unconsciously.

KEY POINTS

Look after your Spleen Qi and it will repay you immeasurably.

Eat as you like and suffer the consequences.

You are the one who has the power to change.

7. How Can I Help Myself?

1 - Most important action is to eat SOMETHING regularly.

Some people think that processing food, in and out, is like banking - if you put credits in, they are there when you need them. This attitude overlooks the fact that there is a living organism trying to keep everything ticking over within very narrow limits of operation.

It also assumes that if you don't deposit (stop eating) and keep withdrawing (going about your day without refuelling) your body sorts out the difference and thinness happens.

BUT, as I have shown, the metabolism can readjust itself to the new 'famine' conditions. The decreasing bank balance concept does not take account of our 'food factory' and how it works.

This kind of thinking assumes that, regardless of everything that happens, we have a very robust and resilient metabolism/inner fire that CAN just keep on burning. But what if it doesn't? Most realise they need to start looking after themselves - far more than they ever had to when younger.

What may have seemed to work before, behaviours we could 'get away with', no longer work without consequences. The indestructibility we felt we had in youth dwindles, leaving a body needing care and consideration.

Denying yourself proper or real food, trying to diet and/or eating irregularly all create great stress on the inner metabolism, leading to a 'silly mode' condition.

Here food may well be stored 'for later', as the body does not know when the next supply will come through. (This is a carryover from when our ancestors lived more naturally, with feasts and famines as natural cycles).

This thus enhances the weight/fat/fluid/cellulite accumulations on our womanly (lower than waist) bits. What is usually happening is that the thyroid (metabolism) is being challenged and the **Yang Qi** is not working as it did.

THE THREE HOUR RULE - If you do not **eat a little every three hours**, blood sugar levels drop, energy, thinking and mood all waver and most people reach for a sugar hit, or caffeine, or a cigarette to keep going.

A protein snack would be so much better. You don't then get run by cravings and moodiness.

Numerous other problems then appear, all whilst we thought we were just sorting out the 'fat' issue. Hypoglycaemia used to be the big issue in the 80s but is now out of fashion - medicine has fads - except that we all seem still to have it. We reach for various ingestibles to self-medicate (chocolate/sugar /caffeinated drinks /comfort foods) rather than eating to fuel our batteries.

By avoiding all the things you usually chose to eat (because they are quick, easy, and you feel like it) and varying the actual content of what you do eat, you may discover a new and easier-to-live-with self. By eating a little every few hours - grazing - you will NOT put weight on, but will actually TAKE IT OFF. .

The basic issue you need to address is SUPPORTING your food factory/ metabolism, by not punishing it.

By eating often, you will experience more productivity in work, less reactivity personally and improved health. The body is designed to be topped up regularly and this results in proper functioning.

I am assuming the reader realises we all are living very unnatural and artificial lives, and that I am suggesting restoring balance, from where you can begin a more active maintenance programme.

You may remember that our grandparents were very big on morning and afternoon tea and supper breaks, to keep running a farm/business or a busy house and family or to maintain a work regime. Now we have caffeine/smoke breaks, usually without the solid, sustaining meals in between. What we need is a walk outside, into fresh pure (not recycled) air and a small protein snack.

The three hour rule is easier to cope with when you know you won't add weight. **I defy anyone to get fat on this food choice diet.** Gluten and sugar (plus alcohol) are what really upset the liver's ability to detoxify and function correctly. They are absent from this plan.

Wok-cooked vegetables and lots of fish, rice and some fruit, nuts and seeds - eaten in moderation - are unlikely to cause weight gain.

2 - Temperature of food/fluids eaten.

As youngsters, if our parents gave us cold food or liquid, we got colic and stomach aches and were generally unhappy.

Some of us don't realise this, and do exactly the same with our own children. Then we wonder why we constantly have to deal with them being unwell. We have reached the point where doctors ASSUME that mucous, asthma, glue ear and other colds, flus and often weekly or monthly infections are regarded as normal. What about the concept that it is a brand new being?

Owner's manual time again Are you allowing it to operate as designed to? Vaccination aside - why not wait till a newborn's immune system has at least had a chance to achieve functionality before attacking it with poisons? Is it any wonder we have such an explosion of peanut allergies????

Think of the little inner furnace. It needs supporting, not dampening down with cold.

Why is this information not freely available? It's just common sense . . . and 'old wives tales'.

Look at the baby below. It IS unfinished. That is why, when they are little, they need so much restful and regenerating sleep.

INCIDENTALLY this is why it is SO IMPORTANT to have a birth that allows a restful angel into your lives - not a shocked, screaming fiend who hasn't got the message that sleep, calm and peace are its birthright. Well, we have forgotten too, in the rush for painless and apparently 'safe' births that babies need to be birthed in love and a natural hormonal situation (not a medical chemical storm).

For more, see anything by Dr Sarah J Buckley and Dr Michel Odent or visit www.easybabies.com.au for my other works.

Why do I mention babies her? We were all little once - what programmes of nutrition and common sense did your parents run? If we are not conscious of our actions, we can unknowingly set our own children up to exactly the same issues that we struggle with.

We then believe the current medical fashion of blaming 'genes' rather than seeing that we are the products also of habit and beliefs that may no longer serve us. These habits and beliefs are as much handed down to us as our red hair/blue eyes and big noses.

Babies, like all mammals, are vulnerable as they are new and not yet ready for independent life. By being conscious of their special weaknesses we can really strengthen them for a robust and vigorous life. Thoughtful, early attention can reap magnificently strong constitutions later.

(Not respecting/breaking a new being/baby as it emerges will give no end of distress).



All the areas above should be reviewed to see how little one can and should be respectfully cared for. It would be wonderful if we carried over a lot of this specialized care too for the older small child, as we develop their systems to be lived in by them for the rest of their lives.

We seem to be going through a phase in society of needing to validate everything not through experience, but through data and scientific 'proof'.

We seem also to think that replacing family truths and wisdoms with the judgment of outside 'experts' - will somehow make us better off. Mothers were good at observing and passing on information.

Our great great grandmothers would now no doubt wonder why we didn't listen to them in the first place, since their and their mothers' observations always worked for them (we are the results).

They knew our inner furnace works best when it is respected. This is especially so for the young, the elderly, those who are ill or recovering in some way, or those who are really stressed (from not looking after self first).

If we eat a little warm, nourishing sustenance frequently, we feel better because we are better. Our little furnace is being respected, and can work as designed to. We are less cranky, less 'edgy' and less prone to reaching for whatever it was we used to need.

What if We Do Not Pay Attention?

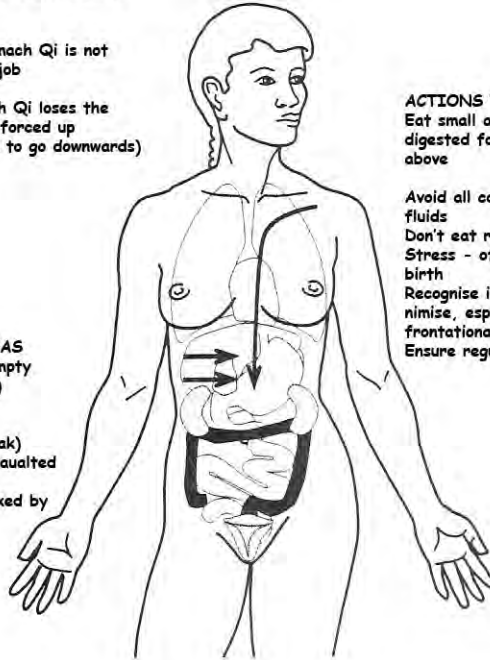
NAUSEAS AND VOMITING

We feel sick if the Stomach Qi is not strong enough to do its job

We vomit if the Stomach Qi loses the battle and contents are forced up (Stomach Qi is supposed to go downwards)

REASONS FOR NAUSEAS
 Stomach is too weak/empty (also Spleen Yang weak)
 Stomach is too full
 Stomach is too cold (also Spleen Yang is weak)
 Stomach is insulted/assaulted

Stomach is being attacked by
 Liver Qi Stuck
 Abdomen overfull



ACTIONS TO COUNTERACT
 Eat small amounts of easily-digested foods very often as above

Avoid all cold/chilled/raw foods and fluids
 Don't eat rubbish/avoid all toxicity
 Stress - often there since pre-birth
 Recognise it and take steps to minimise, esp eat in serene, non confrontational setting
 Ensure regular bowel movements

Feeling sick is a key consequence of putting cold where it is not supposed to go Anything that weakens the Spleen or Stomach Qi will cause an inner rebellion, and either nausea (thinking about everything going the wrong way) or vomiting will probably follow.

What To Do?

Consider drinking a hot cup of something (preferably non-caffeine) before eating cold food. That COLD TEMPERATURE (and possibly VIBRATION) salad is raw and needs considerable heating within to digest it (make it ready for inner usage).

Even putting on extra clothes, and keeping feet and the air we breathe (especially at night) warm will help the body work efficiently. Much like a well-insulated house, it requires less to keep operating well.

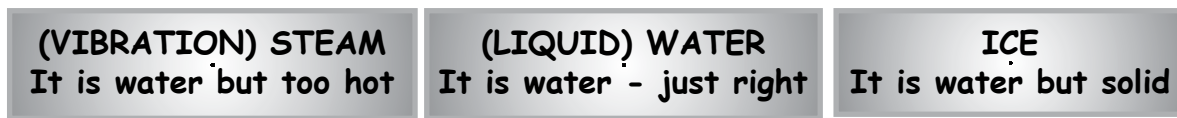
Attending to the temperature of what goes in your mouth, so as not to put out the inner fires, will do more for weight regulation and health restoration (like resisting infections and recovering from weakness) than anything else.

If you do not do this, there is more chance of cold-created body responses and weaknesses - more mucous produced, more fluid and fat wobbling about and more likelihood of Candida, food sensitivities and intolerances/allergies and poor digestion. None of these are 'bad luck' events. You upset your digestive fire and there will be consequences.

You may otherwise do absolutely EVERYTHING 'right'- according to the newest 'diet' craze - BUT unless the basic body rules are covered, what you expect is unlikely to happen. We must pay attention to how we are actually constructed - we are not just a collection of physical mechanical bits all working together.



Looking at something as mundane as water



Often it is when more water is drunk - but out of the cooler or fridge that digestion starts to wane. The actual quality of water is important - BUT SO IS ITS TEMPERATURE. If it is very cold weather or the recipient is weak/ill / young /elderly, tepid water is easier and more palatable.

Imagine giving milk out of the fridge to a baby!

An example from clinic

Stephanie's mother brought her in. She was on her fourth dose of antibiotics, yet still was ill with a dreadful sinus infection, with green nasal mucous.

Rather than just sending her home with supplements - garlic, Vitamin C and liquid Zinc and Chinese herbs - I spent time explaining how a well body works, and questioning how this could have broken down - as she was normally a very healthy girl.

After much prodding, they both remembered that the infection had happened after the introduction of a new lunch box. It had a drink bottle that was filled and frozen, to keep everything in the lunchbox contents VERY cold.

In Brisbane's summer the resulting slush was refreshing to drink, BUT the inner digestive forces were not able to cope. The body's protective functions also failed, leading to the infection and the lessening of digestive ability - thus the over-production of mucous.

Antibiotics were killing off the opportunistic bacteria, BUT the body's healing forces were unable to rally and repair, let alone bounce back because of the continued invasion of what was weakening the Yang/ protective forces within - all that unnecessary cold.

DISCUSSION - Once the food's temperature was adjusted, the body could settle down and eliminate what was ailing it. The supplements could then work; she could be healed, and there were no more hassles.

The lunch box worked just as well on the contents outside the freezer, keeping everything far too cold to digest. It took a lot of digestive fire to warm the contents up prior to digestion - yet it is to HELP not HINDER than we should eat.

Her **Yang Qi** had to take its digestive/Yang forces away from self protection to deal with the unnecessary cold invasion (like a troupe of marauding enemies). Yang also protects and warms - so the **Yang Qi** she had was just not strong enough (being a child) to hold off the continual onslaught of cold.

It is often the missed piece of the jigsaw that completes the picture. If you watch children, notice how they are constantly exposed to sweet cold treats, juice and ice creams.

By simply banning these, a large component of illness - the **weakened digestion**, is removed. The infections, asthma and runny nose all do not need to happen.

This is more important the weaker, older or colder you feel. We naturally seek warmth when we are cold or sick.

We can easily override this by listening to theoretical naturopathic dictates about how we need raw foods etc. But you can also ignore this when you have inner heat and feel better/gravitate towards cooler ingestibles. (See page following)

BUT - 'I WANT to drink COLD water'

You may think that as your body seems to want it, you must need it. You may be right - there can be 'sick' heat that needs to be put out.

The step before this necessary reaction is to avoid having the heat in the first place. Here I may confuse you as I say elsewhere that the metabolism is possibly set too low - as the BBT is not right.

We must realise that there can be heat from toxic sources. Drinking insufficient PURE water or consuming too many concentrated food additives/etc can be a big culprit here.

So also is being angry or frustrated and not realising that YOU are in control. Suppressing feelings attacks your own gut and does not allow wellness to reign within.

This Sick Inner Heat Needs Cooling Down

How did you get like this?

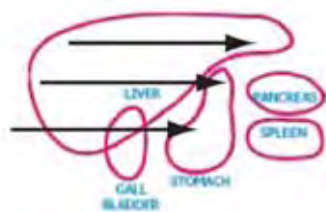
Usually by living on the edge, creating lots of heating consequences by, for example, not sleeping early and enough, taking little water (pure) to clean out the effects of coffee, preservatives, sugar and salt in all consumables, and by not resting and relaxing, usually because money has to be earned, life has to be lived.

One of the reasons we may feel better with cold drinks and foods is that we have 'sick' heat in our bodies.

Ingesting external cool calms this down temporarily. It's the same as if we did not have enough water/oil in the engine of a car - overheating WOULD create drama. Usually the sick heat we generate within ourselves has an emotional component.

The usual way is to hold yourself and your feelings in. What we call '**stress**' is usually stuck, frustrated inner energy that has to go somewhere.

It ends up having its war within us - attacking the gut is an easy solution - it vents within and gives us all the IBS/reflux/ulcers and gut ache - then take medications for.



Irritable bowel, heartburn, reflux, stomach ulcers and indigestion are the beginnings - it gets worse the longer your inner angst is directly attacking you.

By taking in the cold (iced water/ drinks /even chilled water/milk) to cool the **Stomach Fire**, the general **Yang Qi** to digest becomes compromised (just as taking an antacid lessens your ability to digest well

on the physical plane). You need to put the 'sick' fire OUT but not having it in the first place is the best.

3 - Following the body clock

- eating when we are able to digest, not eating when we are unable to digest.

This sounds too straightforward. The underlying point you must realise is that we are all calibrated to eat /process food/work/be awake/metabolize in the daytime, and to switch to regeneration mode after the sun goes down.

Unfortunately, since many of us do not get home till after dark, and as we probably felt we were too short of time at the 'business' /breakfast end of the day, the food deficit has to be made up when we are least able to digest it.

As a result, the most complicated and largest meal is taken at the point when we should be shutting down for the day and going into recharge mode.



In the evening, with the time to prepare, to relax and to consume we choose to eat big-time. We go to bed full and then wake, often after a less than peaceful sleep, still feeling full and hung over, and NOT wanting breakfast.

Our digestive strength is at a lull after 6 pm - just when we start sending all sorts of foods into our stomachs.

It's no surprise we do not want to eat on rising; we are still FULL of the improperly digested results of the nightly binge.

And we probably have not slept well, let alone charged our depleted batteries (regenerated). We have filled up and expected our gut to work flat out when it is LEAST able to do so. But this is so easy to rectify . . . and so is attending to the troubles you are trying to solve. Work with your body, not against it. Why not go with what it is designed to do, rather than fighting its settings?

What about shift workers? They soon get to know how hard it is to go against the pineal gland and how body function is set around the sun's movements.

Trying to reset 'normal' into what we feel like doing, it is no wonder that eventually our body rebels. Fat will not leave despite our best efforts. Sleep quality/energy/digestive and eliminative disorders follow. We start feeling out of kilter - because we are.

We may be inclined to visit the chemist or health food shop and take a pill, but we would do better to review what we are doing to contribute to the disease within.

HEALTH DOES NOT COME OUT OF A BOTTLE

Putting petrol in the car AFTER driving doesn't contribute to the journey you've made. It's the same with food. We can function, after a fashion, without proper nutrients. But signs of dis-ease appear. Lack of quality nutrition is a large component of the headaches, energy and mood alterations that everyone tries to self medicate with coffee, sugar, alcohol and prescription drugs.

The easiest way out of this dilemma is to prepare and plan meals in advance. Regardless of how many you have to cater for, breaking down the day's food intake into even and nourishing proportions is simple. Think . . .

FOOD TO REBUILD, not FOOD FOR TASTE & COMFORT.

4 - Five meals a day.

Divide what needs to be eaten into 5 portions - and start with a cooked breakfast. HOW? Cook the same amount at tea time, and eat half of it. Use the remaining half for breakfast and/or lunch or as snacks in the daytime, by adding nuts, cheese, eggs, canned fish, and avocado.

Think of constant, quality refuelling as the way to get through a day, rather than filling up, AFTER it was needed. You will not then be reaching for the coffee, sweets, smokes, etc, as you will be appropriately topping yourself up when directed to by your belly and you will feel vastly more alive - vital even!

Banish pots, and get a wok.

5 - Stop eating out of habit.

Commonly consumed foods are probably creating the majority of your 'health' complaints. You are addicted and reacting allergenically to whatever you feel you can't do without. Wheat and gluten (also found in rye, oats and barley) and dairy tend to be the mainstays of our diet. Without them, what would you eat? What is there? If you need to think like this, you are a prime candidate for massive change - and, hence, healing.

STOP THINKING OF FOOD AS CALORIES, CARBS AND DIETS.

Stop listening to experts who have medicine and science at their disposal. Their version of what food is 'safe' and what is right or preferable varies according to the decade they are pontificating in. Go back to what kept our ancestors going:

Whole food; grown and eaten as naturally as possible, and in moderation;
coupled with lots of **outdoor exercise**;
at least eight hours of sleep - having no electricity meant sleeping and
awakening with nature;
and occupying a place in the community – being included as part of the wider
social group. **Having a sense of purpose.**

6- Moderation and variety.

We do not need to consume quantity for each snack or meal. Choosing to eat a little, often, adjusts our body needs. Every aspect of our functioning can relax, as food sources are assured. This has HUGE payoffs on all the markers of illness by which you probably use to gauge your life. Colds and infections will be a distant memory. When a body is well, it has no need to become ill. The immune system works, and you breeze through all the work and preschool coughs and colds - like all the other well people around you.

Headaches, gut aches, constipation, mood swings and temper outbursts, plus substance/taste cravings may disappear as the underlying (and medically ignored) nutritional deficiencies that have driven these in the past are now gone.

Moderation means a little, often, not loading up for half a day. Every aspect of the body works better when quality and consistency are the eating goals. Variety means not eating the same types of food choices for EVERY breakfast or lunch.

Variety will keep you interested and healthy. You do not get the chance to become oversensitive to foods if they are rotated at least on alternate days. For example, have chicken/egg free days; potato/tomato /capsicum/eggplant free days [are all in the same family]; and dairy free days. And of course cease all gluten - the wheat, rye, and barley and oats brigade. Once you PLAN your eating, healing/change become easier.

ARE WE CONTENT?

Remember that what goes in our mouths is only one aspect of good digestion. We need people to cook for, eat with and relate to. We are social creatures and do better when feeling included, needed and loved. We all require touch, especially from a loving other. When this is missing, we become tense and prickly, like a cat with its fur standing on end. This creates vibrations of stress that pervade our entire system - not quite 'fight or flight', but a type of raggedness that only calms down with good company.

KEY POINTS

Look after yourself and your body will take care of everything else.

Stress creates distortion that stops all normal processes. You can reverse this easily by looking after yourself.

8. Metabolism (The Key to 'VITALITY')

What Does The Thyroid Do?

The thyroid gland sits at the base of our throat, and governs the metabolism. When it is not functioning correctly, any number of issues may result. The acupuncture cross over - **Kidney Yang** (source of **Spleen Yang**) governs metabolism, circulation, keeping warm, protection, and holding everything in place.

Anything that wastes our **Yang**, especially using cold, being cold, and desiring cold to put out the inner digestive heat. (The stress of not being who we really are and smiling our way through our lives - will destabilise the thyroid and create a lower BBT. This slows the likelihood of pregnancy, weight loss and being able to quit antidepressants and antacid medication.

When the system works - everything is easy. When it slows down, life falters slowly. From what is written elsewhere, you may think that just changing what goes into the mouth will alter energy/health/weight. Sometimes this is the case.

What do you do if it is not?

Sometimes you think that losing tone, energy, hair etc, or putting on weight happen because of 'glands' or because your metabolism is slowing down.

This is probable.

This is also rarely mentioned in any advice or information on health and wellbeing (especially fertility and menstrual), weight reduction and diet, or within the myriad women's magazine supplements. We have all probably noticed that when we do not look after ourselves, a new 'normal' setting eventually emerges. This is usually not as useful for us as the original one was. It is often the result of a short term choice of apparently interesting and exciting living patterns.

What Happens

We may have reset 'normal'. This can happen through not following what has always been traditional common knowledge, instead following the latest body styling fashion. Bodies need a stable, regular and nourishing input to maintain themselves. Usually we do the major damage when we are young - when we consider ourselves to be above and apart from the normal rules that apply to others.

The time-honoured traditions, when mothers stayed at home to prepare meals from 'scratch', with stunning foods, have seemingly gone. We are often left with a 'smorgasbord' of retail choice, very little of which is based on actual need and nutritional value. Those who wish to sell more of their product seduce us with ostensibly useful information, and colourful packaging.

Dieting and external body shape awareness creates very stressful conditions. This is especially so when a young woman is still growing, developing and menstruating, and then, for all the reproductive years, laying down the possible inner nest for offspring.

Every month our mammalian bodies attempt to recreate us. The raw ingredients to support this are shed monthly. We need to replenish ourselves continually. If we do not choose nourishing foods, and if we actively suppress good eating, and since this biological agenda continues regardless, we can really damage our long term health.

More on this subject is found in my eBook [Woman Tides](#)

Metabolism Gauge - How To Measure Basal Temperature

Our digestive fire is just part of what our life force does to keep us going. What sets the temperature of this fire is our basic metabolism. Here we need briefly to cross into the science model. By taking your temperature with a thermometer first thing in the morning, as you open your eyes, you will see what sort of regime your body is functioning under.

As women, our temperatures alter in response to our bleeding cycle. Although there may be an optimum temperature written on the thermometer packaging as being normal, women on a menstrual cycle, (including some women who are no longer bleeding, but who can discern a cycle of sorts) vary in temperature - higher the second part of the month, usually by half a degree.

We should be about 36.6 or 36.7 in the first part, and 37.0 to 37.2 in the second. Other sources may tell you a lower scale - it is being rewritten as most are operating at too low a level and the 'norm' is now being taken as average.

Much less than this, and there could be concern about thyroid health. Normal for men is 36.8 C.

If less, even without any symptoms found later in this book, it can be assumed that sperm production - quality at least - is somewhat less than optimal. As with following a recipe, there is a thin line for 'perfect' settings.

NORMAL WOMAN'S CYCLE CHART



If not chemically altered - through the use of artificial pill or patch or other contraceptive device - a woman who is having periods optimally will have a chart something like this. Where the line is set is crucial - and 36.6 or 36.7 is where you are aiming for. Often it is much lower. This helps explain why you have been struggling (and this may have been for all your life). As thyroid activity and metabolism sensitivity compare with the setting at which the oven bakes, or the automatic car idles, you may begin to see the immensity of the ramifications when it is not as the manufacturer (or your inner blueprint) intended, or specified. Living in your life is a struggle.

Lower Than Average Temperature



If this is you, you may have noticed that nothing is simple, as the body is in struggling to survive mode. **Depression of life** force results when everything is worn out through trying to maintain normality, when the body is now set for this normality not to be there. **Weight gain gradually happens** - regardless of your care of input, the exercise (*no energy* to do it), the intention (*will seems weaker*), the ability to plan and keep to time (*everything is in slow mode*), the quick, resourceful brain (*memory and processing slower* and thus *self-confidence issues* creep in) and the *joy of living* (too hard for too long). They all disappear.

Whilst this is passed off as symptoms of 'getting older', stress or 'to be expected', it is actually a result of many neglect factors. Without a system that actively cares for health, we now seem to have a population of walking wounded.

If you have taken your temperature for a month or so, and if it is just a little less than the figures given here, there may be no cause for concern. Perhaps look to the site www.wilsonstemperature.com.

If however, your temperature is lower than stated above and you can't seem to get out of your own way, weight gain has arrived and is not leaving, regardless of your best efforts.

Perhaps you have: heartburn/ reflux/ constipation, dry skin, period/fertility issues, poor concentration and recent memory problems, and complain of tiredness and/or feeling the cold, have no interest and/or feeling in sex and are depressed, you may still be considered by the medical profession to be 'normal'.

But being the same as everyone else does not make you or them well, or healthy - just all strugglers. This simply means that a lot of the population feel out of sorts, and this is hardly a definition of healthy. You know that you do not feel as alive as you once were. You are just not that sick to register on the medical scene as alarming enough. Stated plainly, you are unlikely to die from feeling awful.

General Gut Disorders and BBT (Basal Body Temperature)

I suspect the short answer is that it is not 'sexy' enough for researchers.

We do not die from feeling poorly all our lives.

But when you think of the digestive issues - poor assimilation/leaky gut/Candidia overgrowths/ constipation /heartburn/ slow peristalsis/reflux/allergies/mucous membrane reactivity (including sperm ducts) - you realise that every aspect of life is affected by the gut not performing perfectly.

By creating discomfort and inferior **Blood** and **Qi**, we are handicapped and may be limping throughout our lives. It is here where orthodox western medicine seems fail us badly. There is a world out there full of people whose metabolism is set too low.

All natural health clinics are awash with desperate people whose bodies seem to be at war with them. Life is hard; survival issues are foremost, and get in the way of what they wish to be able to do. This translates to a life of difficulty.

Brain in 'slow mode', fat, depression, chronic pain and lives half-lived result. Along the way, all manner of menstrual, mood and fertility issues arise.

BBT and Fertility Issues

Perhaps fertility issues loom large in your life. Often, just seeing the baseline I have outlined too low explains why beautiful embryos just do not implant - time and again on IVF. It is often the only thing that needs fixing for the cycle to normalise, so that you do not need reproductive technology. Then there are the 'him' factors - the overweight/solid /chunky individual who is too stressed to exercise ("no time"). Often, he is running too hot an apparent temperature, and always feels hot - but if you get HIM to do his temperature (no cycle) it should be 36.8 or thereabouts. Often in clinic though, men who are trying to be fathers as their temperature is a whole degree lower than optimum.

This in itself means that although the sperm made may (or may not) be there in numbers, they are lower grade than they need to be, even if they appear to be formed properly. They appear to be OK on observation, but really have lost the spark/have no oomph . . . So why are we not addressing such a crucial issue?

We also do not want offspring who are less than perfect. Look at the explosion of highly invasive, though not proven safe, investigative technologies embryos are now exposed to, to see whether they are deemed 'good enough' to grow into babies - without the parents stopping to ENSURE that what they make together is. (See Helping Mother Nature - a Fertility Guide).

What to Do

Once started, this may not be reversed easily. The Eating Plan outlined has been developed after decades of watching women trying to lose weight rather than support themselves in optimal health. Slowly you descended into this mess. You may take steps to escape, but sometimes, even with your best efforts, you may still feel no real success.

1 - Find a **health care professional** who listens and who appears to know what is needed as a good backup for the foundations laid in this book.

2 - In addition, you may need to find a **natural hormone doctor**. Standard medical practitioners will not be able to assist you find your way out of the metabolism trap using standard medical parameters of 'health'/thyroid measurements. Taking lots of supplements without lifestyle changes is also unlikely to create the changes you are expecting.

3 - Most of us are intolerant of the foods we insist on eating. We create the dramas, the tougher job of supporting ourselves, through self medicating with what temporarily assuages our stagnated energy. (Look at what you reach for when stressed). What we are addicted to, we are also allergically reacting to, and all the while not changing this is creating further health dramas. Please look at the Eating Plan. What we do to fuel ourselves is often the first place to promote changes.

4 - Avoid all cold situations. It may be that you feel hot a lot (this is often 'false' heat - brought about through other system failure), but leaving your pores exposed to the chill breeze, regardless of how refreshing it feels, is an invitation to continue the conditions that created the lower basal temperature. Our inner fires have to keep us in a temperature range that is narrow and designed for maximum healthy functioning.

5 - Get regularity into your life. This means having the same time for eating, same exercise and sleeping routines, safety in all aspects of your life, harmony and loving touch included to ensure your peace on all levels is enhanced. This raises the issue of opposite sex relationships and the angst that the grievances so caused create in our energy fields. We are mammals. We are tribal, and we, as primates, require touching just as we need food and water. Some choose pets as substitutes for people, children or a mate. Just be aware that your lifestyle choices reflect who you are, and they in turn shape who you can be.

Please see my eBook - ***Getting Out of Your Own Way***

6 - Keep taking your temperature daily, first thing. If the self-help measures have failed to correct it for you quickly enough, find a therapist who knows what this means, and follow their advice. Be aware YOU are in charge of helping yourself. It is about what choices YOU make, not how 'good' the healer is/finding the right modality/person to 'fix' you..

7 - Continue doing everything outlined, especially the Eating Plan. Most who have metabolism issues also have low blood sugar (hence should avoid all normal habits like trying to lose weight through active dieting, eating sugar and partaking of the coffee culture), low blood pressure and lowered immunity.

8 - Go out and find something to wake up for in the morning.

Do something to make your heart sing!

We all need to be validated by being here and need to feel as though the world is a better place for our input and presence. What is lacking in your life could just be your commitment to actually **LIVING** in yours - and being **PRESENT** and **HONEST** with yourself. This flows into all interactions with others.

If your life is not what you would script for yourself - ask what is stopping you exiting this set of instances and appearing in another one. What **IS** the point in being unhappy all the time? Yes, you may have big plans for the future but living **NOW** is what you are doing.

KEY POINTS - metabolism can easily be measured.

From here, it is easy to see what to do with diet and energy and thus weight.

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF IS VERY SIMPLE - PUT THE HEALTH OF YOUR DIGESTIVE FIRE AND YOUR INTERESTS BEFORE OTHERS AND CONSIDERATIONS OF THEIR WELFARE.

The Current Epidemic of Sub Clinical (not measured through normal test scores) Thyroid Deficiency, Low Metabolism and 'Glandular' Problems

Modern medicine seems to be ignoring the epidemic of people who are struggling with their bodies. (This is covered in more depth in *Thyroid – have you got enough oomph to love living?*).

Naturopaths and natural therapists are seeing more of this as people vote with their feet into their offices- trying to find someone who will listen and assist them. All would benefit from the veil being lifted. Fibromyalgia, reflux, depression, weight and fluid issues, hair loss, . . .

An immeasurable amount of grief is happening 'just' because of this issue - men are not becoming fathers naturally due to it- their sperm are not strong, vigorous and well developed for the task at hand, and women have cycles which are directly upset due to lack of appropriate direction from higher up the hormonal chain.

Just getting the thyroid right will assist a large proportion of those attempting IVF. Getting a medical person to even listen can be an ordeal - as the blood test levels of 'normal' are not calibrated to include quality of life issues, so much as medical emergency - may die from how bad it has gotten.

Everything becomes an effort. The lower functioning condition is put down to aging, when we get past even 30 years of age.

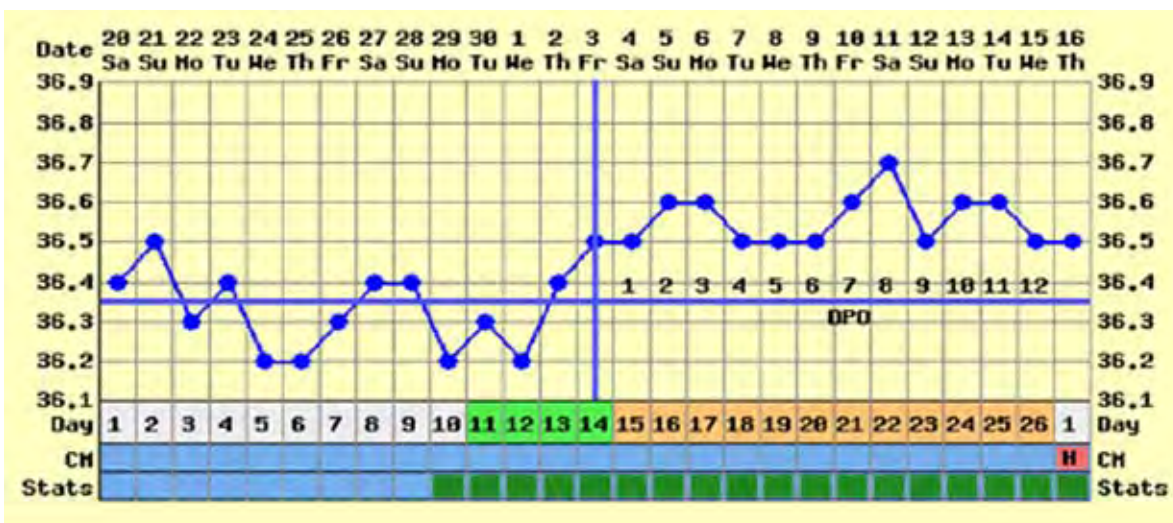
The commonality of this lowered functioning seems to be considered as the new normal - where as it may well be that we are all dwindling through modern living - and this is a real issue.

Where has vibrancy gone? Low metabolism **CAUSES** depression. (See my eBook "Getting Out of Your Own Way").

Low Thyroid Equals Low Everything

Below is an approximation of the menstrual PATTERN - (minus ovulation and decent progesterone/luteal phase) but is just all too low. Why does no one seem worried? Well, you probably won't die from not feeling 100%.

As the orthodox medical system is based in an ILLNESS model, not a VITALITY one, this aspect of health is not considered a problem. If you fall within the scores that say you are 'well' - as the levels are not low enough - then 'you win'!!!! No problem!!!!



Except that you may have felt tired and worn out all your life. Weight and depression and low sex drive/motivation and oomph may have escaped you.

Most who have battled their shape and weight have now a low metabolism, even if it was fine when they started their career in shape shifting.

Compare this with the normal temperature cycling woman's chart (men are supposed to be constant around the 36.8 mark). Remember to take temperature orally the instant you awaken. No good if you are a mouth breather - if a woman perhaps then, take it vaginally.



All those with lower temperatures are actually very stressed. Basic survival takes up most of the energy reserve. It's a bit like the difference between having a base salary and making do, or having a very high income and having lots potentially 'over' to spend as you feel.

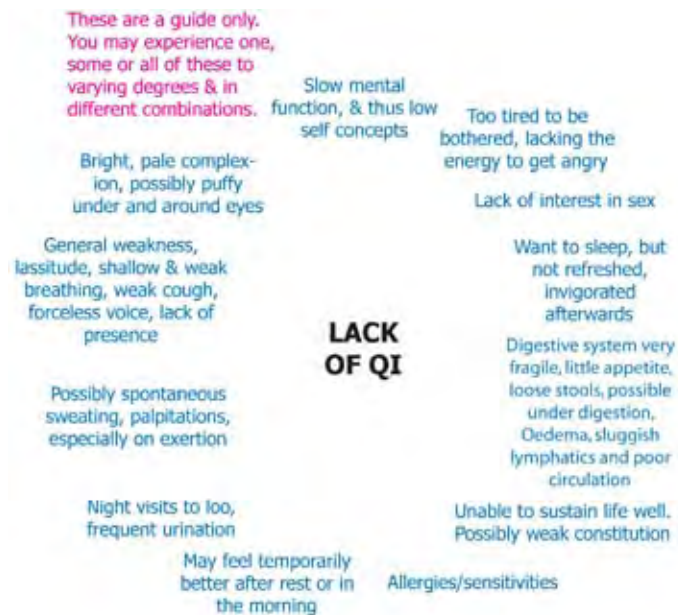
The low BBT person is struggling to keep their head above water. They are stretched/stressed physiologically, as their body is over achieving trying to get to where they should be comfortably working at. It's like trying to bake a cake at 20 degrees less than the recipe states - it DOES bake but not as well. And then there are always the individual ovens that are calibrated differently.

SO - what DOES the thyroid do again? It is the part of the body that directs everything that keeping metabolism and hence all other activities, including menstruation and sperm quality, ticking over properly.

What if I have low energy?

True low energy looks as shown below.

When systems are failing, it is where those dying of cancer and other wasting diseases find themselves. In daily life those of us suffering perhaps from a depleted illness, overwork or a lack of play and no joy situation, may be down in one or two areas. This translates usually as a lower BBT, not feeling on top of your game, or unable to get better or lose weight.



Lower than normal temperature means you expend a lot of your energy just trying to survive.

Symptoms are low blood sugar, low blood pressure and low peristaltic action (tendency to constipation /slow assimilation and digestion of food, possible Candida systemically, Leaky Gut Syndrome etc), poor energy transference from food to action, and slow thinking, poor memory, low libido, and low self esteem and depression.

Mostly, we are just told to pull ourselves together and to stop being lazy. The fact is, there is not enough left over to have 'fun', only sufficient for 'work' activities. Sure, go to the gym but where is the energy you will need?

This is very different from the **Stuck Liver Qi** person who feels much better for it - even though, to start with, they feel too tired to get out of/off the couch.

The low thyroid person will just be depleted further, trying to mobilise themselves. Often they get sick, catching some bug or other. Trying to work out WHICH of these you have may be totally unproductive. Most people move into more or less of one or the other, and often have both together.

Low immunity is also a feature, feeling temperature sensitive - often too cold, and then appearing to overcompensate, or feeling the heat and humidity and 'losing the plot' when summer arrives, but still not coping with the cold. Another feature is inability to lose weight and usually a gradual increase in fluid and fat and cellulite, irrespective of diet and exercise attempts.

Foggy thinking, dull head and maybe even a heavy 'can't think' state on awakening complete the picture. Antidepressants tend to be offered - even though depression (of everything) is just a symptom of underactive thyroid function.

It is easy enough to check out - take your oral temperature first thing in the morning. If it is too low, don't panic: you have possibly been like this a while. You will not die from it - that is seemingly why no medical interest is shown. Check out hormonal disruption and thyroid malfunction on Google. This will at least provide a reason for your difficulties and thus be something to focus on.

How Did This Happen?

Possibly the love affair contemporary culture, aided by modern science, seems to have with fluoride in water and toothpaste (taken up at the expense of the iodine needed for thyroid function).

Amalgam (mercury accumulation over the decades - see Google) in our mouths is also part of this endemic issue. A lot of our parents rigorously made us take little white tablets before bed for years, hoping it would assist our teeth development. This was at a time when sugar consumption and basic nutrition were deemed to be incidental to health and illness!

Food choices (convenience and taste over protein and nutrition) also are partly to blame. So too is the tendency to slothful, sedentary and spectator lifestyles, and the use of carbonated and caffeinated drinks. Phosphoric acid (in cola type drinks) is particularly worrisome for young girls' hormonal balance.

Artificial sweeteners also play havoc with normal metabolism and cause tumour development. It is far easier to rectify this with lifestyle changes - after all this is probably what created it in the first place - rather than reaching for medication. Looking after your **Spleen Qi** will mean your thyroid will normalise.

If your best efforts do not seem to make headway trying to get someone to assist you will be the next thing.

A good metabolic naturopath or other therapist who has had to battle this themselves (and who will therefore have had a vested interest in resolving it) are better bets than consulting a standard medical or endocrinological practitioner. You may find natural hormonal replacement helpful - or someone specialising in 'anti aging medicine'.

Any reproductive specialist will ignore what drives female hormones further up the normal chain of command, and will attempt to correct the specific condition without considering the context.

The most insidious thyroid-related health concern is 'period' problems. Sufferers seek to be medicated with a contraceptive device, which may alleviate the hassles short term. Over time though, this masks the real underlying issue, allowing it to continue. Periods will often normalise if the thyroid function is adjusted. Sperm production and quality are also enhanced if digestion and the entire body is functioning optimally. Anything else is like trying to cook pastry at 180C when the recipe clearly calls for preheating to 225C and cooking there.

How to Help Yourself

There are many ways of up-regulating the thyroid. A regular and stable routine that could be instigated through a more calm life schedule, with downtime and happiness factored in, would greatly help.

Often TV and other electronic entertainment need to be replaced by a programme of actually **LIVING** your own life.

This may mean interacting with your surroundings, and undoing some of the things you hide from within, by cluttering up every spare minute with busyness. Rest, especially sleeping prior to 9pm (yes, I am serious), will greatly assist the healing needed.

Sometimes using Chinese herbs and having acupuncture can reset your normal calibration. Often it calls for more than lifestyle adjustments alone. Sometimes, giving progesterone as a replacement helps. This is considered unusual by standard doctors, only because, I suspect, it is not driven by pharmaceutical companies (for reasons mentioned elsewhere).

If this approach is used, some alternative hormone doctors may use it from day 5 or 6 of the cycle, to allow a rest from ovulation - after maybe three months of using it to block ovulation - and stopping on day 28 or when the period starts, or on day 26 to ensure a period comes. After that they may only use it from day 14 or after ovulation usually starts a fertile cycle; often pregnancy results.

There are numerous ways of going about this - and this may not be practical for those who cannot find a natural hormonal doctor to help them.

I have seen some women on this regime actually ovulating and conceiving (whilst also using Chinese herbs, acupuncture and supplementation) - a clear indication that the estrogen dominance and hormonal disruption (I suggest you Google these) were huge factors and that, with some neutralising, things could return to normal.

Without progesterone, I use a couple of specific preparations to assist return to normality. One is a vitamin preparation for adrenal exhaustion. It is taken at therapeutic, not maintenance doses. It is worthwhile to Google this topic

also. Modern life and its drain on us - living at peak functioning and calling the average crisis-laden day 'normal' - wears us out over time.

Another approach I use in clinic is a herbal preparation that converts the (T4) thyroid hormone you make into the one you need (T3) in the body to so it can be utilised. Many herbal formulae may assist here.

The main problem for those who are already supposedly on thyroid replacement treatment is that it is a standardized rather than custom-made approach. Many of us wander around unable to do this essential conversion. The micronutrient and heavy metal imbalances have made basic life processes too hard for many.

Supplementing with what some of us cannot use (T4) only partially assists the return to health. Subsequent blood tests may show there is sufficient of what is being tested for in the blood. What often needs taking to this equation is that it may not be taken up and used because it is in a form that is actually unattainable for THAT person.

Is it dangerous to tinker with your metabolism? Ask this question differently: Is it safe to be so dysfunctional? What are your options? Is it sensible or comfortable to be dragging yourself through life?

It may not be life threatening but can it really be acceptable to be struggling on a minute-to-minute basis - which is where many find themselves - with no medical support, not sick enough, the test just showing slightly lower than 'normal'? Was it ever YOUR normal that you are below now? It might be very much below your personal previous normal.

What It Feels Like

1 - You feel unable to think (as though your head is in a fog), unable to process information (when previously you had a remarkably efficient brain) and unable to keep to time, (as though slightly brain dead).

2 - You are unable, regardless of effort, to lose weight, to find enough energy to exercise (leaves you exhausted and more unable to get things done).

3 - You do not have a libido (just can't be bothered, or loss of all feeling and interest), or feel vibrant.

4 - You may be offered and eventually take antidepressants (see [Getting Out of Your Own Way](#)). You may not realise that depression is one of the symptoms of low thyroid functioning - and being fatter, having more fluid or cellulite and no energy or libido are also depressing. You feel that regardless of what you do, it seems it totally surrounds you.

5 - It is possible also that you may have fibromyalgia, or other Qi and Blood stagnation and general life-stuck, medically-labelled conditions (not enough Qi to move life force through you). None of this helps your quality of life - but just hoping it will all go away also results in immense losses in all aspects of being yourself. Altering your habits to affect your metabolism is a lot safer and life affirming than going through your life feeling unwell but not sick enough to qualify for the doctors' attention.

Being under the medical radar may also cost you the children you assumed you would have. Once the thyroid is normalised, all things that ail you (which are really just alerting you to the bigger distortion in your condition) will evaporate. Your metabolism may be able to self-regulate/readjust to normal when you start looking after yourself, cleaning up your life - start with eating and sleeping habits.

What to Aim For

Feeling more alive, avoiding hair loss, and having your brain work again, whether or not you get pregnant, is a great start to health and happiness. So too is the loss of weight, flab and fluid without trying. Just as it appeared without your trying, it can similarly dissolve effortlessly, once your inner workings are back to where they can be.

(When Thinking Possible Low Thyroid Function)

The tendency towards low thyroid function is often an inherited pattern. But this does not mean it is set in concrete and unalterable. It may be that a large portion of the family traits could be resolved with basic attention to metabolism enhancement. Blood tests may either show you to be 'normal' or on the low side of normal. This does not necessarily mean that you are well and vibrant - just that it is of no real mortality threat. If you are feeling 'under the weather', especially if you wish to feel robust and happy - and pregnant with a child who will not also have these problems - you may need to go searching for help.

Blood Tests To Start With – T3, T4, TSH.

Thyroid antibodies, iron stores, and the usual range of other hormones - plus progesterone, possibly better with a salivary (rather than blood) test, 7 days after ovulation.

Charts indicating low thyroid usually show as poor second (luteal) phase (see "[Helping Mother Nature – a Fertility Guide](#)") or may just be a lowering of the BBT with a normal pattern. This may mean pregnancy is possible, but may also mean that the 'unexplained' IVF implantation failure now has an explanation.

Possible Hints For Low Thyroid Functioning –

General low functioning of everything. This affects us all differently, but the most likely sign will be lower basal temperature. Some notice no effects - as they have always been like this. The 'like this' is likely to be:

- can't lose weight easily, and gain it for no real reason,
- hard to keep motivated,
- tired; it is an effort to do much,
- low blood sugar - have to eat often or you 'lose it', vague out, get angry
- low blood pressure - including feeling faint and frequently 'not with it'
- slight depression,
- fluid retention,
- hair changes, especially starts to fall,
- brain fog, losing your edge, memory falters,
- morning headache - maybe like a heavy band around the head,
- puffy around eyes, especially in the morning,
- digestive issues - maybe constipation,
- heartburn/reflux - often severe, for no apparent reason,
- allergies - often a lifetime of them - manifesting as skin/gut/systemic/
mucous membrane/asthma conditions,
- any fertility problem, including abnormal periods

KEY POINTS

Without checking that the oven is set at the right temperature, you cannot expect to cook properly.

Having been like this all your life, through your family's legacy, is no reason to stay barely coping.

9 Eating Plan

1 - Two and a half cups of coloured vegetables daily.

FRESH. Not microwaved. This does not include the potato count. Preferably plant your own greens and herbs - and pick them a few leaves at a time. This is very feasible, even on a small balcony. Remember colour selection - ensure that there is heaps of colour on your plate each meal.

Wok and juicer become invaluable here.

Celery, lettuce and capsicum are useful snack agents. These can be filled with the salad and fish/egg mixes that might normally go on breads. Half raw red capsicums filled with avocado/cottage cheese/tahini/ protein/eggs of some description/babaganosh dips are amazing.

Cooked tomatoes and capsicum stuffed with left-over rice, pine-nuts, or raisins, are stunning hot or as lunch-box fillers. Use beetroot as a roasted veggie - step outside what your mother may have taught you that food 'looks' like.

2 - No more than three hours between snacks.

Divide daily intake into five portions, dramatically night time eating. This will allow the body to heal itself. Eating the biggest amount when everything is about to shut down ensures you don't sleep well and don't get the best out of your eating. It means that you do not feel like breakfast which, may well help catapult you out of the fat/energy/health crisis you are trying to remedy.

3 - Avoid all gluten.

This is not to say that some won't find its way into your mouth accidentally. Many things we eat - even tomato sauce - have thickening agents. The more you prepare your own food, the more control you have over all aspects of your inner biochemistry. Avoid WHEAT, RYE, OATS, BARLEY. Check out small print on labels; you will find an immense number of things hidden within.

Before worrying about what you will eat, stop and think how drastic this really will be in your life. Try it out for just a month. The previous 'hits' you needed of bread /carbs will disappear, with the three hour protein snacks and 2-1/2 cups of vegetables daily.

Getting the veggies in daily means you have more than just carbohydrates from non grass (gluten and rice) sources. Eating every three hours, you will not be perpetually hungry, cranky and lethargic, which is really just the body crying out for PROPER nutrition. (Not more - just better quality).

What is the repeated invasion of these highly sensitizing products (breads etc being the pivot of your diet) doing to you?

When you were an infant, your Mum - if breastfeeding, and all through her pregnancy with you - would also have reached for these; they were easily obtained and filling. When you were weaned, it would have been onto these items.

Before your system had a chance to develop properly, you were on a constant round of toast, sandwiches and pastry casings (pies), noodles, pasta, cakes and biscuits.

Over time, as this is what everyone eats, you think of this as 'normal', as you do with the very health issues you are trying to alter. This is due not to 'aging' but to not knowing how to create wellness and not paying attention to variation and seasonal availability for your diet.

It may be that this simple change will correct the majority of the issues you thought you just had to live with'. I am not suggesting you have celiac disease - just an inability to process gluten foods and thus have an acquired sensitivity to them. By just giving yourself a break from them, you may discover the skin/gut and energy, migraines and chronic ill-health issues will recede.

By altering your normal diet, you may find if you subsequently eat some of these proscribed foods accidentally you may feel very ill - bloated, foggy in the head and as though you have had a truck run over you.

Hay fever, or other allergic symptoms may return. By giving yourself a break from what was creating your problems and then going back to it, your body now identifies these substances as the culprits - and gives you the message to avoid them.

STOP DOING WHAT HAS NOT WORKED SO FAR

Is it sensible to keep doing the same old things? It's like hitting the fence post every time you drive in your gate, and blaming the car repairer for not doing a proper panel beating job - the dings are still going to be there in the body work as long as THE DRIVER is not careful with the vehicle.

Stop hitting the fence post and stop eating what sets your ill health and allergic reactions off, and there will be no further trouble.

Midriff fat is letting us all know our system is stressed. Look to the fuel you are choosing. The bloating and gas, the gastric discomfort and the wider eliminative (skin and bowel) issues will possibly be magically resolved once the gluten 'easy' foods are removed.

What to eat instead?

RICE is a very versatile food and highly tolerated by all. It can be cooked and left in the fridge as a start to the next sweet or savoury meal. It can be heaped on a plate, incorporated in dishes, used as a substitute for flours in thickening things, mixed with other flavourings and stuffed into vegetables, fish, poultry and meat, combined with milk and eggs as a pudding, or used in all sorts of Asian dishes, to really interest the taste buds.

It can be made into sushi, or eaten a mouthful at a time, chewed at least 50 times to alleviate hunger. Always have some in the fridge: cooked, and stored as a leftover.

4 - Choose as natural as possible.

Ideally, food grown in your local area and in season would naturally nourish your body. This is no longer the case. Very few people even grow their own food. This means we are eating anything, grown in any part of the globe, in any season. It also means we are not in control of the additives.

These may be things like fertilizers, toxic residues in the soil to be taken up along with whatever nutrients are remaining, fungicides, pesticides, and irradiation and whatever else has been done to what we are supposed to rebuild our bodies with.

Biodynamic choices, where food is grown in optimal conditions may not be possible. One answer is supplementing your shopping with actual home produce. Searching for organic produce is another. At least choosing to prepare and cook everything consumed yourself minimizes the additives (extra salt, flavour enhancers, colourings and preservatives) ingested.

Go back to buying ingredients and starting from 'scratch'.

Naturally grown food is far more tasty, although maybe sometimes more expensive. If you have children who are constantly ill, especially if the medical profession cannot assist, the partial cause may be the toxic harvest of your food and lifestyle choices earlier in your life, in pregnancy, and in early breastfeeding years ago. Toxins can act cumulatively. Reducing the load at any stage of life will be welcomed by your body.

Investigating any website dealing with hormonal disruption or natural living, our stolen future and the consequences of our polluted environment will show you more.

What to do? Look seriously at finding natural sources of produce. Start buying in season when there's a glut, preserving and freezing so you have 'fresher' food in home storage than is available in shops.

5 - Water.

As a minimum, drinking at least two litres a day of non-chilled pure water will help all aspects of your return to health. In cooler climates, it may be necessary to take the chill off; keeping the inner furnace stoked well will ensure that you do not create further problems whilst trying to do the right thing.

Please refer to the note re '**sick heat**'. Wanting to drink cold water is a sign of inner imbalance. Trying to self-medicate (cooling yourself down), your body is alerting you to a problem, without relieving the reasons for the heat.

If you give in to it, there are consequences, although not often immediately obvious to those using the crisis management medical model. If you keep forgetting to drink, put a glass by the hand basin. Then whenever you wash your hands, you will remember.

At the computer, leave a glass within reach (but not where it would cause damage if spilled), and it will constantly just be there as a reminder that you need to look after yourself.

Putting water in a large glass and leaving it as a visual trigger is a better idea than carrying a bottle around with you. The glass is a simple matter of raising it and drinking. Notice how much more you drink this way. Using the bottle is less helpful; water should be always readily to hand.

In our culture, we seem to take umbrage if a visitor wants 'just water' rather than taking tea or coffee. Yet, water is how we cleanse ourselves - the liver, detoxifying every aspect of our modern life, requires an endless supply throughout the day.

In addition to any other beverage, always offer your guests pure room temperature water. Adding ice as a nicety only depletes the inner fire.

**Drinking when thirsty may be too late
- the dehydration may have already begun.**

If we are trained early to drink water frequently, we have far less serious health problems. This will be so even just with easier bowel action but there are also complexion clearing, body odour relieving and headache preventative benefits.

If you drink coffee, you need **at least 4 extra glasses PER CUP of coffee** to help undo the very dehydrating and very heating effects (even if drunk chilled - we are talking of reactions inside the body here) it creates in our liver. Most 'habituals' we reach for when stressed rob our systems of their regenerative abilities. Drinking more water helps diminish these effects.

6 - Fish.

Eat this at least twice as week, preferably oily fish, as it contains a lot of helpful raw ingredients to support your hormonal system. If you have heard danger stories about MERCURY in ocean-going fish, remember that the larger the fish, the more it is absorbing from the food chain. The little creatures - sardines and smaller fish - have less opportunity to absorb the toxic wastes we pour into waterways to be washed into the sea, where we grow our seafood.

Amalgams in your mouth - if you have regular (ostensibly safe) metal fillings - will be doing further damage, as minute amounts leach out when we grind our teeth (to chew) and are washed with our saliva into our stomachs. From here, they are stored in our fatty tissues (brain, nervous system, eggs and sperm and fat in general) an unintended time bomb for our unborn babies to inherit.

Two cans of fish weekly - especially eating the bones, to allow easy bony matrix regeneration - is all you need to do to provide calcium if you have been thinking of supplementation. Calcium also needs Magnesium and Zinc to be useful. Eating green leafy veggies and other varied foods will provide heaps of these nutrients - thus the apparent medical worries can be relieved.

Eating every three hours ensures there is always fuel. You will be far more alert, happy and energized, without gluten and sugar, and with plenty of protein, you will shed excess fat, and find your hormones - especially via your thyroid which controls your metabolism - magically normalizing. This in itself will allow normalisation of bowel activity, clarity in thinking, ability to cope, memory, temperature regulation, libido, self-image and mood, and especially relief from depression.

7 - Nuts, seeds, oils.

Eating a selection of seeds and nuts will provide very necessary good oils in your diet. The highest food Calcium source is sesame seeds. Including these at every opportunity is a great idea, especially for children - tahini and honey as a treat, rather than lollies and chocolate. If small children are introduced to the less obvious when they are first being weaned, these will be their first fuel choices. You as parents are the normalizing agents (especially if you choose to ban all diverting media, leaving the TV at other people's houses).

WE NEED FAT TO HAVE HORMONES THAT WORK.

Fats are the base for all hormones, especially those involved with the metabolism that drives your body. Trying to lose weight and eat healthy by following the tips from the heart foundation alone is not sensible, and is a way to damage yourself. We need fat to survive.

FAT IS NOT YOUR ENEMY - YOUR LIFE HABITS ARE.

I am not condoning fatty meat eating. Meat consumption has not been even mentioned so far. I am speaking of the vegetable, seed, nut, oil and fish sourced fats; these are highly necessary in our diets.

I imagine this is why we want to eat it - it is tasty and has mouth texture. We need it to stay warm and well. It is when fat consumption is not balanced with exercise, and all other aspects of a good eating plan, that problems arise.

Losing weight is not a matter of stopping or reducing eating. Neither is it about cutting all fat from your diet. These are a recipe that guarantees you will feel awful, get depressed and binge on what you know you shouldn't.

BUTTER IS FOOD.

MARGARINE IS A PLASTICIZED LOOK ALIKE.

Look at cultures that have been around centuries and whose populations are well. All traditional societies had animal sources of fat. As the altitude and latitudes changed, food choices varied but all had fat as a vital ingredient.

Olive and other seed /nut oils are very versatile in cooking, and we need at least a tablespoon of these daily. For any healing to occur, you **MUST** include oils and avocado/fish and olive oils in your diet.

8 - Cooking methods.

Cooking allows the process of digestion to begin before we eat food. When young, old, ill or weakened, we really need cooked food to help us get the most from our diet.

In the past, other cultures have fermented as an aid to easy digestion. For everyone, cooking and eating warm foods helps our inner furnace make the most of eating. A healthy digestion is our ticket to wellness.

If you feel the cold a lot; if you have problems with energy and thus digestion, you can change this by not just the food you cook, but by how it is prepared and hence what it will do within you.

Heating with direct heat or fat/oil heats the energy of the food more than when using water methods which have a more cooling effect on the food.

If you want to warm yourself, it is not just a food's served temperature that counts but also what the heat source used has done to the food.

Those people with major heartburn/reflux (inner fire) will already have discovered what makes this worse and would automatically be avoiding - anything **heated in vibration** - like roasted, fried and baked, (using dry or oil heat).

Choose water heating methods and go easy on (or eliminate) all chilli, curries and strong spices, sugars, salt (except in cooking), alcohol and caffeine.

Microwaving destroys all life energy from the food you were going to use to rebuild and nourish yourself. If you are doing this sometimes to reheat - to ensure that there is warmth going in, rather than eating something cold on a cold day - microwaving occasionally is fine. Using it as a normal means of saving on washing up, and for speed is a very short-sighted saving.

We tend to choose food for how it looks - hence the pesticides, picking well before ripeness (hence before taste and vitamins have a chance to blossom) and for size as opposed to nutrition within.

9 - Avoiding artificial.

What we choose to incorporate into our bodies has been skewed by advertising and often false information.

Take soy milk as an example. Years ago, the only way to eat soya was to buy the beans from the health food shop (in the days when they DID actually sell food), soak them and change the water many times over the next three days, wash them well, cook in a pressure cooker, and chew excessively.

A soy powdered 'milk' was available for diehards - it tasted fairly unpalatable unless mixed with lots of other substances to disguise it. Those of us who were strong believers in 'natural' foods persevered.

These days, to make soy palatable, at least malt (ex barley thus gluten) has been added, along with much sweetening. Soy milk is hardly 'natural', although the producers would argue people won't buy it unless they make it taste better - a circular argument.

Fermented soy is far better for all. Small children do not need the phyto (plant based) estrogens soy milk contains. As our whole environment is a chemical soup - there is enough other sources of estrogen mimicry creating enough hormonal disruption without willingly choosing foods that will do the same thing. If you wish to eat soy, **tempeh** and **miso** are fermented and have many other health benefits.

10 Substances - self medication.

Many people think of COFFEE as a great beverage. But coffee beans - whether the caffeine has been extracted or not - have been dry roasted and as a result, their vibration is very toxic and causes heating in the body.

Any hormonal /energy/digestive /nervous or other body issue will be alleviated by stopping drugging yourself with this. Children, whose bodies are still developing, should not have access to it.

CHOCOLATE and caffeine drinks have the same effect in the body - the sluggish energy gets a boost. Temporarily you feel energized, more alive - more 'human'.

Unfortunately there is a downside - your adrenal glands get thumped; your liver is under more pressure, and you need to drink a lot more pure water to undo what the coffee has done.

When thirsty people seek another wet treat - often yet more caffeine. Water would tend to taste very bland after all the hot exciting thrills your taste buds encounter - sugar and other enhancers are in all purchased goods to ensure customer loyalty.

What about **TEA**?

Drinking one cup socially is possibly all right. Many however drink tea all day, often several cups consecutively. Tea is a mild diuretic, meaning it encourages fluid loss in the body. Drinking two glasses of water for every cup of tea would help correct this.

ALCOHOL is another substance that moves the stuck/sluggish energy along. It also has an anesthetizing effect. It may be pleasant, and great as a temporary alteration to life perceptions, BUT there are life consequences.

If there are any health/life problems that you are reading this book to resolve, alcohol plays NO part in their solution.

CARBONATED DRINKS - avoid; the phosphoric acids and other non-nutrient substances, in addition to the sweeteners or real sugars, are in no way designed to do anything other than cost you and make money for the manufacturers.

KEY POINTS -

What goes in your mouth you can use to either improve or waste yourself.

Eat **SOMETHING** often -

Lots of vegetables, fish and other protein

No gluten and other less nutrient-rich ingestibles.

Plenty of water and laughter also help.

10. How HAVE I Upset MYSELF in the past?

(This is possibly everything you are currently calling normal and easy . . .)

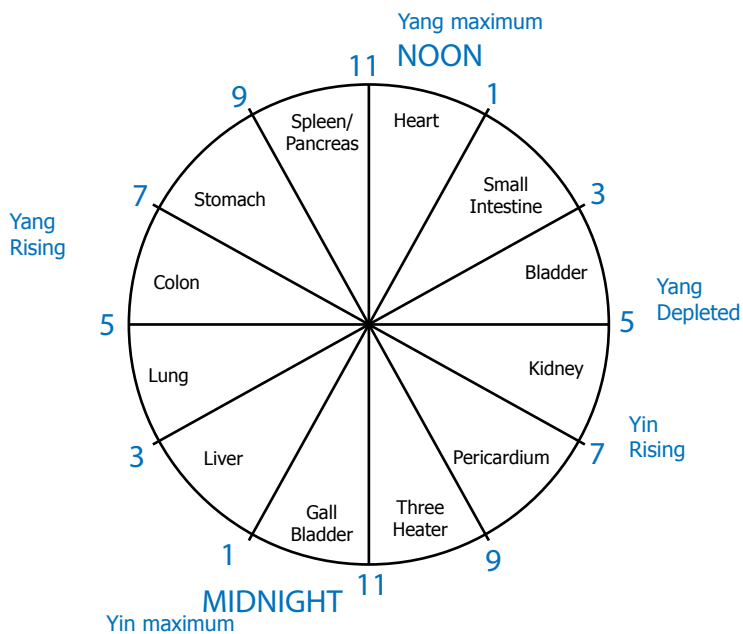
1 - Have long gaps between eating.

This often happens when you think losing weight is a good idea. It's as though we think punishing ourselves for overdoing it, will really make our body work. It doesn't actually help to do this. Instead, our survival feedback mechanisms kick in. Your body may instinctively decide you are in a famine or winter, a familiar scenario for our caveman ancestors, and that you need to prepare for long periods without eating. Then, EVERYTHING you eat is stored, in case this lack of food lasts for a while, and you have to eke out existence.

If you habitually diet and create an artificial famine, all that happens is you reset your clock. Your body expects dire famine to continue, goes into self-preservation mode, and changes your metabolism. When food is plentiful again - you go off the diet - a voracious appetite comes with it. You put on extra weight, to ensure when the next famine hits you have enough in storage. Not a pretty sight around the hips and bum - your mobile pantry.

Please start the every- three-hours diet today, along with 10,000 steps, regardless of the weather. Constant small nourishing snacks and the increased exercise will start your metabolism on its healing journey.

2 - Eating little in the morning and large amounts at night.



By reversing the natural order of things we can expect problems. The metabolism is set to start up and work brilliantly first thing in the morning, after the recharge of the night before.

We wind down to be replenished in the sleep cycle. Having to gear up instead to process a large meal is not how we were designed to work well.

Our body is set to a sun system. When the sun rises, we wake up and need to move through the wastes from the day before, and then recharge.

By assisting this process by putting in warm and nourishing food there is enough to fuel us for the day.

One of the easiest ways to lose weight and gain energy and health is to just follow the sun. Eating a lot before going to bed means even though the 'recharge' setting is in play, you are expecting the last eaten, most complicated and largest meal to be cleared away well. No wonder you wake up feeling hung over and not hungry for breakfast!!!

As we are designed to be busy when there is light, more needs to be eaten, and at regular intervals. As the day lengthens, and we see the sun setting, it is time to have our last meal, before retiring soon after the sun. As we now have ways of overriding our body clock, through artificial lighting and entertainment, we have problems because we ignore the default settings of our bodies.

3 - Heap cold in.

When we eat a lot of cold food, we put out our digestive fire. Extinguishing the fire, especially after a period of emptiness, is a great way to create digestive dramas.

If the cold feels good it might be due to an imbalance that requires urgent attention. Your body is self-medicating as the only way it can coerce you to help yourself. The cold feels better as it temporarily eases a different problem (think of all that irkedness/rage and other angst that you regard as normal) and will cause damage if not attended to. Even if this sounds silly, the best way to help your digestion is to eat something that is NOT cold.

4 - Choose lots of raw food.

Most naturopaths (me included) are trained that raw foods give health benefits, and are better than eating cooked food.

Everything in moderation is a very good maxim.

Our primary goal is to rebuild the digestive fire. However, eating raw food introduces cold in two ways: First, raw food is usually stored in the fridge so it is at a cold temperature. Second, it also has a cold vibration. It requires more

digestive fire to break it down, as it is completely undigested. Cooking starts the digestive process before and OUTSIDE your body and so your body doesn't have to work so hard.

When you must have raw food, please make sure that it's NOT

1. On a totally empty stomach,
2. When the weather's cold (you probably won't feel like it anyway),
3. In combination with sweet taste (oh dear, there is also yoghurt, and that is not even raw, but usually eaten straight out of the fridge),
4. A regular thing. Occasionally is OK, in moderation, buffered by warm drinks.

5 - Tending towards the sweet taste.

The sweet taste, whether it is from actual sugar, naturally sweet foods or from chemically derived sources, slows the digestive process.

Sweetness overloads the energy of the organ complex (see the Spleen and what happens if it is disordered). Over-consumption of sweet taste weakens your Spleen Qi, thus weakening all of these functions, over time.

It is not just that all this extra fuel clogs up the works, but it also leads you down the path of different functioning. Most people would prefer not to have to live through the stomach/inner fire that is created.

In small amounts it may just be heartburn/reflux. It may become the 'diabetes' labelled by doctors or the 'too much sugar' (and not enough exercise) disease we more commonly know.

Craving sweetness after finishing a meal is a sign that your digestive organs are crying out for help. It is not a cry for sugar. You do not NEED it just because you WANT it.

Think again at the three hour protein snack idea - try it - it works on all sorts of levels. Your body is craving FOOD.

The unnatural sweeteners many diets depend on are actually amazingly deadly chemicals in their own rights, and are vastly better avoided. If you can't contain your sweet cravings, try a supplement that includes Zinc, Chromium, Selenium and Manganese, in addition to my other suggestions

If you find yourself still craving sugar/sweet – take the liquid zinc and chromium supplements mentioned earlier, and the protein and other nourishing foods at the right times. Then clean your teeth. Drink a glass of water. Squeeze some fresh lemon juice straight into your mouth.

6 – Become Overly Focused on an Emotion/Stay Stuck

Many people do this as they obsess and find themselves revisiting especially negative self talk.

It's as if beating yourself up will change what has happened. This may just be how you have always been - and without knowing it, you may have surrounded yourself with similar people, those who feel comfortable with your own brand of angst.

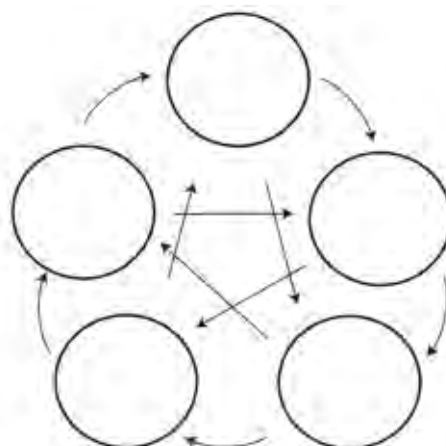
You may believe that this is 'normal' and is how everyone behaves. When you start to shift within yourself, this may mean a parting of the ways from those others, as your differences - whilst being what you were wanting for yourself - may now be out of step with their as yet still stuck habits and patterns.

Your chosen counsellor should give you tools to reframe your view of the world, actively assisting you to RELEASE the old and see things from a different perspective so you feel different and are acting differently.

Just rehashing, debriefing or whatever you like to call it, is NOT the best option. Things always have an upside - it is often not visible when you are essentially the same person who created the drama in the first instance.

7. WORRY – includes getting obsessive about what you put in your mouth

Just as we have the five tastes interacting, so we have the emotions being placed on the model. This is a very simplistic account of feeling . . .



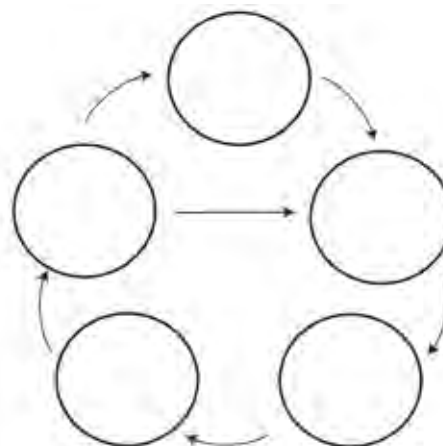
THE USUAL 'SUSTAINING' MODEL

THE CONTROL CYCLE

Worry and over-thinking, or too much reminiscing tends to wear us down over time. This is likely to overwork the very areas that control the digestive fire. Most of us live in a constant state of being 'not happy', often unaware of the continual chatter and negative self talk that almost drowns out all other thoughts. Constructive planning and action can create the way out.

ANGER/REPRESSED EMOTIONS - usually considered the 'bad' ones

Just as worry can get us down, so too does holding onto things about what we or others could have or should have said or done (or not) in the past. Living in this moment is where our life happens. Are we really present/conscious in our lives?



Anger could motivate us to change - not charge into other's spheres, but actually propel us into action - planning and execution of strategies. Sitting in hopelessness and helplessness provokes the DEPRESSION that people take pills for, without CHANGING what needs to shift.

SUPPRESSION of the angst, frustration, annoyance, aggravation, etc eventually spills over and goes either UPWARDS (giving all manner of grievous conditions - blood pressure, migraine and tension headaches/ inability to breathe well being just some of these) or across to the digestive system, as we have seen, creating fiery stomach problems.

Read **“Getting Out of Your Own Way”** for more on this.

Stuck Liver Qi creates the stress-related undercurrents that make up most of the autoimmune/degenerative and aging-like disease processes.

We are in charge of whether they affect us.

We just need to get rid of what they feed on. We are the only ones who can resolve our long standing hatreds, jealousies, grievances and feuds.

GRIEF - often deeply buried because people expect grieving to be over with in a few days. You're expected to be back to work and life and to put it behind you.

The reality is that it stays inside, FESTERING, shutting off the heart and the joy that could be felt, IF ONLY the stuff above it was moved on.

The solution is to really open up to life, love and living.

Yes it can be pretty unpredictable and raw, but is surely more fulfilling than a flat line of nothing while you are doped up with the latest anti depressant.

FEAR – condenses all of who we are and stops all normal Qi and life flow. It clogs up our base chakra, distorting everything into primal survival patterns and panics. The ‘realities’ you worry and obsess about are tied up with what MIGHT happen, not what WILL happen if you do not change.

Change can seem scary. But when what is happening FEELS so difficult that ANYTHING is better than now, change can also be a welcome relief.

JOY – where did it go?

We overcompensate with all the programmes our parents instilled - the fear leaves no chance for the joy to enter. Look back at the controlling five element cycles: if you get too hopeful, there's always a wet blanket for the fires of desire.

KEY POINTS

Following what feels 'right' may not be the wisest move.

Doing what you always have may continue your 'always-like-this' experiences

CHANGE is the way to heal.

11. How to Rescue Yourself

1 - Eat food that's body temperature or warmer

Correct food temperature permits optimum digestion. You don't waste energy heating the contents to begin the breakdown process. You might think that giving the body some extra work would get rid of the fat sooner.

This would only work if you had a very strong digestive fire (and then you wouldn't be doing this since everything would be perfectly balanced, and you would not be trying to change things).

The temperature of what you put in is crucial when trying to lose weight. It is especially important if you are very hungry, or if it has been a while since you fed/stoked your inner fire.

Putting cool drinks or food into a hungry body is like pouring water on a cooking fire then expecting it to burn brightly.

2 - Eat regularly.

This is a key factor in allowing the body to plan and work efficiently. Do not have large gaps between snacks or meals.

When you want to lose weight you need the metabolism to be as fast as possible, so every three hours add another small, nutritious snack.

3 - Eat small amounts

Don't overwhelm yourself. "A little, often" could be your new mantra. The inner fire works best if gets a nutritious, small amount regularly.

4 - Don't drink while eating

When you drink and eat at the same time you dilute the digestive fire. If you must drink, make sure it's only a little and NOT COLD.

5 - Choose a balanced taste palate

There are five different tastes. They are sweet, salty, pungent (e.g. curries and chillies), sour (e.g. vinegar) and bitter (e.g. lemon). These five all work as energies that nurture different aspects of the organs. We need them all in balance and in moderation.

6 - Eat bland, nourishing foods.

Quite often we get fixated on one taste (usually sweet and/or salty) to the exclusion of the others (pungent, sour and bitter). We also need to eat a more bland (i.e. more balanced) mixture of foods, particularly on an empty stomach. But this does not mean flavourless!

7 - Limit the Sweet Taste

Sweet taste actively disrupts the whole ability of the digestive system to work. In moderation, sweet is very important, but because it's readily available and used as a treat, we often don't recognise it as even being sweet any more.

Rice and milk are sweet to taste - yet our very heavily altered taste buds may not register this. I am not just talking about cane and corn sugar, but all artificial sweet tastes, all honey and all dried fruits.

In an energy model, if it TASTES sweet, it can overpower the organ it relates to, and this organ is the key one that keeps the digestive fire functioning.

The sweet taste and sugar should really be banned, until you can take it or leave it.

If this feels like a punishment, start some self reflection: What does food mean to you really?

Most of us were raised with sugar as a reward, and tend to keep this habit going when we feel in need.

8 - Choose a harmonious, unhurried lifestyle

Try not to sandwich eating between disputes, hurry and disjointed activities. Whilst the environment where you actually eat is important - it's often impossible to eat, or process the food in a very tense or fraught setting - remember that the digestive activities keep going for hours after eating.

What can 'Go Wrong'

Living in a **panic** setting can disrupt digestion. If we get into a situation (or think we do) where we need to survive, the 'fight or flight' body mode clicks in. This is a very primitive, inbuilt survival approach. In this mode we are ready to stand and fight or run away, and all our usual body functions are geared to

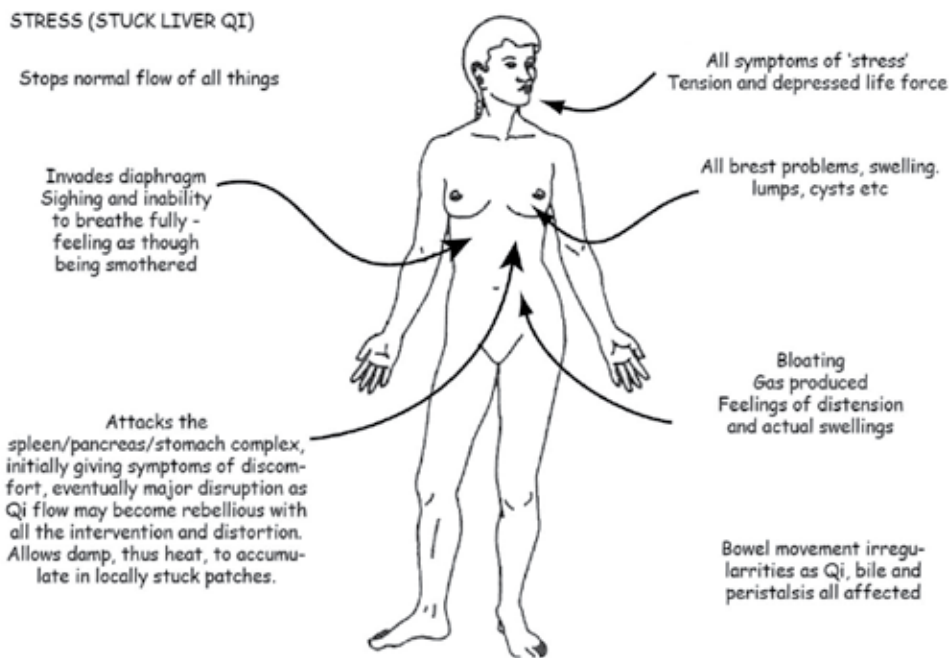
support this and NOT digestion. This encompasses all below surface anxieties, unresolved issues and disputes - characteristic of how a lot of people live their lives. For example: 'Is he angry with me?'; 'Is she going to leave me?'; 'Am I good enough?'; 'Does my mother really want me?'. And so on.

(In an emergency there is no point in processing food; all our blood and energy needs to be energizing the muscles to either flee or stand and sort out the problem).

So, if we LIVE our lives in a moderated crisis, or are somehow stuck in a situation as though it were dangerous, we cannot expect the best out of our eating and our gut to support us well. It's only when we're back in a peaceful place that we can truly nourish ourselves.

This Leads us onto - Stress

For some of us, the body never turns this panic off. It is permanently ready for battle. Living or working in an environment that does not support and comfort you is good way to shatter your health.



Emotional turmoil tends to create a body that tries to function in a half-in/half-out survival state. Tension and stress become our living companions.

Uncertainties predominate, like not knowing when next your partner, workmate, or family member will explode into anger, fury or dangerous behaviour.

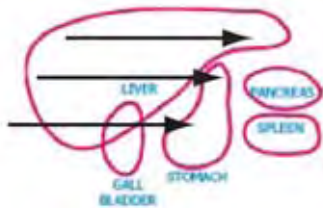
All the time, you're worrying: 'Is he going to leave??'; 'Am I going to get fired?'; 'Will I finish this report in time?'; 'Is there enough money in the account to last till payday?' And so on.

This living in a constant state of battle preparation can wear you out. It's difficult to maintain and we cannot stay there and optimally support ongoing life. Over time, all aspects of life will suffer.

Stomach Fire - as a result of the above . . .

Those who do enjoy and who even seek out cold do so because there is TOO MUCH fire inside. This is either a case directly of the **Heat in the Liver** or the angst from the **Stuck Liver Qi** - usually a mixture of both, one coming from the other, moving to assault the stomach/digestive complex.

This usually comes about from emotional incendiaries that we intend to deal with later on (as in 'hopefully never'). So here in one we see where the need for 'reflux' /heartburn and 'acid' reducing medications arises - and continues, if we choose to not correct why it is happening.



This is very different from the appropriate inner digestive fire (**Spleen Yang**) that we all need to stay alive. The unhappy **Stomach Heat** can also come from

not looking after ourselves the way our forebears would assume we know how to.

The extra heat inside flows out through the urine. Often, this is the sole reason for cystitis. Besides causing reflux/heartburn/gut ulceration and irritable bowel and Crohn's disease, colitis and gall bladder attacks, it also can create an internal drying-out leading to pellet-like stools, constipation and general bad body smells.

Odorous mouth discharges - including gum disease, accelerated tooth decay and dry lips - are all part of the inner stomach heat that often is caused by a mixture of stuck emotions - **Stuck Liver Qi** and the consequent self-medications - sugar, chocolate, alcohol, caffeine, etc, instead of actual nourishment.

The tendency to diabetes/autoimmune diseases and other degeneration or accelerated aging result from this inner fire that destroys our **Jing** (life foundation). Then the round of dieting to control the flesh follows - and around and around we go.

The very erratic and unhealthy food and beverage choices we make, the irregularity of eating (especially avoiding some meals, for whatever reason) extract a toll that eventually is felt by anyone who has been neglecting themselves.

Taking chemical pharmaceuticals and medications to neutralise stomach acids rather than correcting life choices that have caused the distress, leads to other issues.

Weakened Spleen Yang (inner fire)

This leads to all manner of apparently disconnected (from a standard medical model) body issues. These include all the hypo (low) functions - especially the low thyroid activity that is never quite enough to get over the test results line that admits you have a problem.

This is hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar), low blood pressure/ poor peristalsis - especially with constipation through inadequate bowel action - heartburn and other digestive complaints, due to low stomach acid, Candida, leaky gut syndrome, and failure to thrive as a baby/toddler. And these are just SOME of the digestive issues.

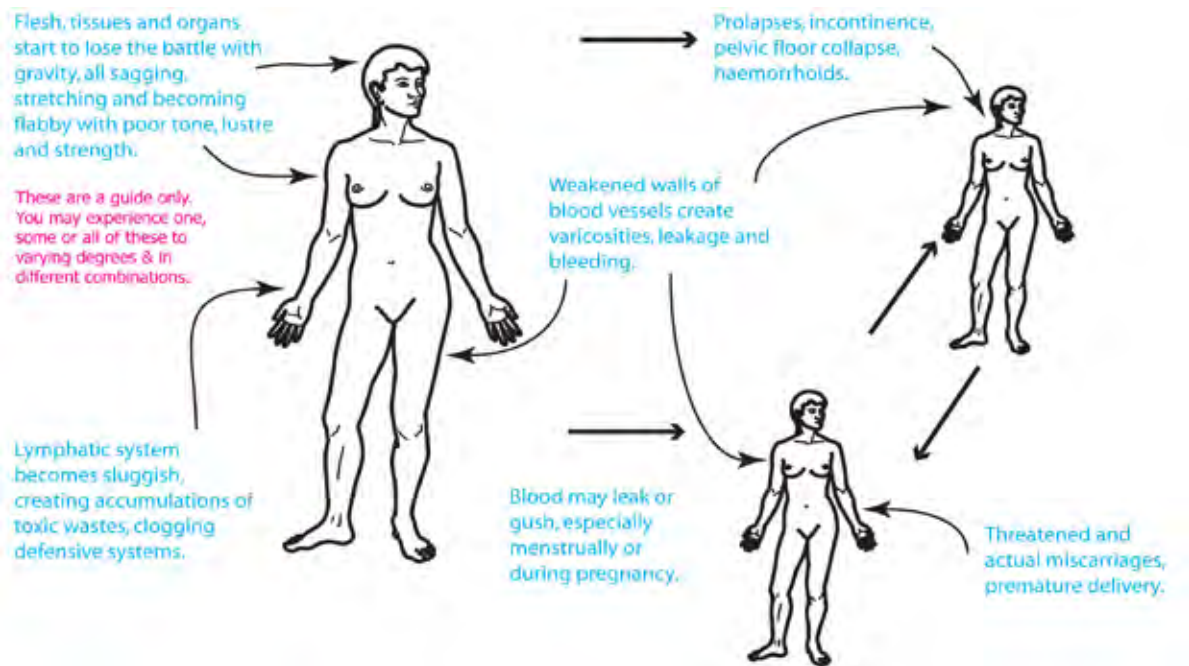
As the **Spleen Yang** keeps all tissues and blood in place, there is quite a selection of apparently unrelated issues that often occur.

The loosening of the flesh is part of the Spleen Yang not holding things up - and includes all circulation deficiencies - and varicose veins, haemorrhoids and prolapses (anything fallen out of normal position)

Losing too much blood - especially when having a period or carrying a baby or birthing - is also part of this. Often the inner heat generated when anger is felt and internalised adds to the inner mix of angst and creates major havoc in women's physiology.

Over time, the whole body is challenged. Since the food factory is generating what keeps us here, stable and functional, losing far too much monthly, or in one hit when pregnant or birthing, is a body blow from which recovery can be difficult, especially at the rate we expect to be able to live our lives these days.

Accordingly, stress can show itself in a few different ways in acupuncture - and these are sometimes concurrently, and/or intermittent, so please do not spend time trying to think which it is in your case- either/or - as it may be a bit of both.



Recap

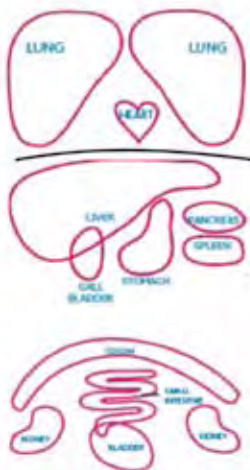
1 - Chew all food very thoroughly.

The digestive process starts in the mouth. This means that a meal that is unhurried, well chewed, and eaten in pleasant surroundings and company is much more likely to result in the quality nourishment that the raw ingredients were chosen to provide.

2 - Have good posture.

Allow enough space for the organs and general circulation to work unimpeded. This is the next most helpful step after choosing and eating your food.

If you sit in awkward and generally immobile positions (think using desks and computers) for extended periods after eating, or your stance is constantly slightly off centre, so you are not breathing fully, this will have a detrimental effect.



The liver, our chemical laboratory, sits right under the diaphragm. Being scrunched over makes us chemically cramped as well.

Occasionally a chronic problem, such as constipation, may have a simple solution, like breathing a lot deeper (exercise helps this also) - allowing the action of the diaphragm to massage the liver and colon, thus ensuring that they work well.

How to change position easily

- 1 - Take shoes off. Stand up, with feet hip width apart. .
- 2 - Without adjusting any other aspect of your position, tilt your sacrum / sitting bone under. This action thrusts your pelvis forward a little.
- 3 - Touch your upper abdomen - under your diaphragm and above your belly button - and from here, straighten up. Doing this lengthens the abdominal muscles, giving vastly more room for your liver and other digestive organs to get on with their job. This should also give you more height/lengthen you instantly.
- 4 - After these few changes, the last is more subtle. Imagine you have wings and **WITHOUT MOVING YOUR SHOULDERS** - move the little muscles between your spine and your shoulder blades to adjust these. This slight movement will be all that is needed to correct your stance.

Does it feel more comfortable?

These few changes will assist your body to support you well.

3 - Exercise.

Allowing the circulation of all things to freely flow is crucial for the **Liver energy**. If we are not active, all the aspects of self stagnate, creating eddies and turbid areas, which further hinder the potential for a well functioning unit.

Ten thousand steps is the starting point. Do this every day, especially if "too tired" is the complaint. The extra movement and enforced deeper breathing will change everything for you. Defaulting to lazy ensures nothing works well. (Get a pedometer and see just how little you do, even when you think you had a busy day)

In addition to the steps, work at least five days per week with weights or do something to stretch muscular comfort. For men, it is imperative to do something that allows muscular mass to develop. This will increase natural testosterone production and have a positive effect on all hormones.

Turn off the TV and other screens by 8pm at the latest. Walk at least after every evening meal, and devote yourself to an outdoor pursuit. This is a good start to becoming a vastly healthier person.

Walking up hills, anything to produce extra load on the heart, is a great way to improve overall fitness - especially if you can find your own space in a forest or nature reserve where you can immerse yourself. If this sounds too idyllic, ask: why not? Why wait until retirement to live as you would wish? Change your life if it does not fit.

POSSIBLE 'LIFE' ANSWERS

Meditation is a great way to move outside the shell you have constructed to protect yourself. We are more than our beliefs, memories and experiences, just as we are more than our physical bodies. Visit the meditation section on www.heatherbruce.com.au and look to 'Beings of Light' pictorials.

Join a meditation group lead by someone who is sincere and wanting to assist you. Here are many different kinds - awe are all different and at different times of our lives we need different things.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

There are many people who could really do with your input - willing hands, warm heart - if nothing else; you may feel vastly more grateful for what is yours.

START SHOWING UP IN YOUR OWN LIFE

Living now is the only option we have - please consider it the privilege it is.

KEY POINTS -

Simple self-help may allow you to feel better than you have done for years.

Stress as Major 'Cause' of Disease

Chinese medicine states that external climates like draughts or excess of anything that challenges the state of homeostasis (inner balance) and emotions are the major causes of disease. Not germs, epidemics, parasites, accidents etc - but stuff that 'old wives tales' abounded with. This means that if your ability to adapt to change is weakened, you will be susceptible.

You get/stay upset - you get sick.

In Tibetan medicine, suffering is the root of all illness, and the state of suffering is due to attachment - to the judgement that we/our beliefs are right, to our state of being, to our body and even to its precious life.

To be breathing under this framework IS to be born to suffer.

To shut down feelings because it hurts too much is a sure way of making it hurt more, and in different ways! Thus you could see 'stress' as not in your head, but as a result of your not flowing and responding appropriately. It is definitely self-generated, something you create through your early life teachings that arises from the beliefs about what you should and should not do.

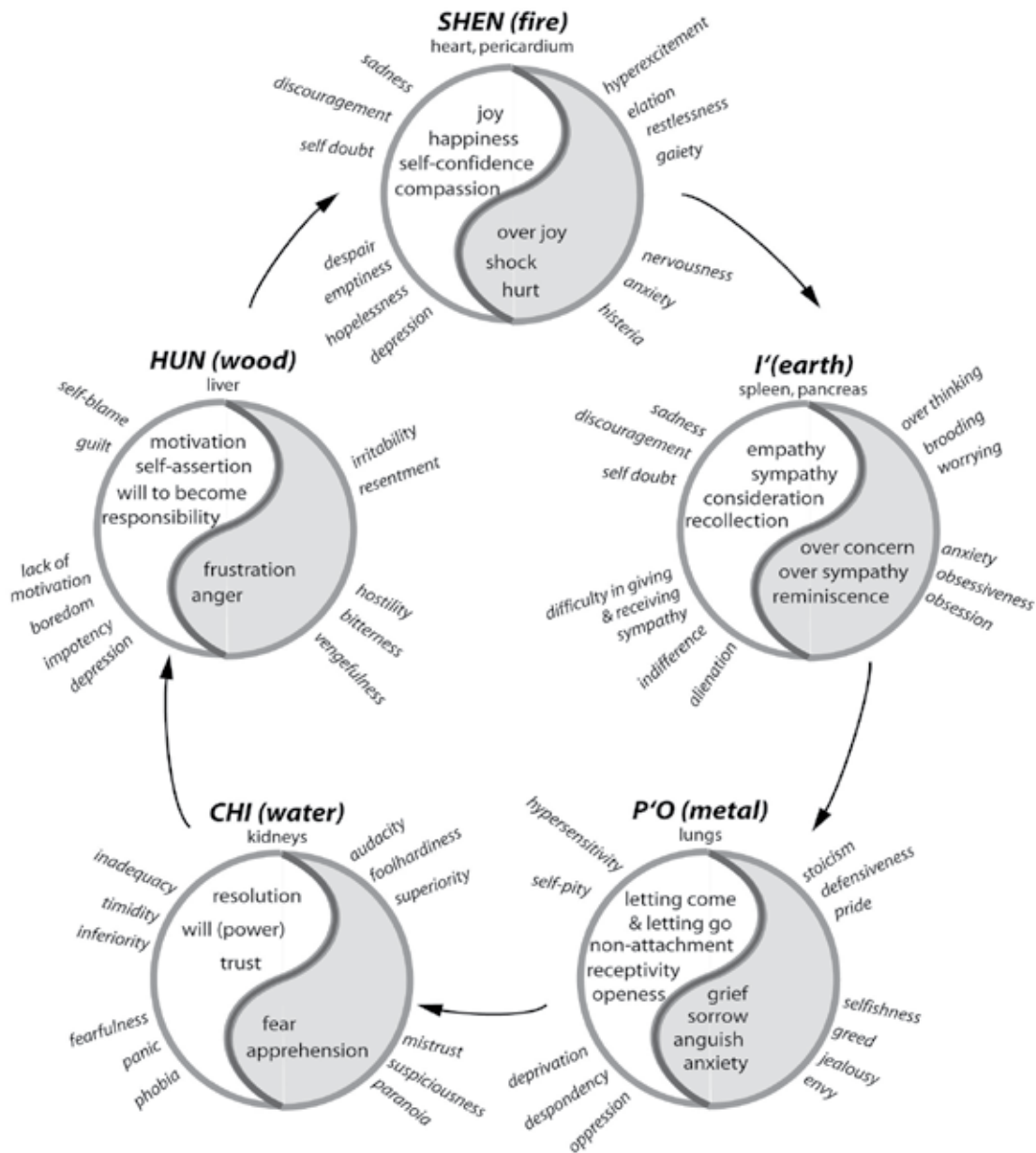
How to Get Out from Under?

Stop seeing yourself as the sum of the life experiences you have had, but as the spark of pure consciousness that you were prior to entry into that physical vehicle, your body, and the one you will still be after that physical body dwindles and dies.

This begs the question - 'Who am I?'

I suggest you start working this out for yourself – undoing what has lead you to being where and who you are.

Below I have used a far more inclusive/practical and complete model than the usual acupuncture one. It was assembled by Iona Marsha Teegarden - taken from her book *The Joy of Feeling*.



You can see that the 'emotions' as usually presented and taught in acupuncture courses, and what comes from modern China, is just a fraction of what we actually are and what we feel as people. This is especially so when we hold on to, or hold back. The powerful energy flares and pockets discharged have to go somewhere, and the do - throughout our OWN bodies.

So whilst we are not upsetting the ones who may have caused our distress by their actions or behaviours - we are actively having our resultant war within - and it hurts US to be externally nice and boiling within. This eventually emerges as 'irritable bowel syndrome' or IBS, or reflux, some inflammatory/auto immune problem etc.

So how do we get so stuck?

What can I do about freeing myself up?

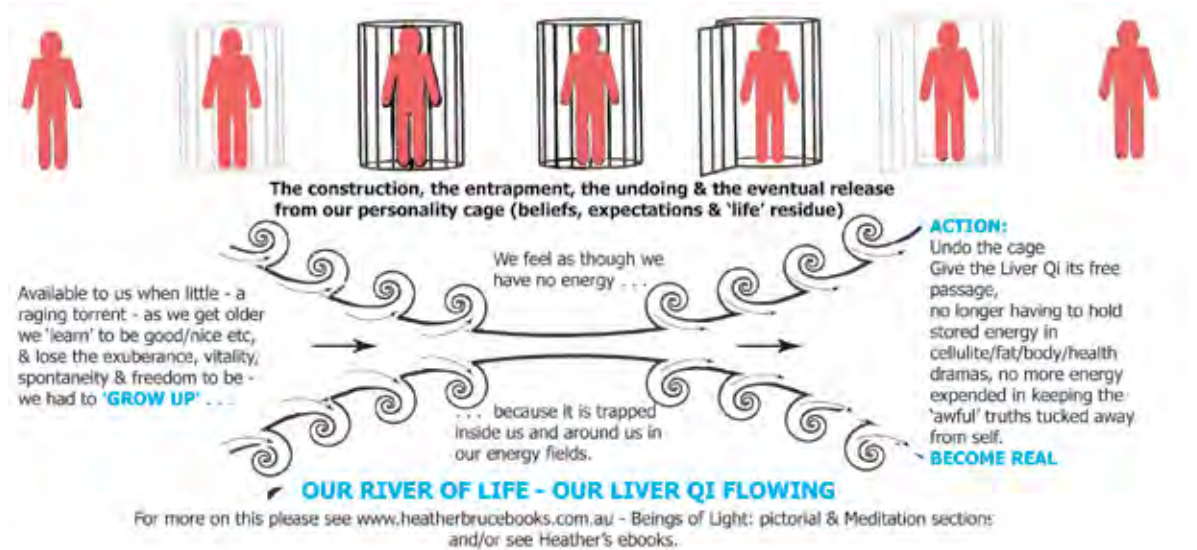
Would counselling help?

What about just going on an anti-depressant tablet?

It can seem all too hard for you to deal with. And when you want an associated **Stuck Liver Qi** problem 'fixed', how can you lose the symptoms and warning signs, and still be the one that needs healing, the one who won't choose change and peace because it SEEMS too difficult. Isn't being stuck (DEPRESSED LIFE FORCE) also uncomfortable?

DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF OUR SHUTTING DOWN ALL THAT WE ARE WHEN YOUNG – OTHERWISE KNOWN AS BECOMING SOCIALISED/ GROWING UP/BECOMING 'TAMED'.

We start off as little babies in awe of our world. We may see auras and other manifestations of life that, as adults, we have been trained out of seeing/doing. What the majority sees as 'real' is explained. We quickly learn how to please and do whatever it takes to get attention and earn praise.



In the process, we shut down and learn to hide our real feelings and who we are, as this can cause unpleasantness. We shut off spontaneity and adventure and become 'depressed'. Our life-force isn't flowing. As a consequence it dams up, creating festering pools of stagnancy within.

These further disrupt normal flow and we find ourselves with health challenges that Western medicine may medicate for. But all the while, the dammed up river is still pooling and stagnating, creating heat as it does to further age us and waste our yin/Jing.

The blocked flow goes under all other sorts of -labels, including depression, but all can stem from what stress is now said to cover in the medical model. This means anything for which you are given an antidepressant. It could be better described as being angry, helpless, hopeless and unable to see your way out - 'life impotence' disease. **Isn't this a little harsh?**

Sitting in on thousands of life stories as part of history-recording over the past thirty years, I have found that behind every person is (whether perceived by others or not) a tragedy that has not been let go of. It is still driving the inner person; the state of resentment and other emotions is in constant battle for expression - yet is always covered up. This it creates the **Stuck Liver Qi**.

So What is this Depression (of)?

Given how MANY people visiting a clinic use anti-depressants - to help them feel better, sleep, cope, get over this patch, etc, it may be helpful to DEFINE what is actually depressed and what it represents.



HOW TO LIBERATE STUCK LIVER QI

BE YOUR SELF

SAY IT

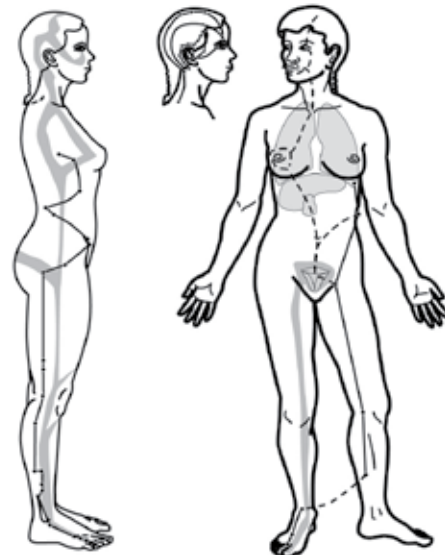
Hiding yourself is not 'nice', but dishonest, and whilst 'not hurting anyone, may be a programme our parents were given, this is a different century and what is being less than who you are costing you?

FEEL IT

Allow yourself to enter the areas you have previously had out of bounds and explore all of who you are. (If not now, when?)

MOVE IT

(general exercise - group sports, running, anything except sitting about feeling as though it is all too hard).
Sexuality - liberate it.
It is your Stuck Liver Qi creating your Stuck Blood/period problems/unhappiness - why wait for Mr/Ms Right? - pleasure yourself)



GALL BLADDER AND LIVER
Liver Muscle and Main Meridians run on both sides equally

(Please notice all the 'stress'/tension and the female disease disaster areas)

The Gall Bladder and Liver meridians of energy flow show you how diverse and complete the disruptions of flow can be for all aspects of 'health'.

The gall bladder and liver meridians and spheres of influence on the emotional plane carry all the feelings that you do not want to deal with, which our society deems as being 'bad'. So where do we store everything we cannot express? In those areas serviced by the gall bladder and liver energy and lines of influence.

If we identify if LIFEFORCE is actually flowing as intended we may get a clue.

Who is doing what they absolutely love in their life?

Who is feeling a bounty of joy and purpose on awakening?

Who is brimming over with good humour, feels part of a bigger picture and is an essential piece of many people's lives - all with common goals?

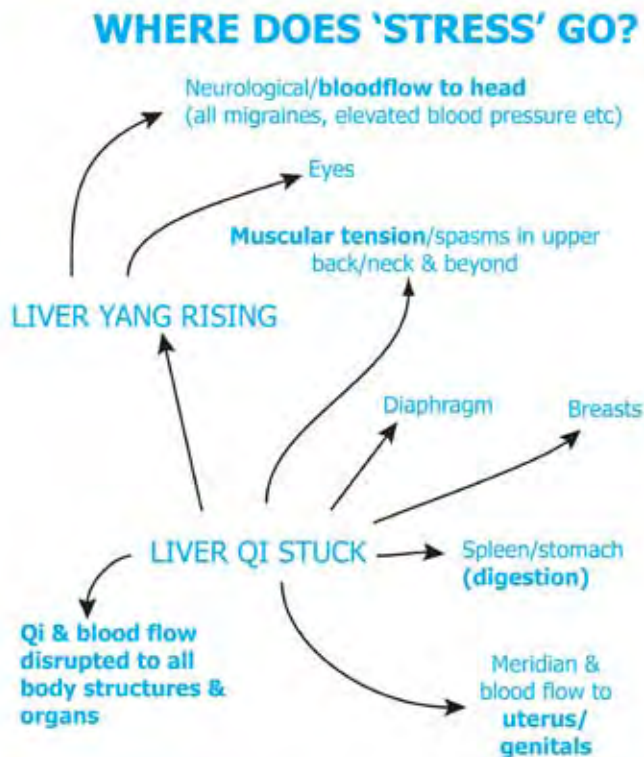
Who is grateful for all that has happened, knowing that it has led them to who they now are, and who actually love and respect themselves for this?

Here are all the issues for which you seek help. The solution is to stop trying to be who you think you should be and start being who you are beneath the false displays of smiling and grinning and bearing it.

Where does all this angst come from? After all, people might think, you seem to have the perfect life. But you know that it wasn't. The inner closet can't contain it and keep it in a perfect state forever. It needs airing, releasing and reframing into a non-judgement.

Stress Again

When we are not able to freely express who we are, what we want and when we want it, we also start to clog up. The fight or flight mechanism may try to kick in. We may attempt mentally to calm ourselves down, saying 'He really didn't mean that' or 'they really wouldn't. . . .'



Recognize yourself within?

The various medical specialities could do well to explore a more inclusive framework - most of the body-breaking-down specialities are represented here in this flow chart.

Chances are that fixing your own Stuck Liver Qi will heal what ails you.

What if You Don't?

All the while, the constriction/stress of lack of honest self-expression builds up.

After a few experiences where we have overridden our body/mammalian / primal wisdom - and having been taught to essentially lie, to be pleasant, civil and understanding when we really wanted to hit the person - automatic body responses seep into the communication without our permission.

Eventually, it is just too hard to stop what comes naturally.

This division between the conscious and unconscious parts of us causes vast inner disarray.

The body system cannot work as it must, and the seeds of ill health are sown.

- **We become tense as battle-readiness rises in our structure.**
- **We consciously keep overriding the need to run or fight.**
- **The gut stops working properly. Over time this creates a state of relative malnutrition. (THINK IBS/Leaky Gut Syndrome/ reflux/ ulcers and heartburn PLUS any other 'stress' related gut issue)**
- **The back and larger muscles become pumped up and are now in constant readiness for running or fighting – hence knotted up and in spasm.**

The digestive system still tries to keep us going, but, with less blood supply (we are in a battle ready position - so it is in the external structure for action) we cannot process food so well. Over time this results in reduced quality of nourishment throughout the body, accelerated aging and breaking down.

Despite this gradual loss of normality, we are inclined to think we are used to stress, and we tend to believe what we say to others - that 'we are over it'. But usually we just store the stuff away inside. Where do we think we get the degenerative and inflammatory 'health' conditions from? They are not random unlucky events. We make them over time by having learnt to fester.

Over Time

Eventually there is little room left to operate well. Our system keeps trying to carry on as normal, although finally ill health begins to seep through. There can be warning signals - a slow tic in the eye, an echo of a past headache, a tensing of the cheek muscles, tooth grinding during sleep, gut distress, raised blood pressure. All these usually get ignored or medicated as the tension builds.

As the body is not designed to deal with this indefinitely, we start to get used to the changed conditions, and start self-medicating. Many of us take on more sugar and chocolate as a reward for not eating properly (no time to prepare good food!) and more caffeine and alcohol to move the stagnant **Liver energy (Stuck Liver Qi)**. We have the odd cigarette in the belief that this affords a break from the tedium, stops us feeling hungry, empty and upset.

Looking at what the **Liver energy** does within the energy model, we can easily see all the states of angst and named diseases that we then tie ourselves up with.

We need our **Qi** and **Blood** to circulate well and the Liver to flow freely for the entire food factory and everything it supports (us) to function easily.



Sitting about

Most of us work these days sitting on our bottoms. We also sit when travelling and then we sit around watching monitors both at work and when we get home. Of course the body is unhappy.

Humans were designed for movement and constant stimulation. We may pretend that it is interesting to be watching a TV show or by trawling the Internet, yet this is not what the human frame was built to do.

Add a diet of too much highly processed or concentrated food sources too often to this inactivity and over-thinking, and, of course, things eventually slide into disorder.

We cannot 'fix' this with a pill from the health food shop, or a few sessions with a healer. We need to go back to how the body was intended to be used. Why do we spend so little time with ourselves, undoing what we know is cluttering up our heads/hearts and bodies?

When is it our turn?

Solutions



Unless we treat the cause, we return to the very conditions that led to the problem. Look at the physical placement of the organs.



They sit neatly on top of each other. When we scrunch over a desk, or lounge in the car seat or easy chair, we provide little room for their expansion and proper functioning in breathing and digestion.



The diaphragm is like a very large muscular wall that separates the digestive from the breathing and circulation organs (from a structural perspective).

Anything that constricts movement in the diaphragm actually lessens the amount of room we have to breathe. This has a knock-on effect.

We start taking smaller, shallower breaths, and then wonder why we feel tired, slow in thinking and slightly headachy.

So, how do keep awake? Reaching for a caffeine/sugar hit is one solution.

Having a skipping rope on hand and going outside for your version of a 'smoke' is a better one.

1 - Think about it! If the smokers can leave the building to get a hit, surely you can too - with equal validity. Have a 'fresh air to help thinking' break. Away from the dead inner re-circulated air, a brisk five minutes of skipping or walking will increase your heart rate and get you deep breathing. Coming back inside, you will be far more invigorated and creative because the oxygen hit wakes you up.

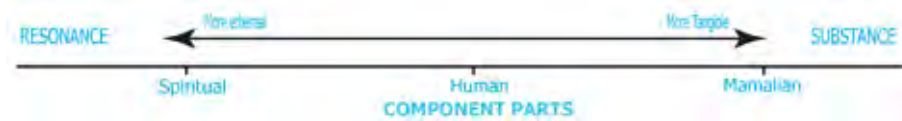
2 - If, every time you went to the loo, you also skip or run up and down the stairs, you may get strange looks but you also may find everyone seeing the point as you look and feel better.

3 - Another option is to start Tai Qi or some other form of martial arts and on the way to the rest room, take some time to actually enhance your breathing and circulation, doing some warm up exercises. Always give yourself a physical break every hour or so, so your body can support the enforced foolishness of sitting and thinking all day, every day.

4 - Walk to work, get off the bus or train before your stop, walk around in breaks, up and down the stairs - MOVE IT!!!

Why We Need Free Movement of Everything

The physical energy and the sphere of influence I call the Liver all need to be circulated with abundant and good quality nutrients - on every level. We could look again at what we are made of within a more inclusive model . .



If we wish to operate automatically as a well person, so that all bodily functions work without conscious involvement, we have to give the system room and conditions to move. When 'we' (the ego driven personality that thinks it is in charge) get out of the way, the physical body can then support us. It works as well as it has been built to do and can even self-correct.

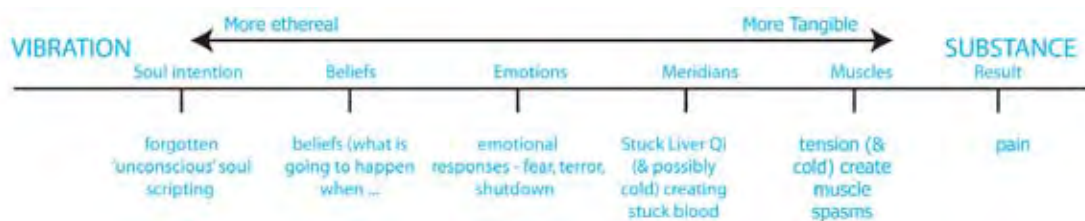
However, this can only happen if we live within the boundaries of what our body has been programmed to accept. Part of this of course, is survival of the fittest - and most of us wouldn't.

When we consistently default to whatever 'silly mode' we have gotten used to - eating twelve hours out of synch, staying up late even though we're tired; saying 'yes' when we really want to say 'no', and walking away rather than confronting what needs addressing - we are working against our own best interests. We stop our own free flowing, but we have the power and the keys to change.

If We Don't

Things become uncomfortable as more and more automatic processes are interrupted by the inner clutter we have not bothered to clear - a little like a cupboard where we hide the mess from the room, so it all LOOKS neat and tidy when visitors come. Eventually there is an overflow - and there needs to be a defragmentation.

What might be messing up the pure workings of our blueprint/inner default setting?



How to Enhance Free Flowing Life

Be real.

Blocking feelings is a habit we all acquire. Being 'civilised' and 'growing up' trains us to be as others would like us (supposedly) to be. This is all according to our major socialising (training) grounds — our family of origin.

The resulting inner undercurrents which are always felt by our more real body responses - we are all operating within a mammalian body - is not factored in here. Watching primates in a zoo gives an indication of what we have beneath our human veneer.

The feelings and intuitions we experience are real. We just try to block them because they don't fit into the reality that has been constructed for us and in which we try to live. The inner war between survival, personal wants and how we think we should present ourselves, gives real hassles. Over time, it causes these blockages to flow that create our own dis-eases.

When you feel something, stop and investigate.
Ask within.
Don't pretend all is well.
It is unlikely these feelings you have are 'nothing'.

It may not be relevant to the current time and incident or the people around you, however.

Most of us carry around old wounds, old sites of past unresolved trauma - and these are easily triggered (especially if we are already stressed or not fully functioning because of something else).

What is being set off may be an old response to a similar condition.

You may want to negatively blame whoever set this off. But they may be just catalysing an inner instance of when you chose to walk away sometime in the past.

It is more likely we are revisiting the old patterns and unresolved stuff we carry around. I'm not suggesting that you express all your anger or fear at that moment. You need to be in a 'safe' spot, listening to your inner voice.

Become more active.

Regular exercise, the solitude of a brisk walk, doing laps in the pool, or a yoga session allows some of tension build-up to discharge. Build in down-time to declutter EVERY day.

Through vigorous exercise, the increased slapping of the diaphragm (with the increased and heavier breathing) massages the liver and other internal organs, allowing the discharge of residual tensions and toxins.

Provide unstructured time off daily.

Inner processing of stored situations, memories and feelings can occur during down-time from external stimulation. This internal 'defragmentation' used to be part of everyone's' lives. Travelling, the horse only went at a modest speed, walking was slower still. This provided time for reflection and pondering. Gardening, doing mindless tasks (without the distractions of radio/sound systems), needlework - anything when the brain is in neutral - will allow this switching into a different mode.

Meditation is often cited as the perfect way to begin a conscious day. Most people protest that they do not have enough time. Having no time for yourself, in your life, is the sure way to create body-unfriendly conditions. Without cleansing our outer energy fields, we end up aurically grubby. We pass through a lot of stored and repressed stuff out in the world among others. Some form of cleansing - not just of our clothes and our skin - allows this to be shed. Consciously, and with intention.

Get rid of the extraneous time gobblers - TV and other 'entertainment' devices - allows the time, resources and self-caring to flow to you.

LET GO

IS IT WORTH IT TO BE SO 'NICE?'

Letting go of the past will ensure that life is lived more fully being present.

Letting go of being right.

The need to be right.

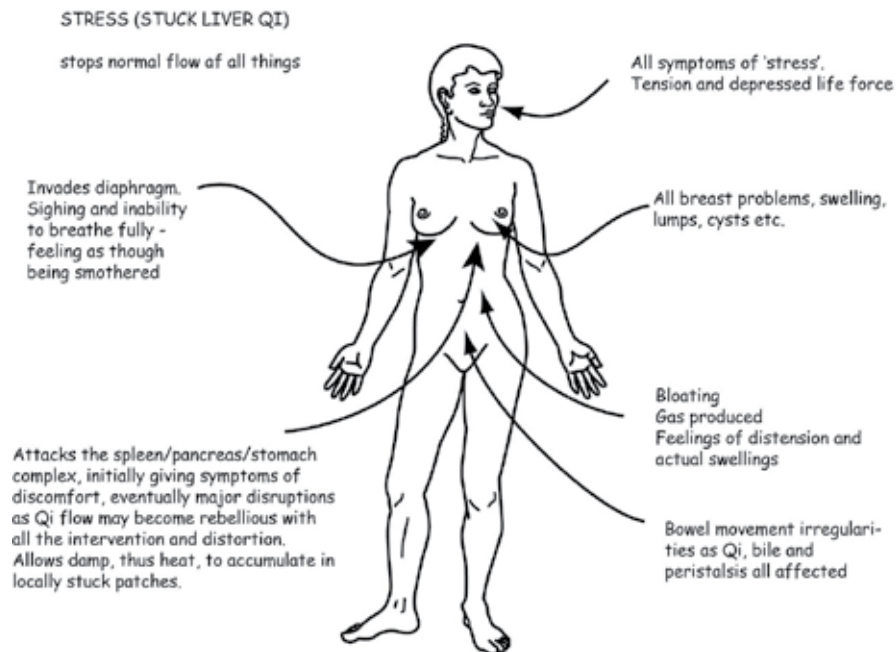
The need to be seen to be perfect - who really cares?

Help yourself by eating well -lessening likelihood of moodiness

Eating well means having the necessary ingredients to hand when the need arises - be thoughtfully aware of your body. Every three hours, you must be conscious of your own needs.

At least be drinking enough clean water. This means being prepared and treating yourself as a toddler - leaving the house with the required nourishment (a packed lunch, a snack??) to see you through till you return home.

WHAT IF I DON'T CHOOSE TO CHANGE OUT OF STRESS?



PLUS.... ALL women's issues: PMT, menstrual irregularities/period pains up to and including endometriosis, PCOS and fibroids/blocked tubes etc. Anti-depressant usage, reflux and antacid medication, all gut and digestive issues not already mentioned and migraines/tension headaches /high blood pressure and all sleeping issues result from the too-hard-to-deal-with hiding from what is really bugging us.

WHAT GUARANTEES THAT THIS WILL?

Nothing.

However doing more of the same that you have so far is not likely to give you what you wish for either.

WHAT IF THIS IS ALL JUST TOO MUCH LIKE HARD WORK?

You get to stay stuck, and try to alleviate what is distressing you with more and more medications or visits to therapist. And you get more and more discouraged as you seem to not be on top of things or in control.

KEY POINTS

Identifying and unlocking what you are buried under will allow everything to find a new balance.

In the meantime, self-medicating, eating inappropriately, choosing behaviours to stifle feelings, may not feel as good as becoming active and being all of who you REALLY are.

Toxicity

Most chronic health problems are due to toxicity - there is residue where it was not designed to be. On many levels we chose to ignore messages - inconvenience, apparent other priorities - all leading to a less than perfect vehicle for living in.

Looking to the most obvious - do we get enough restful SLEEP?

Not just hours in bed shut eye - but hours before midnight when it will do the most good?

Restful where we are not clogged with a large meal that the physical body needs to process, rather than restore and revitalise us as we are quiet?

Restful as we are feeling safe in our beds, our lives and are happy in all that we do?

Do we have a reason to fill the day productively so that we feel as though we are making a contribution, and that the world is a better/richer place for our being in it?

Does our heart overflow with joy and merriment from the relationships we have in our sphere? Do we feel included, validated and enriched through being in the lives of those around us?

Do we thus have a sense of purpose and of preciousness, where we are special being here?

Are we getting sufficient touching? Do we get eight hugs a day at least? Are we remembering that we are mammals and as primal beings, grooming and sensuality are needed to make us feel whole?

Whilst these may seem odd to include in a book on detoxing, what your body is doing is determined by how you feel. Your bits do not make up the whole - your being directs the bits. If your state of being is depressed, distressed and/or disconnected, it is unreasonable to expect that your body bits can do the best they are designed to - as the central computer (your spirit) is not in peak condition.

We all know this - we can all see the difference in others and ourselves when we are happy/at peace with the world and our lives/in 'love'/in acceptance and living in a state of grace.

Research is always going to lag behind what we all just know. Someone has to think of the research topic and someone else has to have a vested interest sufficiently to fund it - hence a lot of obvious research will never happen as

there is either no apparent connection in the eyes of those who are trained to see the being as a mechanical object, or from those whose product may be seen to be of assistance.

It is often through the oral wisdom and traditions that we have been parented hence have our living tapes. It may be that listening more to the knowings of the elderly, and possibly even following what they do will enhance your state of being more than following the latest research findings - as the latest fashions in thinking have rarely stood up to real scrutiny.

Life Residue

The build up of rubbish within us on many levels. Naturopathically and even mechanically, this is evident in refuse sitting in the organs and overspilling into the tissues. It may be obvious through body odour. It may be visible through skin eruptions and rashes. It may clog up the organs and appear as 'bad' smelling discharges. It may even sit around in the organs slowing their important work, meaning that all function is gradually impaired. Arthritis/auto immune diseases of all kinds - regardless of their medical labels - and cancers all await - all just the end result of a body not able to do its own house cleaning.

So the lack of good living, stunning nutrition and happiness shows up eventually as 'health' problems.

'The left-overs from eating were never expected to be stored within. When a person is not having at least a daily bowel movement, there can expect to be problems. What is stored and needs to be evacuated, interacts with the clear flowing of every other aspect and this can overspill into what should be a perfectly clean system.

How to change?

Eating

One obvious issue is to choose clean and fresh and appropriate intake. On every level - not just food. This is problematic as within a few generations, we are no longer in charge of what we are eating as we no longer grow it ourselves.

What looks fine in the shop may be a very poor relation to what we would have eaten even decades ago. Agriculture has become agribusiness. Taste and nutrient load is not the driver - profit and quantity is. This is obvious to any who either grow their own or frequent organic growers markets.

What do you do?

1 - At least try to only eat from 'scratch' - that is start with the ingredients rather than have someone else construct the meal and buy it 'readymade' - this way the flavour enhancers, and other chemicals to attract it you and to ensure you buy theirs again are not present.

2 - Another way is to start thinking of how you can prepare more and save it for later so you are not spending so much time in the kitchen - as most seem you be too busy for self care. The freezer, the fridge and the use of cooking facilities at your place of work are all possible outlets for you to reduce the amount you spend and the quantity of extras that make it into your mouth through 'convenience', rather than forwards planning.

3 - Start the day with a good cooked breakfast. This is the way to ensure you last at least till morning tea break -when hopefully you have packed something portable and fresh and nutritious from home. Reducing the impulse food buying by shopping to a list and after eating is always a great move.

4 - Being relaxed and not pushed for time is the best way to have a smooth transition between great food choices and the best use made of what you eat. This 'stress' test is missed often when thinking of eating - are you eating with others who you are at peace with and happy to be sharing your life? If not, the digestive processes are muddled by alarm and by tension - and we do not process anything well when in a moderated panic.

TENSION AND 'STRESS'

A lot of what/how we feel is due to nutritional deficiencies. Most of ill health is directly related to what we have done to the once perfect blueprint and beginnings we started from. We as teenagers especially have bright ideas - and they are always more exciting than what mum and dad or anyone wrinkly would suggest - we forget when we are young that all those before us lived through this stage as well.

If we have been exposed to discord and even violence when little we may feel 'at home' on some level with this, even though it distresses us - it may feel 'normal' to be there and we may unconsciously choose partners and associates who also have flare-ups. This makes for very volatile living. Our bodies are always trying to help us - and often the warnings we get we ignore as they are inconvenient.

'STRESS' - lack of essential nutrients

The 'stress' responses you maybe medicating against may well be the red lights on the car's dashboard. By popping pills/taking substances/suffocating feelings in alcohol/cigarettes /food to turn them off, you really may be setting in motion other larger disasters.

The inability of the body to process well due to lack of essential nutrients may start with irritability, tension in muscles and possibly headaches and more crankiness. Muscle twitches, jerkiness, spasms, cramps, jumpy legs and mood changes and sleeping disturbances. The Magnesium deficiency is medicated through antidepressants, muscle relaxants and sleeping medications - without a thought to all the crucial biochemical processes that are also deficient and hence stressing the body. Less magnesium is then available as all the self medicating and the prescription drugs fail to address the central issue- less nutrients mean a body in crisis.

Taking chemicals in rather than super nutrition starts other pathways of bodily distress as the liver organ and others have to attempt to remove what should not be there away. This can get to ridiculous levels as more drugs are prescribed to help counteract the side effects of the drugs that were prescribed to assist what was actually a life and nutritional mismatch.

What to do? Start getting aware - read more. There are doctors and researchers who are not allied to big business who are producing very useful information - Dr Igor Tabrizian has many easily read books, CDs and other media products, Mark Sircus (www.imva.info) has a great site and often sends out very important health information and www.mercola.com is always there. This are just a touch of what you may tap into and with the internet being as it is, there are many blogs and naysayers - so beware and look after what is apparent- there seems to be a lot invested in you saying ill. Usually the low tech, low cost items are rubbished in favour of a new drug or way of thinking. The body operates perfectly in third world surroundings MINUS contaminants.

The trick is getting yourself and your life back to basics.

Emotional Residue

Often we just keep going even though something may have really upset us or that we are just so exhausted and for whatever reason we do not stop and look after what we really need to do. Now the lessened state the body still attempts to keep it together and possibly your MAKING it means that it is now running compromised.

A time out is what weekends and holidays could be - but they usually are filled you now with what didn't fit into the week.

Where is time for you?

This is crucial as the deficiency of good food, rest and relating and touching, leave you vulnerable and still we keep going

Below are some physical pointers to assist you in undoing some of what you are carrying as baggage - lightening your load can only make life easier.

Detoxing is not just about the physical - what people and self beliefs running you may also need addressing. This is covered more in my next eBook "Getting Out of Your Own Way". Please see www.heatherbruce.com.au or www.getting-out-of-your-own-way.com for details.

Detoxing

A lot has been said recently about this - with many different products that supposedly shortcut this process for you. Some of the older methods - especially going to bed before 9pm and sleeping well, following the morning routine are well worth the effort.

QUESTIONS FOR YOURSELF

To really help yourself, especially when multiple states of toxicity seem to co-exist - please consider the following:

When you read my words - you may feel a sense of panic, asking 'Am I expert enough to take charge of myself?' and 'Do I trust myself with my health?' The answer is: You are. You do this all the time. Who made the eating and other personal choices for you? You did.

You may ask yourself – “Is it safe?” “Would my doctor recommend this?”

You have to work out what you want for yourself.

There will always be naysayers. Go to a qualified naturopath and ask their advice. Your local orthodox health care professional is less likely to even know about the more natural and effective ways to assist the body to heal itself.

You can always ask yourself: Is anyone making money out of this? If not, could this be why it is not sold as an option these days?

Doctors and medical specialists have been trained out of common sense and the natural ways into a pharmacological and controlling system that is not life-affirming.

All natural methods appear slower. They are less 'sexy'/marketable and sometimes even messy and painful. But they also allow the body to use its own wisdom.

Naturopaths are less likely these days to suggest enemas - yet they remain a great way to move through what is stuck. Sitz baths - sitting in a half filled tub - seem to have disappeared.

So too does the Epsom salts bath - a great way to relieve all manner of spasms/tension on all levels, as Magnesium deficiency can lead to depression, spasms, pain and general tension.

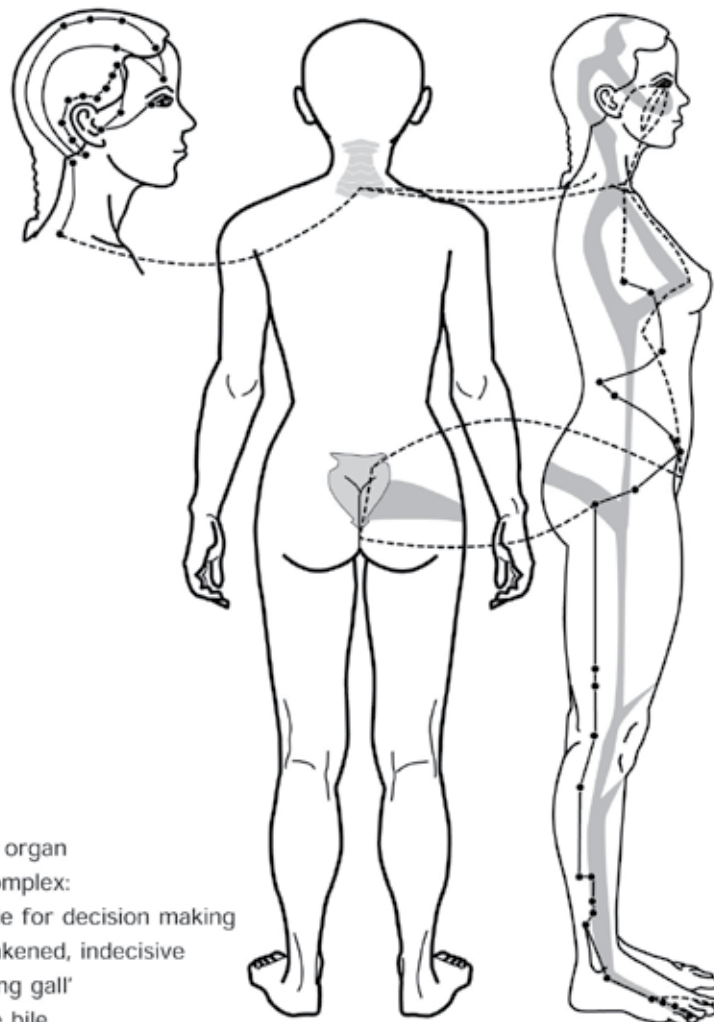
Castor oil packs were another mainstay of older naturopathic practice, and the method prior to IVF technology that I used successfully to unblock many women's Fallopian tubes - allowing easy conception and maternity to follow.

THE GALL BLADDER CLEANSE

Ridding yourself of a life's worth in accumulated toxins, stored in the liver and gall bladder, will allow these organs to work as designed. A gall bladder cleanse is a major adjunct to any weight loss programme. Having a well functioning liver and bowel enables you to feel more alive.

GALL BLADDER

Gall Bladder Muscle and Main Meridians run on both sides equally



Gall bladder organ
& energy complex:

- Responsible for decision making
- When weakened, indecisive and 'lacking gall'
- Stores the bile

Look where the meridian (line of energy) travels - all types of structural problems in addition to digestive issues are there for you to straighten out. A lot of the personal rigidity and lack of grace that you may feel physically may just be a matter of removing much of the emotionally charged residue that you have stored within.

DOING THE GALL BLADDER CLEANSE

What you will need on hand:

Apple juice	6 - 12 litres
Epsom salts	4 tablespoons
Olive oil (cold pressed and pure)	1/2 cup
Fresh grapefruit (pink is best)	2 small (enough to squeeze 3/4 cup)
Black walnut tincture	10 drops

(to help inactivate any bacteria that comes out with the stones)

Preparation

Drink 1 to 2 litres of packaged, preferably organic, apple juice a day for 6 days. This softens the stones, making their passage easier through the bile duct. It may cause some bloating and discomfort in the first few days. Do not drink it cold out of the refrigerator, or at all if your system objects. Also, continue with your normal water intake.

An alternative here it is to take Chinese herbs that have been dispensed for the process – visit a real herbalist/Chinese medicine practitioner, not a health food shop. However, I also advise people to go to a health food shop for a product designed to cleanse the colon, and use it at least a week before and after the gall bladder cleanse, as the colon is key to expelling what has been liberated.

The main part of the cleanse can be done over a weekend, or when you can rest. Do this preferably when the moon phase is either waning or full, as this would be working WITH rather than against normal body flows. Similarly, do not attempt this just before, after or during a period and not at all during pregnancy or breast-feeding.

On the sixth day of drinking apple juice, either fast all morning, or eat extremely lightly, with plain steamed vegetables and rice. You will not actually feel like eating, as you have given your body an opportunity to clean itself out, and eating seems too much trouble. After 2 pm, do not eat or drink anything except warmed water.

It may also be helpful to use castor oil packs the day of the cleanse. This is not to be taken internally. We use this as naturopaths did of old, as a drawing agent.

CASTOR OIL PACK

For this, you need to buy about a litre of castor oil from the chemist. Heat some of the castor oil indirectly - in a bowl, inside a pot of heating water on the stove works well - to just a bit hotter than warm. Have a small towel or absorbent cloth, ready - of a size that fits the whole of the belly, from the diaphragm, covering the whole of the abdominal area, down to the pubic bone. This is also extremely helpful in clearing blocked Fallopian tubes.

Doing the Cleanse

Evening 6 pm:

Mix the 4 tbsps of Epsom salts in 3 cups of warm water and keep in a jar. This makes 4 servings of 3/4 cup each (185 ml). Drink the first portion now. You may take a few sips of water to get rid of the taste, or perhaps drink it through a straw, to bypass the taste buds. You can also mix a little Vitamin C powder in water to drink afterwards (2 mouthfuls) to get rid of the taste. It tastes awful but keep going - the results are well worth it !!!

8.00 pm:

Drink the second serving. You will not feel hungry. Get ready for bed. Timing is crucial. After the next mixture, you have to go immediately to bed.

9.30 pm:

If you have not had a bowel movement, you may take a water enema if very keen.

9.45 pm:

Squeeze the grapefruit. You will need 3/4 cup of juice. Remove the pulp. Pour the juice and 1/2 cup of olive oil into a jar. Add the black walnut tincture, if available -it is not imperative.

Close the jar tightly, and shake hard about 20 times until watery.

10.00 pm:

The drinking of this can be delayed for 10 minutes, if bowel movements are still happening. Stand next to your bed (do not sit). Drink the concoction in one go, or sip through a straw. You may use brown sugar to chase it down between sips. Do not take more than 5 minutes.

LIE DOWN IMMEDIATELY

If you do not, you may not be able to release the stones. The sooner you lie down, the more stones will exit. Turn the lights off and lie flat on your back, with your head propped up on 2 pillows.

Focus your attention on your liver, visualising the mixture moving the stones out of the numerous bile ducts in your liver. You may feel the stones releasing. There will be no pain, as the Epsom salts have opened the bile ducts.

Keep perfectly still.

If at any time during the night you feel the need to go to the toilet, do so. Use a flashlight to see if you have passed any stones. They will be either green or tan coloured, and floating in the water.

You may feel nauseous during the night, but this will pass.

The Following Morning

6.00/6.30

Drink the third cup of Epsom salts mix. If nauseous, wait till this passes.

8.00 am

Drink your 4th cup of Epsom salts. Rest. (Many bowel movements may still be happening).

10.00 am

You may drink a glass of freshly squeezed fruit juice (not orange).

1/2 HOUR LATER

Eat 1 or 2 pieces of fruit

1 HOUR LATER

You may start very light eating.

ON THE ENERGY/EMOTIONAL LEVEL . . .

. . .the stones represent the deeply held resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness and non-acceptance of any aspect of your life. Ultimately, to rid yourself physically of these toxic vibrations, you need a change of attitude at a heartfelt, soul level. It may be an idea to set aside time to take up journaling or at least take vibrational or homeopathic emotional clearing remedies.

What to PHYSICALLY Expect

You may have passed a number of bowel movements in the form of diarrhoea, consisting of gallstones first mixed with food residue, then with water. Look for gallstones floating in the toilet. You may see mainly green ones of varying shapes and sizes. Some pea shaped, and others as big as 2 or 3 cm across.

There may be hundreds coming out at once. Also watch for tan coloured and white ones. Some of the larger tan ones may sink, as they are calcified, and carry heavy toxic substances, and little cholesterol. All the green ones will be soft as putty, thanks to the apple juice.

You may also find a layer of white or tan coloured scum or foam floating in the toilet. The foam consists of millions of tiny white, sharp edged cholesterol crystals, which can easily rupture small bile ducts.

It is most likely that some of the stones will get caught in the colon. If they remain there, they can cause irritation, headaches and abdominal discomfort. It is vitally important you clear these through colonic irrigation.

To rid yourself of your chronic health problems totally, it may be necessary to repeat this cleanse up to six times, leaving at least two and possibly three weeks between cleanses. You will need to lose an awful lot of stored rubbish before the liver and gall bladder organs are clean enough to rid you of allergies, bursitis, fatigue, upper back pains and headaches permanently.

The cleanse may rid you of toxic wastes for a couple of days but then the stones from behind will move forward and you may see a return of the original symptoms. This signal it is time for a repeat.

Never undergo this process if you are feeling ill, having a period, are pregnant or feel as though a migraine is threatening. If in doubt, please seek the advice of a natural therapeutic practitioner. This information is not given to be in any way a substitute for medical treatment.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A GALL BLADDER anymore?

I often get people to do this cleanse in this situation. All this stuff is simply stored in the liver, and, for the same reasons, you want to move it on and out.

OTHER METHODS OF DETOXING

FOOT PATCHES

Patches seem to be very effective. I suggest using these AS WELL AS the gall bladder cleanse and associated colon cleanses and gut recolonisation.

MORNING ROUTINE

A morning routine is very important as a gentle and gradual clean out, hand in hand with earlier bedtimes, yoga and walking - at least some of which should be done up hills, to really stretch the body to work well.

EATING MORE ETHICALLY

This may be a surprise, but the journey behind 'organic' produce you buy may invalidate the claims. Where was it grown exactly? Where did it stop off before it arrived at my house? The answers may also surprise you. Check out books such as *“Not on the Label”*, *“The Omnivores’ Dilemma”* and *“Pandemonium”*.

If you really want to study what else is going on in the food chain, please start Goggling - hormonal disruption will get you started A book as easy to read as *“Vegetable, Animal, Miracle”* by Barbara Kingsolver, Steven Hopp and Camille Kingsolver will get you hopefully interested enough to start making large changes to your life.

One way you can help yourself and the planet is to follow Sir Paul McCartney's plea and become more vegetarian. Furthermore, being mostly vegan would allow the weight and degenerative diseases no fertile 'soil' within which to germinate.

Check Google to see what type of diet autoimmune and degenerative diseases tend to accumulate around - and commit to change yourself rather than living in fear and spending all your money on expensive and invasive testing. This is very obvious through reading *“Deadly Harvest”* written by Geoff Bond, a nutritional anthropologist.

Just quitting all barbequed and cured meats and their by-products would help you enormously. What has the animal who gave you the substance you are eating been eating itself? Did it even have a life? What contaminants from its life are now amalgamating into you and your life - and possibly the baby you wish to make /feed with your fat cells swimming in chemicals that were used in its manufacture/processing?

No one wants to 'go there' Looking to milk in its raw state . . . - and preferably A2 and biodynamically grown would vastly improve your being - or perhaps no dairy at all.

SUGGESTED MORNING ROUTINE

The Chinese Clock diagram shows the times when the different organ systems experience their energy surges.

By working WITH what is happening in response to the pineal gland and the sun naturally you can massively assist any life process.

This helps explain why shift workers are always struggling and behind in health matters.



Allowing our bodies to awaken naturally, giving all systems a chance to switch on and clear out, will greatly enhance our state of well-living. Being mindful of the rising of Yang Qi with the dawn, the optimal time to awaken and arise is also with the sun.

This, of course, is difficult if we choose to follow a path of wilful disregard for the natural cycle, staying active into the regenerative phase of night. Sleeping by 9pm would make a huge difference to all metabolic problems, and almost guarantee a healthy body, AS LONG AS a very small meal was consumed, not a late, large one.

You can see that morning is both the time of peak Yang/metabolic /digestive vigour, and also when the stomach and spleen/pancreas energy is at its peak. Before this, is the colon time. Getting up and having a good evacuation/clean out is what nature intended.

Eating a small, nutritious and easily digested meal early in the evening allows the sleep cycle to regenerate inner energy, hence **Jing** storage, thus assisting continued good health.

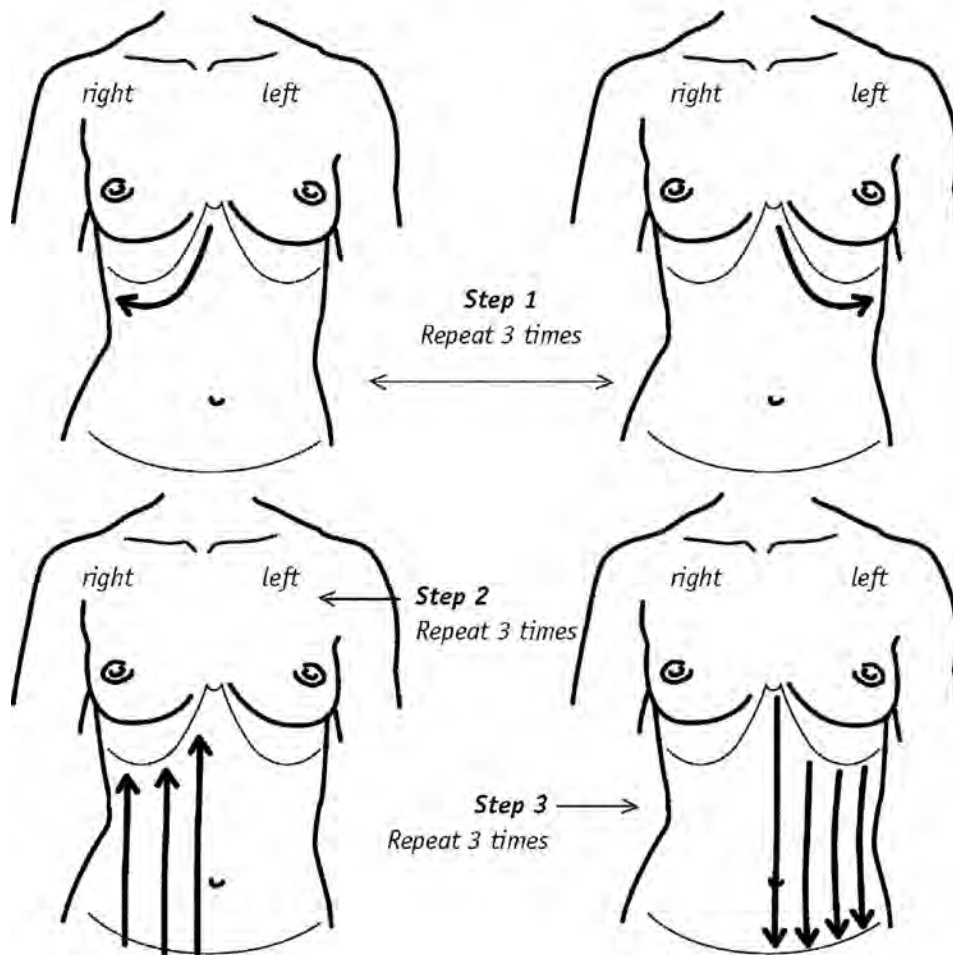
To look the suggested morning routine on the following page over and laugh at the absurdity of it in your life is to exactly point out to you the issues you face in returning your system to optimal functioning.

WHAT YOU MIGHT DO TO ASSIST YOURSELF ON AWAKENING

1 - Stretch luxuriously; allow your consciousness to fully return here.

2 - Whilst lying in bed, perform abdominal self-massage to help heal the inner organs, ensuring they can properly support you. The time invested daily, initially for a month, will create a supple and healthy abdomen that will reward you with regular, easy bowel movements, a healthy appetite and more abundant energy.

ABDOMINAL SELF MASSAGE



ABDOMINAL SELF MASSAGE

Studying the Three Heater model, we can see how vital the health of our abdominal organs can be. Our entire being depends on an abundant supply and subsequent circulation of Qi and blood. To assist this, spend five minutes every morning, whilst still in bed, lovingly massaging your inner factory.

STEP ONE

- Lie on your back, with your knees drawn up. Feet slightly apart, the knees will fall into each other, without effort.
- Press the flats of the fingers of both hands under the bottom of the right ribs.
- Begin pressing as you breathe out. Continue to press, and exhale to the count of six.
- Whilst breathing in, move the fingers down, and over to the sides of the rib cage, breathe out, and press again.
- Do this three times, until you end up pressing under the floating ribs at the sides.
- Return to the body's mid line beneath the ribs, and repeat this process under the ribs on the left side, starting with light pressure, then with each stroke becoming more firm.
- There may be pain, resistance, or tension in this region. Over time, this will ease, as you help your body heal itself.

STEP TWO

- Position your hands on the lower right abdomen, next to the pubic bone. With each out-breath, press down for a count of six. With each in-breath, move up the abdomen until finally under the ribs again.
- Make three passes up the right side, travelling upwards in ever closer lines to the centre, following the course of the ascending colon.

STEP THREE

- Beginning at the solar plexus, press down the mid line, until you reach the pubic bone. As before, make three other lines down the left side of the abdomen, following the course of the descending colon.
- Repeat this process, one wave from right to left, three times in total, each time exerting slightly more pressure.
- Return now to any places where you felt pain or discomfort. As you exhale, exert pressure on the periphery of such spots, gently moving whatever is under your fingers, in a general circular movement, clockwise towards the bottom left abdominal quadrant.

Practising this daily will gradually reduce the intensity and existence of these sore/hardened areas. Typically, it may take four weeks of daily routine to be free of any reactive spots. Moving the physical obstructions will allow the work you are doing on your Stuck Liver Qi to really make changes within.

3 - Drink half a glass of warm water with half a lemon squeezed into it, to help the liver to wake up, and thus activate the colon.

4 - Use a dry skin brush to assist the skin in its elimination of toxins from the inside out, and to awaken the senses.

DRY SKIN BRUSH

Your skin is a living vital organ, with many vital functions. From the acupuncture framework it is seen as an extension of the lung energy. When our Lung Qi is healthy, our skin is soft, supple and lustrous. The Lung Qi is also in charge of our defensive energy (Wei Qi).

This Wei Qi, governed by the Lung Qi, controls the normal opening and closing of skin pores, in response to body and external temperature changes. Ensuring the health of the skin layer thus assists our protective (Wei) Qi.

Approximately one third of all body impurities are excreted through the skin. Daily, almost half a kilo of waste products is discharged this way. Taking a spa, creating sweating and brushing your skin will all assist in ridding yourself of toxins.

An inexpensive, natural plant fibre mitt or skin brush (often found with a long wooden handle) works best. Try to avoid nylon or synthetic bristles, which are too sharp and damage the skin.

This feels utterly amazing - and is very easy to do, especially whilst reading the morning paper or some such first thing.

HOW?

Starting with the soles of your feet, brush vigorously, using circular motions and gradually work up the body, massaging all of it with the bristles. On the more sensitive areas of the face, inner thighs, abdomen and breasts, apply less pressure. Brush until your skin feels warm and glowing, which usually takes five to ten minutes. Finish with a shower to wash away all dead skin particles.

BENEFITS OF REGULAR DRY SKIN BRUSHING

- Removes the dead layers of skin and other impurities, keeping the pores open.
- Stimulates and increases blood circulation and all underlying tissues.
- Revitalises and increases the skin's eliminative capacity.
- Has a powerful rejuvenating influence on the nervous system by stimulating the skin's nerve endings.
- Contributes to healthier muscle tone and better fat distribution (especially good for cellulite).
- Rejuvenates the complexion and strongly enhances the circulation of the Wei Qi to and on the surface of the body.

5 - Do ten 'Salutes to the Sun', (see pages following) remembering to slowly breathe in on the stretching up and expanding movements.

6 - Go for an enjoyable walk or perform another exercise - preferably outside.

7 - Do a guided meditation, lasting twenty to thirty minutes.

STRESS REDUCTION

Unresolved emotional issues are the most common cause of all health problems. We load ourselves up with unsaid, undone and unforgiven energy charges, carrying them about as extra energy appendages, eventually feeling their presence clogging up our life flow. We call it 'stress' and, when it hangs around long enough, eventually label it 'depression.' See chapter later on.

The first thing you could choose to do is let go of all that is weighing you down. Letting go of the balance sheet that keeps meticulous score of all the slights, hurts and broken promises and dreams is a good start. To do this, you may start to live unconditionally. That is, act as you wish others would. Be the first one to smile, hug, back down graciously or drop your mask, and be the real you.

(As a consequence of even reading this, you may observe an aspect of self arguing to stay where you are. It may be useful for you to explore what it means to carry the old belief systems that hold you in this spot where you feel so uncomfortable).

Besides making the necessary changes and adjustments to the way of life that is triggering reactive emotional behaviours as though they were landmines and someone just tripped one off.

These sites/'no go' areas are what often run us whilst we are unconscious of them, in our lives. It is thus important to learn to consciously and deliberately relax. Allowing/giving yourself the first bit of the day might take a bit of practice.

Daily, programmed deep relaxation can be the single most important factor in allowing the body to heal itself at all ages. One of the most likely spin-offs may be your awakened ability to factor yourself/your real needs - not what you HAVE to do in the day. This alone will reduce significantly the amount of Stuck Liver Qi (depression = life impotence, rage and helplessness - all self-targeted).

A daily routine will feel refreshing. There will be a marked, progressive and cumulative benefit, with regular deep relaxation practice.

It needs to be a non-negotiable part of every day - as vitally important as eating and sleeping. It is a gift from you to you.

Each day's deep relaxation should last at least twenty consecutive minutes.

More than thirty minutes may give no further health gains for that session. A morning and an evening spent inner processing may greatly benefit all elements of your life. As with your computer, a defragmentation session will allow a lot less head clutter. You will become calmer, finding yourself more organised, seeming to fly through what used to bog you down.

To argue you don't have enough time available is to miss the point that in spending quality 'down time', you are facilitating peak efficiency on the 'up time' phase.

Deep relaxation should result in complete physical relaxation, in addition to mental respite. Your whole body, inside and out, will become relaxed, pliable, soft, and at ease. Use a guided meditation CD, such as my **“Reunion – Healing Breath”**, Following the prompts, allows an orderly relaxation of the tension trapped in your structure.

Centring your attention in the lower abdomen, focus your breathing there. As you do, previously trapped energy and emotions may surface. Using something like this will allow you to revisit, reframe and release your past hurts and their energy attachments/inner landmines.

Factoring in self-healing as a daily practice, will improve the quality of your experience of living. You will become more present, less involved in being 'right' and more likely to find fun and laughter as an outlet. The physical markers of wellbeing will also improve, digestion, elimination and appetite will normalise, and sleep, mood and energy will return to a happy equilibrium.

In acupuncture terms, the tension we accumulate impedes the circulation of Qi (energy) and Blood, and leads to conditions of both heat and stagnation in the body. In choosing to release our own inner trapped energy (tension) we release all aspects of ourselves from bondage.

8 - Have a shower followed by a good body moisturizer, and a good cooked protein breakfast.

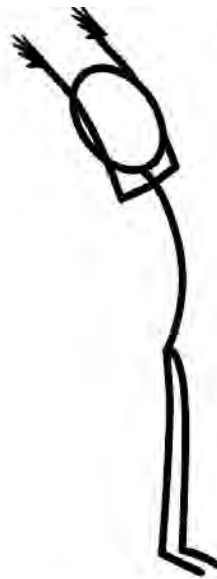
**As they tell us on aeroplanes –
look after yourself/put your own mask on FIRST.**

YOGA - SALUTE TO THE SUN



Step 1

Stand upright with your knees and feet together. Place your palms together and hold them against your chest, with your fingers pointing upwards.



Step 2

*As you **inhale**, raise your hands above your head and bend gently backwards, Your palms should be facing upward and your head reaching back.*



Step 3

***Exhale** and lean forward without bending your knees. With practice you will be able to touch the floor with your finger-tips or even rest your palms on the floor.*



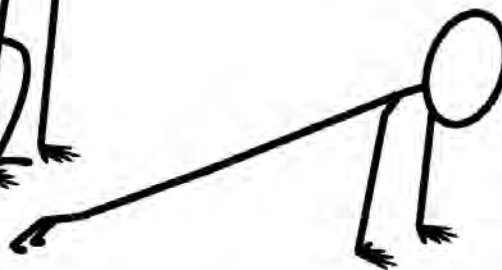
Step 4

***Inhale** bending your knees and putting your palms flat on the floor. Push your left leg back and rest the knee on the floor. Look up and push your hips forward.*



Step 5

***Holding your breath**, put your right leg back, next to the left. Use your arms to keep your body raised, with your palms still flat on the floor.*

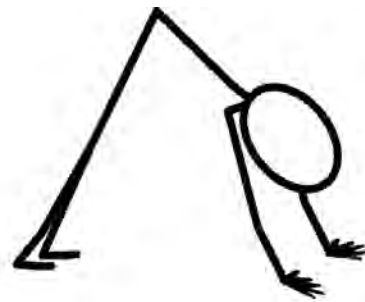


Step 6

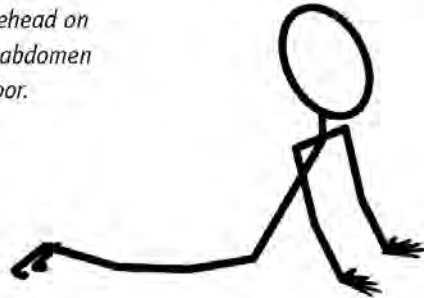
***Exhale** and move your body backwards, keeping your hands in the same position until your buttocks rest on your heels and your forehead on the floor.*



Step 7
Breathing in and out, come forwards taking your weight on your hands. Rest your knees, chest and forehead on the floor. Keep your abdomen and pelvis off the floor.



Step 9
Exhale and push up your buttocks keeping your hands and feet flat on the floor. Straighten your legs and your back so that your body forms a triangle with the floor.



Step 8
Inhale fully and straighten your arms. Stretch your head up as far as you comfortably can, arching your back.



Step 10
Breathing in and out, bend your knees, resting your buttocks on your heels and your forehead on the floor.



Step 11
Exhale, bringing your left knee up between your hands and stretching forwards and upwards. Keep your palms flat on the floor.



Step 12
Exhale, bringing your right foot up to your left. Straighten your legs and bend from your waist. Then breathe in and stand erect. Now you can stop or repeat the salute once or several times if you like. In successive salutes, alternate the leg you take back in step 4 and forwards in step 11.

Appendix 1: What to Eat?

Some suggestions - mixing protein and veggies together . . .

Breakfast/When Time Permits

Left-over cooked rice and veggies - especially wok ones - are invaluable as you do not have to start from 'scratch'.

- * Make fritters/rissoles from left-overs - adding chopped up left-over meat or canned corn - or anything really - with some sauce/flavourings/sesame seeds around the outside when being fried. (Yes, you need fat and oil to provide the raw ingredients for hormones to be made)
- * Heated up left-over veggies with an egg or two smashed up and cooked with it - pretend it is a Spanish omelette.
- * Reheated left-overs from tea.
- * Anything from the snack/lunch list - but not cool/cold, especially if the weather is not tropical. This can be alleviated somewhat by having a hot/warm cup of herbal tea with the meal.

Snacks Or Lunch When You Have No Time

- * AVOCADO with canned fish in the seed hole, with a relish, or marinated capsicum on top.
- * Slice of ham/chicken, with half an avocado and favourite relish on top - rolled up
- * Celery sticks with cashew or other nut paste (not peanut) in the centre.
- * Half a red capsicum with pesto or relish around the inside, then cottage / ricotta cheese filling with avocado or a slice of fish or ham on top.
- * Soft boiled egg taken whole to work, to eat as quick protein snack.
- * Little rice crackers (seaweed or sesame seed variety) with nut paste or cottage/ soft cheese on top.
- * Lettuce leaf wrap for a salad and cheese/egg sandwich - everything placed inside as though wrapping in rice paper.

Appendix 2: Glossary

Acupoints - areas on the skin surface where the meridian qi can be influenced - usually with fine stainless steel needles, but sometimes with pressure or the application of herbal heat (moxa).

Blood - Blood is classified as being Yin energy within the body as it functions to nourish, cool and lubricate. Blood energy nourishes all aspects of all physical, mental and emotional well being. The quality of our Blood energy is seen in the lustre of the skin, the shine, strength and colour of our hair, the easy transition throughout the month as our levels of Blood and energy change with the menstrual cycle, and our ability to sleep well and stay well balanced throughout our life changes.

Cosmic Qi (or 'Da Qi') - that which surrounds us. Not the gaseous particles, but the more resonant aspects of what we are breathing. Also called prana in the Indian traditions.

Digestive fire ??

Heat in the Liver - usually from emotional suppression - see above. This is the cause - and the result - of 'Stuck Liver Qi'. It is made worse with self-medication to suppress self and feelings further - evidenced by the epidemic of violence by drunk/drugged people. The inner heat causes 'sick heat' above when left to fester. It starts in early life when we are not given ways to express 'bad' feelings. This unattended fury gets volcanic and starts destroying inner workings well before it vents as emotional outbursts.

Heat can also occur as a result of fevers unattended, of yin/fluid loss (think of excessive diarrhoea /haemorrhage/general blood loss) - and of not drinking sufficient pure water, especially when using heating substances (smoking is a great example). Not resting and looking after diet is another way to wear self out before time. (Heat consumes Yin and Jing).

Jing - Jing is what we inherit from our parents. This is an energy concept which incorporates the DNA coding. Jing is our essential building block. It is the foundation of our Kidney energy which in turn is the root of our Yin and Yang Qi (energy). Our Jing could be considered our life capital. It allows us to be here in a body, enjoying our senses. In our very early years its potential is realised in the second phase of life (birth to 10 years), to be gradually enhanced until we reach a plateau. This plateau is based on our 7 and 8 year cycles as women and men. It is dependent on our life experiences, and whether we live off our interest or squander our capital before we reach our potential lifespan.

Kidney Jing - the underlying substrate/blueprint that allows us to be here in form - can be likened to DNA and genetic inheritance. It gives us our 'oomph' to be here and our constitutional vigour (or otherwise). The rough equivalent is the quality of the eggs and sperm when attempting conception.

Kidney Yang - the energy that runs the Kidney complex - thus the source of life for the entire organism. The strength of the Yang is our inheritance and as such is vulnerable when very young/or pregnant. Heat, rest, stability, good hydration and regularity all help dramatically to allow the body to heal itself. Quality of Kidney Yang grants us sexual feeling/inclination and abilities - also sexual potency and vigour in men and their sperm.

Kidney Qi - what holds the urine in place and allows us to sleep through the night. When it is weakening, we have urinary continence issues.

Liver - as used here refers to the entire sphere of influence that the Liver Qi has in the body. This ranges from the spiritual visionary aspects of self through to the ability to evacuate easily and the mechanical functions of the liver organ.

Liver Energy - that which flows freely to energise and maintain all life functions in health. Without Liver Qi flowing, all aspects of self stop-up, slow down, start clogging, resulting eventually in many types of obstructive (painful) and degenerative (accelerated aging) conditions. It is mostly affected by the inner inability to express and is worse with being 'nice' and sedentary.

Liver Qi

Meridian Qi - the energy that runs the body effectively, found in fine pathways all through the surface and within the entire physical structure. It is fed through the finer processes involved in digestion and breathing, and can be influenced at the acupuncture points. (Acupoints).

Qi - pronounced "chee", loosely translates as 'energy'. The body has many different types and uses of /for Qi. Our personal Qi circulates within and around us. We live by virtue of our ability to manufacture more Qi, to allow us to maintain our equilibrium in the face of change (homeostatic balance), and to repair and reproduce ourselves. Qi is divided into two different, though complementary aspects - we call them by their Chinese names - Yin and Yang.

Shen - a Chinese concept that covers the essence of self in a spiritual sense. Our Shen governs who we are and how we express ourselves. A well nourished Shen allows us to present a consistent personality to the outside world. It governs our clarity of speech, our brightness of eye, our coherence of thought, and our ability to live in mental and emotional tranquillity. A strong and well nourished Shen allows us to sleep well, hence replenish ourselves on all levels. It gives us the ability to think clearly, respond appropriately, and to perceive and react reasonably. This is all governed by the amount and quality of our Blood energy, as it is our strength of Blood energy that nourishes our Shen.

Sick heat - an overall depletion of the yin in the body giving rise to accelerated aging and degeneration. Can be evidenced by the warm/hot feet at night that need to be out of the covers/hair loss/irritability and early aging. Also creates degenerative, autoimmune and wasting conditions. These may start slowly and take years to get going, but their beginnings are there if you know what to look for and are reversible when identified early.

Spleen/Pancreas - when speaking of the Spleen here, both organ functions are really implied. The acupuncture energy version of digestion/assimilation is through the action of Yang with the Spleen Qi. Both are weakened through inadequate attention to regularity, stability and moderation in all matters.

Spleen Qi - the energy of the Spleen complex that keeps the body structurally intact. It is compromised through weakening any Yang energy in the body, especially from under-eating, invasion of cold, and by not looking after self. It thus holds all tissues/blood and organs/babies in place in the body.

Spleen Yang - Provides the oomph necessary to power and sustain ourselves independently, once separate from our mothers. Originates from the Kidney Yang and, as such, is totally dependent on self-care and good inheritance from parents.

Stomach energy - that which we need to process all stomach contents in a downwards direction. When it is weakened, we feel nauseous, as it is not up to the task of cleanly moving all through it. Vomiting happens when the stomach qi rebels and sends the contents upwards.

Stomach fire - unhealthy extra heat that occurs when we are disordered - from emotional over-balances from the Liver Qi, moving sideways to attack self, or from the ingestion of too much concentrated food sources. These include chemical/salty/ sweet/caffeinated/alcoholic/unnatural drinks and substances including medications that wreck the fine inner balances.

Stuck Liver Qi - what happens when we are hiding or constraining who we are. This leads into all aspects of digestive, reproductive, circulatory and emotional distress. Loosely we could call it stress - that which drives our angst/PMT and fuels our inability to flow as designed.

Wei Qi - the most active component of the above. It circulates in the outer reaches of our energy and physical bodies, forming a protective barrier. When we are awake, it travels externally keeping our pores on the ready and us safe from predators (immune system). It retreats inside, to be replenished, during sleep.

Yang - the other component of the duality we call 'life' in this reality/plane /dimension. Yin and yang are always relative to each other, and cannot be used without the other as context - just as we only know 'day' through having experienced 'night'.

Yang Qi - that which allows us to move, metabolise, circulate and be active.

Yin - a Chinese term referring to the relative density/structure /solidity of whatever aspect of life is under discussion. Sometimes loosely thought of as being female/feminine, it embraces this, but is far more inclusive - of anything that is more dark as opposed to light, solid as opposed to ethereal,

Yin Qi is a general category of nourishing energy. This is found with the actual Blood, and circulates within all the meridians, Blood vessels and denser structures. It regenerates and enhances our being; we can work and be here, and it allows us to have a strong foundation

Appendix 3: Further Reading

For more information see www.heatherbruce.com.au

HELPING YOURSELF series

The *Helping Yourself* series takes the reader through why we eat and how to get the best start to healing - fuelling yourself differently - and why it is to your advantage to follow what nature intended. This is appropriate to any age and interest, especially those troubled by weight and energy issues.

*Also in this series is *Getting Out of Your Own Way* an explanation of why things stress us and how we can freely flow. This covers such issues as IBS and reflux, depression and menstrual issues and how to avoid or get off antidepressants and sleeping pills and start feeling again.

*These issues are covered in more depth in "*Woman Tides*" (see below) and "*Freeing Yourself*". This is about the programmes that tend to run us that we are stuck with, and within - all of which needs changing to escape from always having the same sorts of problems arising, and thus our emotional life.

*"*Woman Tides*" is for those who want to normalise their being a woman. It tracks from pre teenage years through to the eventual ceasing of periods, back into a zestful free woman stage.

FERTILITY AND PREGNANCY series

Helping Mother Nature – a Fertility Guide covers the pre-conceptual care and information required whether at the beginning of getting pregnant - or to problem-solve after years of trying, possibly as a step with or before IVF.

What Dads Can Do is a manual and accompanying DVD already in hard copy (pub. 2005). The book is printed in very good quality art paper, in three colours and section sown (very sturdy), so it can be used as a reference for generations to come. It comes complete with the DVD *Massage - What Dads Can Do*. The manual will also soon be available in eBook format, as it is a very heavy tome (.75Kg) and costly to ship.

Getting There is a DVD presentation of the quality issues I raise below. It is part of a Connected Birthing set - that is nearly complete as a six pack of DVD presentations. The DVDs *Massage - What Dads Can Do* and *Birthing - What Dads Can Do* form parts of this set and are available from me on www.easybabies.com.au

Birthing – What Dads Can Do DVD is a workshop explanation of why pain happens, and how to minimise its likelihood well before labour. It is a complete birth preparation, alternative childbirth education tool, easily followed by the most unprepared couple awaiting their baby.

Connected Midwifery is a 3-DVD (8 hours duration) presentation with accompanying PDF containing the PowerPoint presentations, manuals and workbooks used. Although the intended audience is midwives (hospital and home), doulas and other birth attendants, should you be a massage or other support therapist, or just someone who has had their interest piqued by what you have read so far, it is pitched at the beginner and follows logically.

* As yet incomplete - available soon

For more information see www.heatherbruce.com.au