

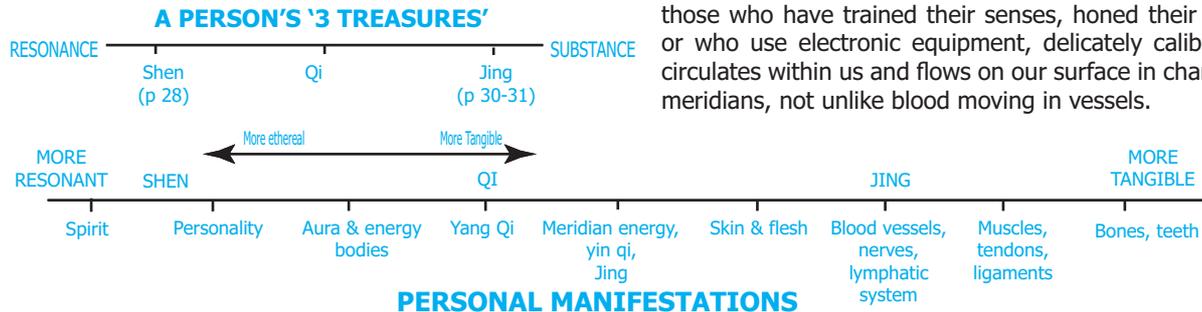
WHAT IS A PERSON/WHAT IS QI?

To help answer this question, think of water - it is found in differing states, (gaseous as vapor, liquid as water or solid as ice) depending on its determinants - temperature, purity and atmospheric pressure/altitude.



We too have many forms and layers of being. Our medical model recognises some of these. Energy models such as acupuncture are not concerned with physical manifestations, so much as how they work within tides and cycles that in turn control and regulate the physical body. As in a computer, the hardware is important, but the quality and type of software installed has also its place when attempting to "troubleshoot" when an 'error' message (discomfort) appears.

To use the acupuncture model, we need to understand a few concepts. The basic energy unit is known as qi. Qi, pronounced "chee", loosely translates into English as 'energy'. The body has many types and uses of/for qi. We live by virtue of our ability to produce more qi to allow maintenance



of our inner equilibrium in the face of change (homeostatic balance), to repair and reproduce ourselves.

The strength of our own personal qi can be seen how we move, the 'liveliness' in our speech/manner and in our complexion. Some of our qi circulates in an orderly fashion in meridians, or channels of qi, flowing through/within and along the bodily structures. This qi flow, though less tangible than the venous, lymphatic and nervous systems, is a complete network separate, yet complementary to, our physical structure.

Some of our qi can be influenced at points along our body where intersections or accumulations converge. These areas called acupuncture points can be activated to initiate flow changes that in turn alter how we feel and how our very being functions. The state of our qi can be felt by sensitive people, those who have trained their senses, honed their intuition or who use electronic equipment, delicately calibrated. It circulates within us and flows on our surface in channels, or meridians, not unlike blood moving in vessels.