

The Essence of Springtime Energy

By Gisela Norman

It is possible to learn so much about healing and the body just by observing Nature. In winter we hibernate, plants die and animals put on their winter coats. We gather energy inward and withdraw from the world to reflect, rejuvenate and rest. It is an impatient time of the year, a time of wanting to break out of winter.

Step Into Spring

Now the season is shifting into springtime. We see the energy moving outward, the bulbs are blooming, they are tender yet unstoppable, the anticipated sap is rising and energy that has been stored inward is starting to come to life. We want to go outside, jog or just take a walk. See how the allotments are a hive of activity. We crave those long sunny days and to feel the warmth of the sun on our backs. Then all of sudden the season breaks out into springtime.

We also undergo changes at this time. Likewise, we too can sense our energies rising, stirring and wanting to move. It is a time for us to release and to express. Because of the outward moving, expansive energy of the season, we are ready to move stagnant, heavy sluggish ways out of our bodies and lives. Projects and plans that have been on hold start growing, developing and spring into life. Spring represents growth, it brings with it renewed optimism, hope and life.

The Wood Element

In Chinese medicine, spring is the time of year associated with the 'Wood' element, which is associated with the Liver and Gallbladder organs. It is a time to spring clean our bodies, minds, homes and work places. It is a time to start afresh and begin anew, whether with personal goals, creative projects or our health. The "Qi" energy, or as it is known as "the life force energy", is moving upwards and outwards. It raises the warrior energy within us of being outgoing, flexible and moves obstruction.

This element or phase is associated with the colour green, the emotion of anger and frustration, kindness and gentleness, the wind, tendons and joints, sour tastes, the eyes and sight. These relationships were observed throughout the centuries by the Chinese and serve to instruct us how to take care of ourselves as we flow through the seasons and through life.

Under the Wood element its major organ is the Liver. According to the Yellow Emperor's Inner Classics "the Liver is like an army's general from whom the strategy is planned". The Liver gives us the ability to plan, make judgements and direct our lives, both physically and mentally. A healthier Liver gives the ability to take control of our lives in different ways. By treating the Liver it regulates internal imbalances and stimulates our connection with the spring energy.

Liverish symptoms

This is the season that the Liver and Gallbladder organs are most accessible and responsive to treatments. The organs may be more reactive due to pollens, allergens and an overload of toxins.

If your physical health is challenged with skin disorders, allergies, arthritis, ligament, tendon and joint pains, headaches and migraines; digestive problems and bloating, constipation; cystic breasts and Pre Menstrual Syndrome or low energy, then your body is communicating that it needs Liver support and cleansing.

Emotional Effects

The inability to express spring's energy can lead to all sorts of complaints. In nature this is like the debris from a heavy storm clogging up a river or stream causing blockage and stagnation.

If the Liver or Gallbladder are out of balance or stagnant, the emotions that are prone to express themselves can be ones of frustration, irritability, depression, mood swings, short temperedness and anger. The effects of high stress, of being unable to follow through with plans and goals and a lacking in direction.

Acorn Into An Oak

Emotionally, spring connects us to the spirit of birth, renewal, growth, expansion and all that is creative. It is a time for the warrior within to emerge and it is a good time of year to cultivate this energy by strengthening our daily disciplines, to create new goals and projects, transform dietary habits and cleanse our bodies. It is a time of hope, possibility and inspiration. Now is the time to stretch oneself as the new sapling allows itself to bend in the spring wind. This is when the acorn decides it wants to grow into an oak tree.

So Many Outlets

When an outlet for this energy is found these emotions can be transformed into creativity, opportunity and change.

- We can help harmonise these discomforts by cultivating kindness and gentleness. Walk quietly through a wood and feel its essence.
- Plan or work out how you will accomplish your goals to see where you are going.
- Talk through frustrations and irritations to a friend or express these emotions in writing
- Nourish our bodies with movement, a massage, stretching with Yoga or Tai Chi exercises. Do deep breathing and take long walks outdoors.
- Eat a diet full of fresh spring greens, green leafy veg, sprouting foods and cereals.
- Use pungent cooking spices help clear the body e.g. mint tea with a bit of local honey. Add basil, fennel, marjoram, rosemary, caraway, dill and bay leaf.
- Increase liver cleansing foods such as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, beetroot, carrots, all roots and onions. Sour foods stimulate the liver energies and raise metabolism.
- Add water cress, dandelion greens, artichokes, garlic, citrus peel, pomegranate and drink green tea. Consume fruit high in vitamin C.

Two acupuncture points that touch the spring energy within are called: 'Bright and Clear' and 'Gate of Hope'. A wonderful herbal formula called 'Free and Easy Wanderer' gives us an essence of its spring moving qualities.

Nature provides us with this perfect time of the year to take advantage of the springtime energy and to take the opportunity for an emotional and physical spring clean.

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