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### **Eating for Health & Well-Being – Mend Your Mind/Body/Mouth Connection**

Many of us have food issues. Some eat too much, whether it's healthy or junk food. Others binge to fill a void, use sugar for quick energy, or eat due to boredom or to relieve stress. Acupuncture and Qigong practice can help you resolve food issues by maximizing Qi flow, thereby eliminating cravings and strengthening willpower leading to healthier food choices. This mends the mind/body/mouth connection by balancing hormones, boosting metabolism, strengthening digestion, increasing energy, nurturing spirit, and forging a deeper connection with oneself.

#### ***Importance of Eating Nutritious, Healthy Foods:***

Our body is formed out of an "essence" called *Gu Qi* derived from the food we ingest. What we eat and the Qi derived from this food is essential for overall health, beauty, and well-being. *Gu Qi* provides essential nutrition to activate our entire physical and energetic system. The potency of this Qi depends on the quality of food and drink and the ability for our body to break it down and absorb it. If only de-natured, poor quality food is ingested combined with a weak digestive system the result will be insufficient *Gu Qi* to nourish our body. Therefore, depletion of Qi results from rich, non-nutritious, processed, over-cooked, and chemically laded foods. When Qi is restored and flowing fully and freely throughout your energetic system, your body can easily reinforce this Qi flow, allowing you to regain and maintain a healthy weight for yourself.

#### ***Eliminate Cravings, Strengthen Willpower & Balance Hormones:***

Willpower is strengthened through the building of Kidney Qi. Acupuncture & Qigong nourishes the yang of the kidneys, reduces cravings and excessive hunger. Hormonal balance is established through stimulation and balancing of the endocrine glands which are essential for proper storage and processing of your food. As the proper functioning of the thyroid, parathyroid, pituitary, hypothalamus, pancreas, and adrenal endocrine glands help to maintain balanced appetite, digestive energy, metabolism, and sugar levels in our body.

#### ***Strengthen Digestion:***

A strong digestion ensures that the foods you eat get processed and distributed throughout your body more efficiently. The organ that governs digestion is the Spleen as it transforms and transports food in your system. Weight problems stem from the Spleen not performing its proper role. The resulting Spleen Qi depletion comes from a poorly functioning digestive system, whereby food is not properly transformed and transported to the cells, tissues and organs –food then becomes stagnant in your body leading to excess weight and a condition diagnosed in Chinese Medicine as Spleen Dampness. To make matters worse, this condition leads to depression and the inability to make decisions. The Spleen can become further depleted due to excess anger, stress, drinking too much water, eating too much or too little and too late in the day, and eating rich or processed food. When the energy of the Spleen becomes balanced and strengthened through acupuncture and/or Qigong, the body digests food better and a shift in the weight of your body occurs – you actually begin to feel lighter.

#### ***Increase Energy:***

When Qi flow is increased you have more energy. When you have more energy you have what it takes to choose the right foods. You have enough energy to do more exercise which promotes digestion, metabolism, good mood – all components that lead to better food choices and a more fit body inside and out.

### ***Energetically Calm, Cool and Connected:***

According to Chinese Medicine, a *Shen* (spirit) *Disturbance* can leave you feeling disconnected and wanting to overeat. Healthier food choices lead to a clearer and brighter *Shen*. For example, you may realize that you are not speaking your mind, not saying the words necessary to stand up for yourself. And in place of this, you find yourself stuck in front of the kitchen cabinet stuffing your mouth, binging on foods as a result of not saying and being who you truly are. Instead you are stuffing your feelings, by stuffing your mouth. Not a pretty sight for sure.

Acupuncture treatment and Qigong practice promotes harmony of *Shen* in the following ways:

- Pacifies heart and spirit
- Creates an open, positive attitude
- Improves mental acuity
- Overall sense of calm
- Increased vital energy
- Promotes energetic awareness

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Through increased energetic and spiritual awareness, insights will bubble to the surface of your mind. When you discover what it is that's eating at you — you can then change what you are eating.

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With this newly established mind/body/mouth connection you feel calm and at peace about what you say, you come forth in the world energetically connected with yourself physically, and when it comes time to feed yourself you do so in a more balanced way. You no longer find the need to stuff your feelings, because they have surfaced and been shared in a gentle, loving and humble manner in a way that is understood and respected by others.

### **Letting Go Qigong**

Qigong is an ancient Chinese exercise practiced to cultivate Qi (vital energy) and restore it to its correct balance. There are several classifications for disharmony in the flow of Qi. Once such Chinese medicine diagnostic classification is called *Stagnant Qi* which is when Qi no longer moves through the body in a smooth and orderly fashion. For example, Stagnant Qi of the Liver can create energetic toxicity leading to depression, disease, exhaustion, poor metabolism, aches and pains, and/or pre-mature aging. Through Qigong practice to release and let go of Stagnant Qi, proper flow is restored and pre-disposition for or actual manifestation of symptoms would be abated combined with an overall sense of health and well-being.

One of the best methods for releasing *Stagnant Qi* within your vital organs is through *Qigong Tapping*. I call this exercise *Ragdoll Twist*. It is fun and easy to perform as your arms are so relaxed that they “flop” just like a ragdoll.

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*Begin by standing with your feet parallel and a bit wider than your shoulders. Turn your torso to the right and at the same time swing your arms (at a 45 degree angle*

*from your shoulder) also to the right and allow your right hand to tap over your kidneys on your lower back as your left hand taps over your liver and gall bladder on the right side of your torso. As you twist to the right - pivot your left foot inward on the ball of your foot.*

*Next turn your torso to the left and at the same time swing your arms (at a 45 degree angle from your shoulder) also to the left and allow your left hand to tap over your kidneys on your lower back as your right hand taps over your stomach and spleen on the right side of your torso. As you twist to the left - pivot your right foot inward on the ball of your foot.*

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Remember to relax your shoulders and your arms and allow them to naturally tap your torso and back to make a distinctive tapping sound, creating a vibration to stimulate the health of your internal organs.

You can also release Stagnant Qi within your meridians pathways with a Qigong tapping exercise which I call *Thump Pump*. You can begin with tapping of your fists on both hips simultaneously, tapping down the sides of your thighs, outside of your lower legs, down behind your outside ankle, along the sides of your foot, up inside your inner ankle, up the inside of your lower leg, following upward with your tapping fists up your inner thighs and then to your hips again. Repeat two times. This opens and releases Stagnant Qi mainly the Gallbladder, Liver, Spleen and Kidney meridians. Tap, Tap, Tap to your heart's content - your energy body will feel free and clear, your physical body refreshed and relaxed.

### **The 10 best ways to boost your immune system and what are natural cold and flu fighters?**

According to the ancient Chinese classic the *Nei Jing*, the first line of defense against pathogens is the *Wei* Portion on the surface of the body. *Wei Chi* is the Chinese word for Protective Qi. *Wei* Qi needs to be balanced and strong in order to resist and combat pathogens (External Pernicious Influences) when they invade the body.

Things you can do to strengthen your Wei Qi and prevent illness:

1. Tell yourself "I have fierce and bold Wei Qi and I will not get sick under any circumstances".
2. Receive acupuncture treatment such as Stomach 36, Large Intestine 11 and 4, Lung 7, Spleen 6.
3. Take Chinese herbal formula called *Jade Screen* daily for 3-4 months before, not after, onset of cold or flu
4. Take ginger footbath. Directions: Grate two inch piece of raw ginger into big pot of water, bring to a boil and simmer 20 minutes. When cool enough soak your feet in it.
5. Practice *Thymus Tapping* Qigong exercise. Tap at the center of your chest with your fist to stimulate better functioning of the thymus gland.

### Things you can do after onset of cold or flu:

1. Receive acupuncture to specifically treat your symptoms
2. Take the Chinese herbal formula called *Yin Qiao San* if symptoms include fever or other heat symptoms.
3. Drink a tea twice a day made of ginger, garlic, lemon, honey and cayenne just before or during onset of cold or flu.
4. Take a hot shower and allow the steam to clear and moisten your sinus passages during a cold, or sit in the room and breathe in the steam if standing in the shower is too much for you.
5. Get plenty of rest and drink chicken soup made from organic ingredients and Chinese herbs.

### **Name your cannot live without modality technique, favorite remedy, supplement for insomnia, or an over active mind so you can sleep like a baby?**

According to Chinese Medicine, insomnia results from a Liver energy imbalance. The Liver stores most of the blood in the body and insomnia results from not enough blood reaching the head of the body. This deficiency leads to a flaring of fire resulting in the palpitations or otherwise lying in bed at night with thoughts going round and round, keeping you awake long after you are tired.

#### Remedies to Resolve Insomnia:

- Lie down in bed, get comfy and say to yourself - "It is now time for my mind to rest on the pillow of my heart". Visualize the fluffy, soft pillow of your heart holding and nurturing your mind as you experience your thoughts let go as you slip into a deep slumber.
- Receive acupuncture to strengthen Liver, Calm Heart, Nourish Spirit, and balance Kidney Yin. My favorite treatment includes Governing Vessel 20, Sishencong, Heart 7, Urinary Bladder 62, Kidney 6 and Liver 3.
- Daily Qigong exercise to build blood and proper Qi flow within your vital organs and the rest of your body, nourish your nervous system, plus energize endocrine glands to balance circadian rhythms.
- Last but not least, you can rub your fist on your lower back between your kidneys – this is the place of your "Life Gate Fire". I call this exercise "Counting Qi" as you circle your fist in this area first clockwise and then counter-clockwise over and over – counting slowly from one to a hundred to strengthen your kidneys, reduce flaring firing, and induce a restful sleep.

## **Name your top 10 health resolutions to incorporate for 2011?**

1. Eat mostly organic foods including plenty of dark green leafy vegetables, cruciferous vegetables, colorful fruits, whole grains, beans, seeds and nuts and a small amount of meat fish, and poultry for maximum nutrition
2. Eat predominantly low glycemic foods for decreased inflammation, minimal cravings, and a healthy heart.
3. Nurture, love and be good to yourself and others. Listen carefully to yourself and what you need and at the same time be humble & honest as you are aware of where the person in front of you stands as you bridge with them. This will maximize healthy relationship with yourself and others.
4. Refrain from gossip as it is toxic for not only you, but others. It spreads like a virus and poisons the minds of all who partake.
5. Have fun and be playful. Laughing is nurturing to your heart.
6. Sing whenever you get the chance. Singing nourishes the Spleen Qi to promote healthier transportation and transformation of food in your body.
7. Get acupuncture to keep your energy system in balance as a preventative measure at the change of seasons. We in the acupuncture world call these “seasonal tune-ups”.
8. Practice exercise on a regular basis. This should include both an external Western exercise such as lifting weights or doing the elliptical as well as an internal Eastern exercise such as yoga, tai chi, or qigong.
9. Get at least one massage per month to promote relaxation and optimal blood circulation.
10. Create more regularity in your life. This includes all of your life activities and schedules – but especially those for sleep, eating, bowel elimination, work, and rest & relaxation,