

A Five Element Approach to Building Emotional Resiliency through Energy Medicine Techniques and Strategies

Emotions and Energy

The word “emotion” has been said to be “energy in motion”. Thanks to the work of the late Dr. Candace Pert, (“Molecules of Emotion,” 1997) whose pioneering work in the field of neuroscience and discovery of the opiate receptor helped lead us to an improved understanding of the relationship and actual science behind mind-body medicine, we have increased our awareness of the powerful effects of our emotions on our health.

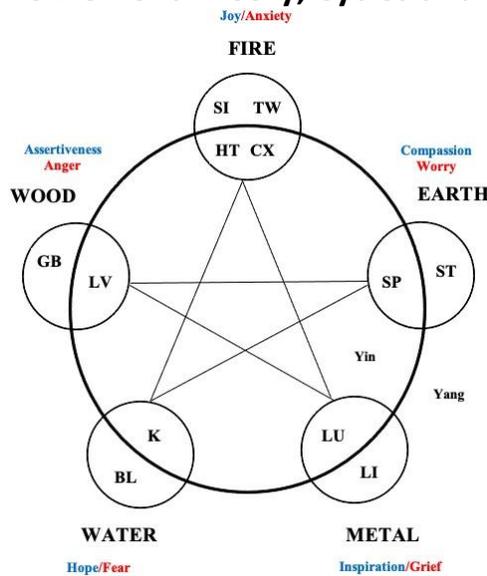
There are not only the molecules of various emotions at work in our environments, however. Molecules are ultimately made of atoms, and the movement of subatomic particles gives rise to various frequencies, or vibrations. Thoughts have energy, and have the capacity to produce energy patterns in people’s auric fields, or biofields. The late Dr. Richard Gerber’s important contributions to our understanding of the effects of vibrational fields and patterns in both ourselves and others was clearly outlined and explained in his book, “Vibrational Medicine” (2001). He makes a strong case describing how human beings can affect others on a very real vibrational, albeit unconscious level. Certain individuals may have energy blockages, leaks, or other maladaptation in their biofields which can subsequently have a negative effect on others. This phenomenon has been described as energy “leeches” or energy “vampires” and most of us know of people in our lives who have had a “draining” effect on our energies. On the flip side, however, there are those who have an uplifting and energizing effects. Various known as “constructive” or “destructive” interference, or “resonance” or “dissonance” the world of physics helps to explain how the energy drain or boost actually works. Physicist Dr. James Oschman has taught that physics can demystify energy healing, for example, and that we understand the basics of subtle energy and energy healing better than we do the inner workings of conventional medicine!

Our current conventional medical model tends to be based more on the physicality of diagnosis, therapy and basic health maintenance. Emphasis is put on finding the right physical cause of disease and then prescribing the correct drug for the identified problem – and in today’s world all of this must be done in as short a time as possible, leading to rushed visits, missed opportunities and a growing sense of dissatisfaction by both patients and providers alike. A more holistic approach takes into consideration environmental factors such as diet, exercise, job/work/life/nutrition balance and can often do a better job of identifying emotional stress and the often profound role it may play in this paradigm. And we cannot overlook the importance of a spiritual component or contribution to a problem.

Dr. Gerber wrote in 2001 that:

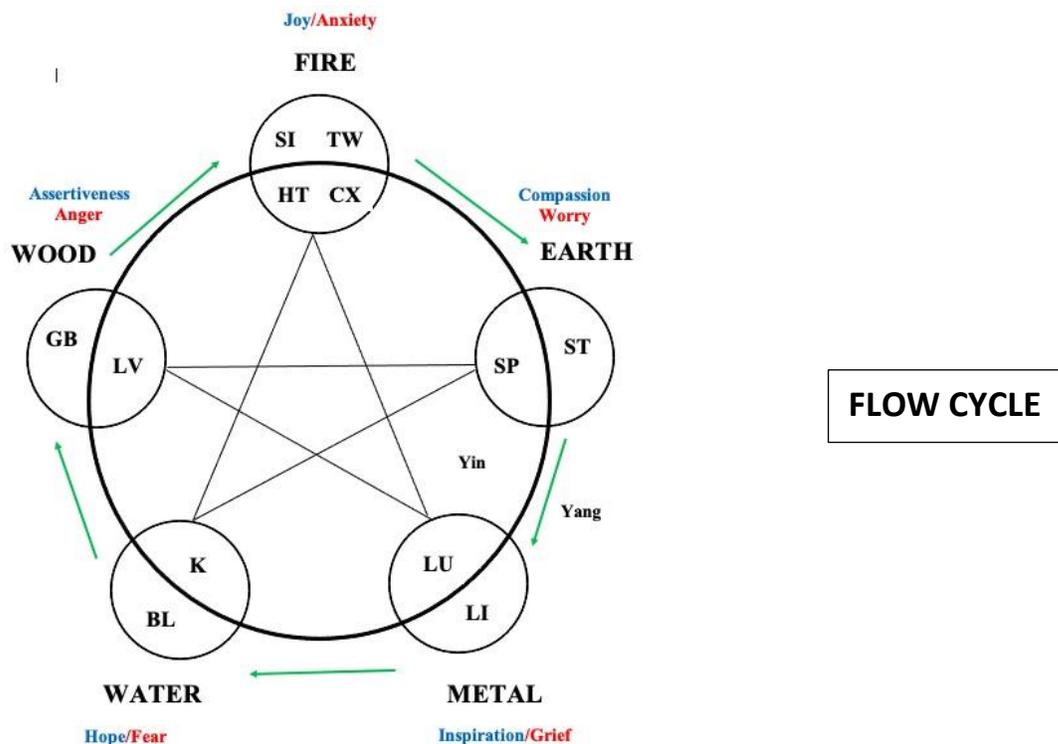
“ Another spiritual malady, which is more of an inner than an outer stress is something known as “divine discontent”. **It is a form of inner friction that will be seen with increasing frequency over the next ten or twenty years.** This type of stress is due to an inner pushing from higher spiritual levels which seeks to subtly remind us (at conscious or unconscious levels) of the need to give greater expression to the divine qualities of the Higher Self. This form of subtle discontent is often a reflection of a person’s movement toward higher consciousness, and is frequently seen in people who have spent years in daily spiritual practices such as meditation.” (p.462)

Introduction to Five Element Theory, Cycles and Corresponding Emotions

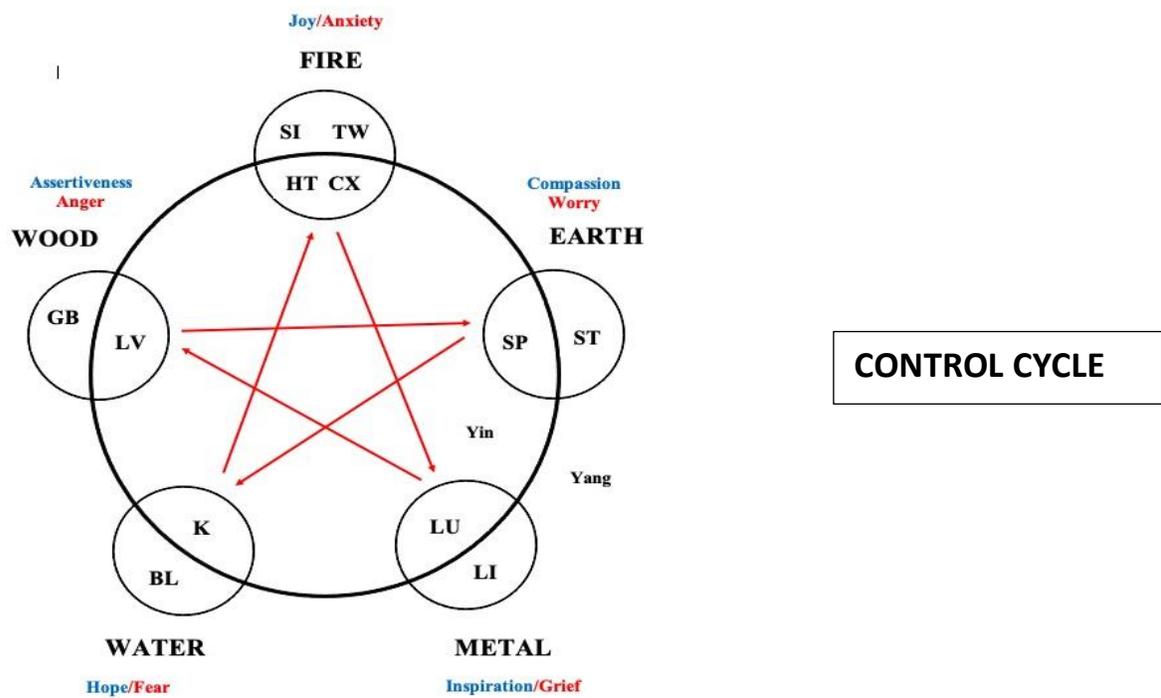


An important facet of Ancient Chinese Medicine is in its discussion of Five Element Theory. This is an ancient theory, felt to have been developed approximately 3000 B.C., and Chinese medicine practitioners found it useful to categorize all of life into these “Five Elements” which allowed them to make sense of their world and how it seemed to work. It allowed for greater understanding of how societies function, what the human body needs for its health. (Eden, 2008). Donna Eden, a famous clairvoyant and developer of the Eden Method of energy medicine says that to her the Five Elements function more as rhythms that run through all the other energy systems, providing a framework to better understand the human character, temperament, cycles, and illnesses. It offers a whole additional lens, or perspective, into the human condition, and can provide greater understanding for all of us of our fellow humans’ behavior, foibles, and vulnerabilities. She teaches that all humans have all five of the elements or rhythms, though each of us will have one or even two that tend to be more dominant and can to define us in general. She writes in great detail regarding the physical, psychological and other aspects/correspondences of these elements/rhythms, which also contain yin (feminine) and yang (masculine) components which are well beyond the scope of this workshop.

Five Element Theory is vast and complex as well as being quite illuminating in its provision of clues to how we humans, and our world function. A brief overview follows. The Five Elements are believed to have been translated into the western world because of the early pictograms of what was concrete, familiar and observable. (p. 214) The elements were Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, and Metal. Since this system is founded more on the actual processes and movement of nature rather than when the forms are stationary, it provides a useful comparison to the seasons as well. Water, then, is the same as Winter, Wood is analogous to Spring, Fire corresponds to Summer, the four two-week periods of the solstice or equinox together relate to the Earth element, and Metal is the time of endings, or Autumn. This cycle is also known as the Creation Cycle, or Flow Cycle in that just like the seasons, the elements flow into each other.



Another important cycle that is important for emotional health is that of the Control Cycle. The Control Cycle looks at the same circle depicted in the handout, but instead we superimpose a five-pointed star in the center. In this scenario, it is important to consider metaphor as a language of understanding. Therefore, the Water element “puts out” (controls) the Fire element (which in Chinese medicine can be seen as a manifestation of excess heat). The Fire element, then, controls the Metal element by “melting” it. Next the Metal element “chops” (controls) the Wood element. The Wood element is said to “control” the Earth element by stabilizing it (think of a well rooted tree in the soil). Finally, the Earth element controls the Water element by “damming” it which affects the flow. In Chinese medicine and energy medicine, everything is both relationship between systems, and bringing balance back to an organism.



Can a basic understanding of Five Element Theory give us clues to working with others in terms of emotional challenges? The answer is yes, and what follows can help provide this understanding, and the resultant clues, and management techniques.

Five Element Theory is a vast, complex treatise regarding human emotion and disease; and a thorough rendering of all of its tenets is beyond the scope of this workshop. However, much information can be gained through an examination of the presence of emotional clues that can provide ways for us to help our clients and ourselves.

Let's examine a very general overview of each element and some of its correspondences that can provide us clues. We have included a helpful chart on Element Characteristics as well. Just as Autumn ends a cycle of seasons, Winter begins a new one. The season of Winter is that of the Water element. The two meridians that comprise this element are Bladder (yang, masculine) and Kidney (yin, feminine). In Chinese medicine, the Water element is said to govern the nervous system, reproductive and urinary system, bones, fluid, teeth and the hair covering the head. The emotions are Hope (balanced) and Fear (unbalanced)

Next is the Wood element, or Spring. A time of new beginnings and growth, the two meridians that make up Wood are Gallbladder (yang, masculine) and Liver (yin, feminine). The Wood element is said to govern ligaments, tendons, muscles, eyes, and nails. The emotions are Assertiveness (balanced) and Anger (unbalanced)

Fire comes next, and is associated with the high energy of Summer. The fire element consists of four meridians, two of which are associated with physical organs, and two that are not. These meridians are: Small Intestine (yang, masculine), Heart (yin, feminine), Triple Warmer (yang, masculine) and Pericardium or Circulation Sex (yin, feminine). The Fire Element is said to govern the arteries, veins and circulation. The emotions are Joy (balanced) and Anxiety

(unbalanced).

Next on the flow cycle is Earth. While some disciplines have Earth sitting in the center of the other four elements, Eden teaches that it follows Fire on this cycle. Earth is associated with the four annual two-week periods of the Solstice, and Equinox. Earth oversees the life force (CHI, Ki, Prana, etc.) digestion, muscle tone, lymph and blood health. Its meridians are Stomach (yang, masculine) and Spleen (yin, feminine). Emotions are Compassion (balanced) and Worry (unbalanced).

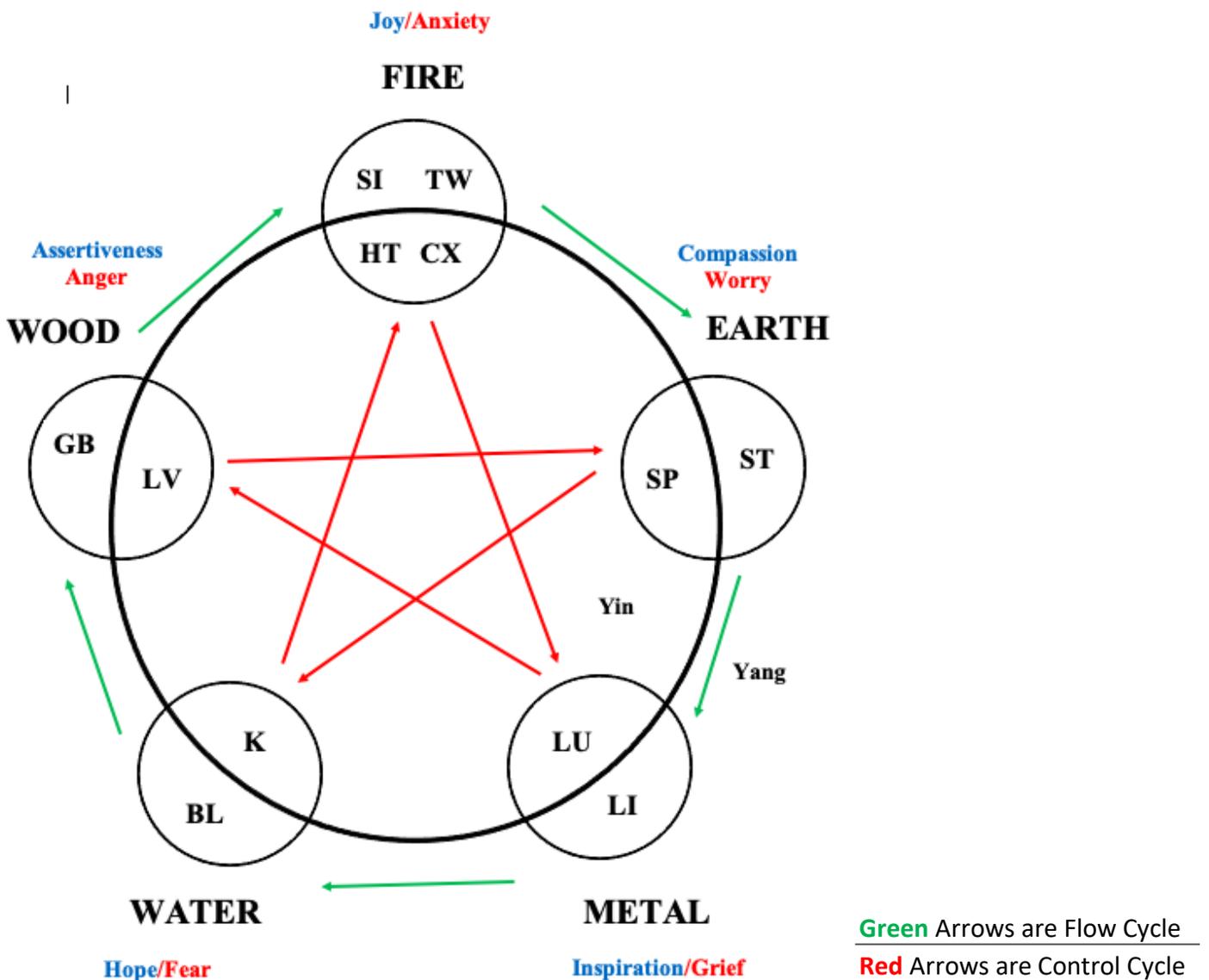
Finally, we reach the Metal element, or Autumn. Autumn, as mentioned, is the ending of a cycle, the time of harvest and preparing for a new cycle that will begin anew with Winter. The meridians in the Metal Element are Large Intestine (yang, masculine) and Lung (yin, feminine). Metal governs respiration, elimination, skin and the hair on the body. Emotions are Inspiration (balanced) and Grief (unbalanced). (Eden, Eden Method Certification Program, class 5, page 15)

Element	Meridians	Governs	Emotions
Water <i>Winter</i>	Bladder, Kidney	Bones, fluid, teeth, hair on head, nervous system, urinary and reproductive systems	Hope/Fear
Wood <i>Spring</i>	Gallbladder, Liver	Ligaments, tendons, muscles, eyes, and nails	Assertiveness/Anger
Fire <i>Summer</i>	Small Intestine, Heart, Triple Warmer, Circulation Sex	Arteries, veins and circulation	Joy/Panic (Anxiety)
Earth <i>Solstice</i>	Stomach, Spleen	Life force, digestion, muscle tone, lymph and blood health	Compassion/Worry
Metal <i>Autumn</i>	Large Intestine, Lung	Respiration, elimination, skin and hair on the body	Inspiration or reverence/ Grief and trouble letting go

Eden points out the following considerations as well. A key point in helping to choose an exercise for working with each rhythm is paying close attention to the rhythm’s **stress** emotion. When met with one of life’s significant challenges, she writes that each rhythm’s sustaining mental state can tend to move one into the rhythm’s stress emotion. (Eden, p. 235) “Winter’s courage becomes fear, spring’s assertiveness becomes anger, summer’s passion becomes panic, Indian summer’s compassion becomes a codependent sympathy, autumn’s reflectiveness becomes grief.” Humans are able to experience a wide range of emotions, but these five tend to

be primary for each of us. The element balancing techniques can help to balance the rhythm of each of the seasons by pulsating its energy throughout the body. (p. 235)

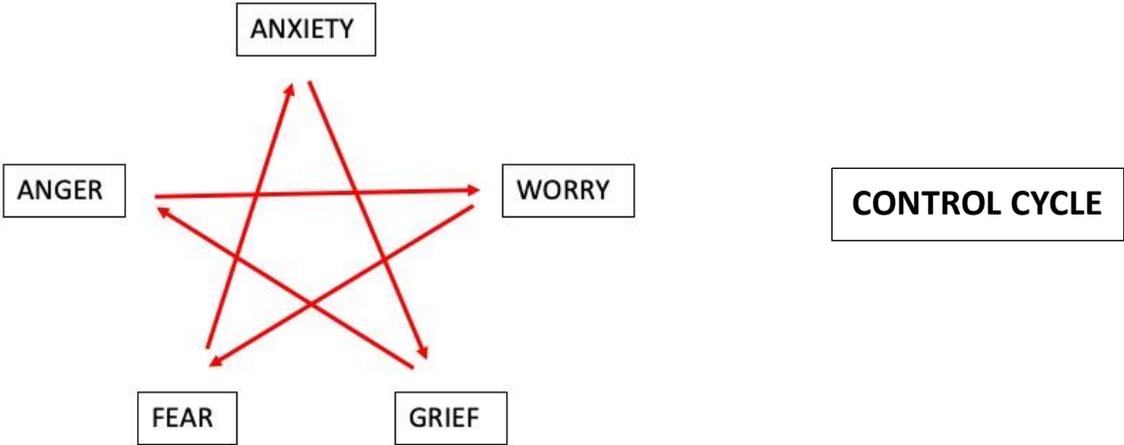
So how does this overview translate into a way to help our clients, friends, families or ourselves? An example would be that a client presents with a lot of anxiety. Perhaps there are some sleep issues as well. After gathering a history that includes length of time present, when did it start, possible known precipitating event, any medical or lab workup/findings, medical treatment, etc.; useful questions could include whether there has been a lack of joy, or hope for example. Additional questions from the Element Characteristic chart may also provide insight, such as “do you find yourself over-committing, or saying “yes” too easily to others? These are general questions that could point to a potential benefit from one of the Element Balancing Techniques taught in this class.



Negative Emotions on the Cycles



FLOW CYCLE



CONTROL CYCLE

Element Characteristics

ELEMENT	MERIDIANS		EMOTIONS		Characteristics	
			+	-	+	-
Water	Bladder Kidney	BL K	Hope	Fear	Wise, introspective, deep thinkers	Negative, fearful, suspicious, paranoid, secretive, too persistent or not persistent enough. <i>Toxic:</i> <i>intimidating, feels</i> <i>impotent</i>
Wood	Gallbladder Liver	GB LV	Assertiveness	Anger	Accomplished, honest and truthful, solid and dependable, kind, can lead and inspire others	Lack of sensitivity to others, single vision- "I'm right!", barrels ahead with tunnel vision. <i>Toxic: passive</i> <i>aggressive,</i> <i>resentful, seething,</i> <i>sense of injustice</i>
Fire	Small Intestine Heart Triple Warmer Circulation Sex	SI HT TW CX	Joy	Anxiety	Inspires others, believes in the good	Says "Yes," often without actual commitment, difficulty discerning between self and others. <i>Toxic: bitter,</i> <i>lying, sarcastic,</i> <i>teasing, feels</i> <i>betrayed</i>
Earth	Stomach Spleen	ST SP	Compassion	Worry	Compassion, caring, makes others feel safe, harmonizes humanity	Suffers too much for others, enables and gets caught in the middle, can become manipulative and interfering. <i>Toxic:</i> <i>disgust, complains,</i> <i>feels abandoned</i>
Metal	Large Intestine Lung	LI LU	Inspiration	Grief	Integrity, excellence, Spirit-seeking	Needs to be right, needs to be in control, dismissive. <i>Toxic: disdainful,</i> <i>snide, insulting</i>

Element Balancing Techniques

Balances Water

Blowing Out the Candle

1. Sit in a chair with arms crossed and hands in opposite armpits.
2. Rock back and forth and imagine staring at a blue candle flame in front of you.
3. Breathing deeply, rock slowly and exhale through pursed lips with a “Fwhoooo” sound.

Balances Earth

Cradling the Baby

1. Cradle your solar plexus with your hands.
2. Slowly inhale from the back of the throat. Slowly exhale making a raspy “Eghhhh.” Repeat several times.
3. Inhale and circle hands over head. Hold your breath while you alternately stretch each arm over your head twice.
4. Exhale while bending forward with arms extended.
5. Trace up the front of the body and land at the heart.

Balances Wood, Fire, and Metal

Medical Qigong Exercise

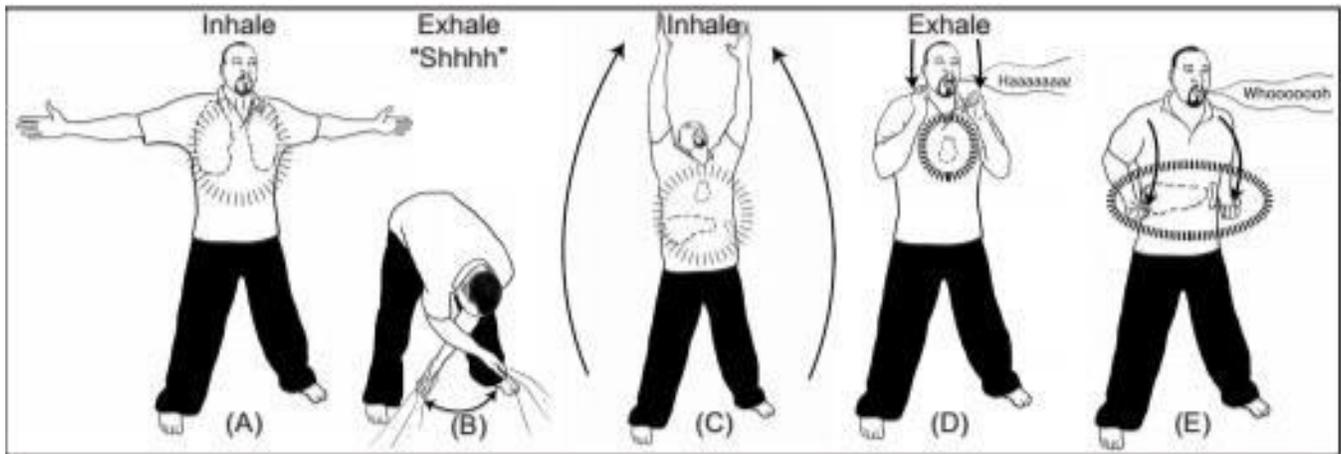
“You can only heal-what you can feel”

Dr. Xu Zong Wei (Xi Yuan Hospital, Beijing, China)

Traditionally prescribed to patients who are disconnected from their own feelings, energetically shut down, and experiencing Shen (Heart/Mind) Disturbances (depression, emotional disharmony stemming from the suppression of anger, guilt, grief).

“This special Healing Sound Prescription is used to bring the patient back in touch with his/her suppressed emotions. It addresses “toxic states of mind” that keep “old stories” hidden in the patient’s tissues, so that they can be transformed into an active form of healing energy.”
(Johnson, Vol 4 p.76)

Old Man Searching for the Reflection of the Moon at the Bottom of the Tide Pool



**illustration used with permission from Dr. Jerry Allen Johnson*

- A. Inhale to begin.
- B. Bend over, exhale, and crisscross your arms back and forth 5-10 times while making the “Shhh” sound.
- C. Stand up, inhale and reach your arms overhead.
- D. Make loose fists (facing each other) and partially exhale making a “Haaa” sound until you reach the level of the heart.
- E. Turn the fists to face your body and continue exhaling as you make a “Whoo” sound and bring your hands down to the lower belly.
- F. Repeat C-E two more times.

Summary:
Inhale/Exhale (bend over and Shhh),
Inhale and stand up (Haaa and Whoo) x3

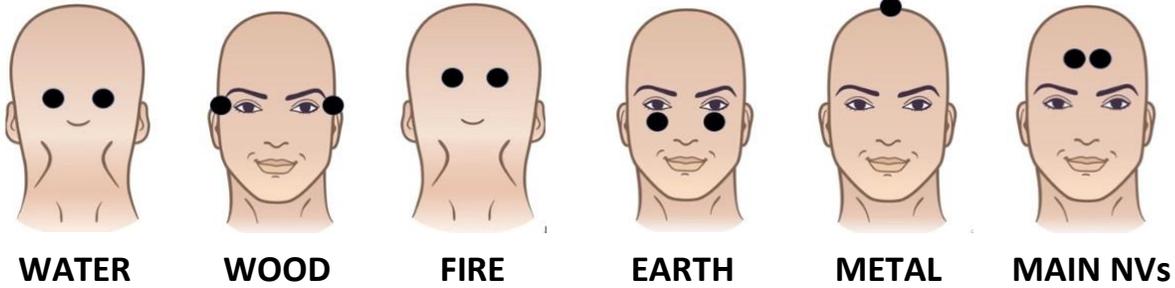
Sounds

“Shhhhh” releases grief from the lungs

“Haaa” releases sorrow, wounding, anxiety from the heart

“Whoo” releases anger from the liver and balances spleen

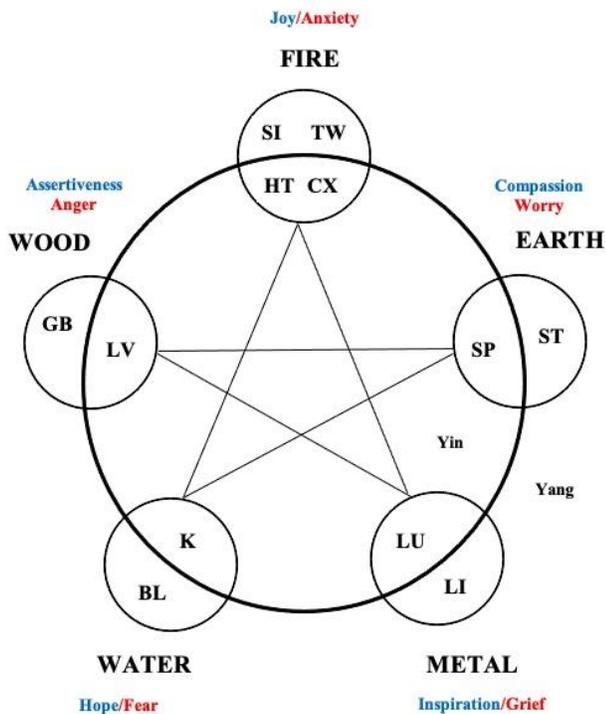
Neurovascular (NV) Holding Points for each Element



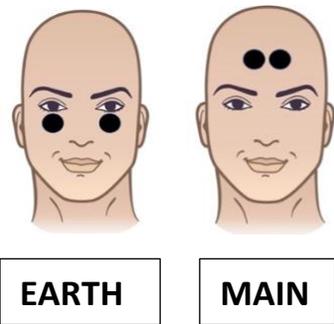
How to Use the NV Points

A. To work with a single emotion

1. Identify which negative emotion you want to work with.
2. Determine the associated Element.
3. Locate the NV points for the Element you want to work with.
4. Using *very light touch*, hold the Elemental NV points and the main NV points at the same time.
5. Focus on the emotion.
6. Hold for 1-20 minutes.

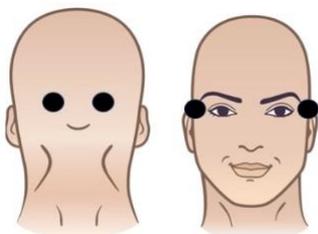
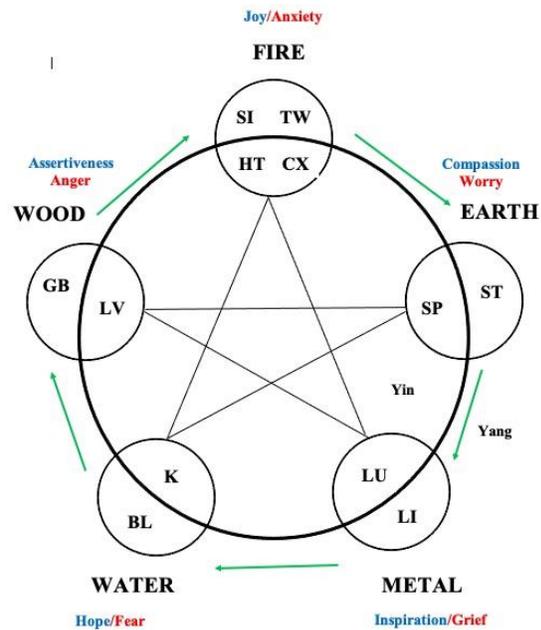


For example: To work with *Worry*
Worry is the Earth Element emotion.
 Hold the Earth NV points with the main NV points at the same time.



B. To work with emotions on the Flow Cycle

1. Identify which negative emotions you want to work with.
2. Determine the associated Elements and note their sequence on the Flow Cycle.
3. Locate the NV points for the Elements you want to work with.
4. Using *very light touch*, hold the NV points for the Element that appears earliest on the Flow Cycle, along with the main NV points. Focus on the emotion and hold for 1-3 minutes.
5. Using *very light touch*, hold the NV points for the second Element you identified, along with the main NV points. Focus on the emotion and hold for 1-3 minutes.



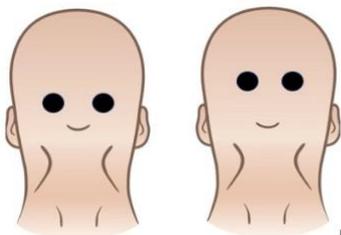
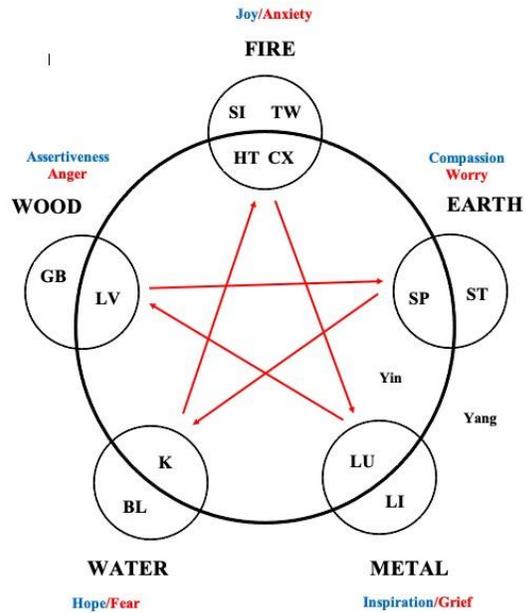
WATER

WOOD

For example: To work with *Fear* and *Anger*
Fear is the Water Element emotion.
Anger is the Wood Element emotion.
 Water precedes Wood on the Flow Cycle, so work with the Water NV points first.

C. To work with emotions on the Control Cycle

1. Using the arrows on the Control Cycle, identify which pair of negative emotions you want to work with.
2. Determine their associated Elements.
3. Locate the NV Points for the Elements you want to work with.
4. Using *very light touch*, hold both sets of Elemental NV points at the same time.
5. Hold for several minutes.



WATER

FIRE

For example: To work with *Fear* and *Anxiety*

Fear is the Water Element emotion.

Anxiety is the Fire Element emotion.

Water controls Fire on the Control Cycle, so hold the Water and Fire NV points at the same time.

Summary of Techniques

Element	Exercise	Purpose	Neurovasculars
			<i>Hold forehead (Main NVs) with...</i>
Water	Blowing Out the Candle	Dissipate fear	Back of skull, behind the eyes
Wood	Old Man and the Tide Pool	Dissipate anger	At temples
Fire	Old Man and the Tide Pool	Release anxiety, heart sorrow and wounding	Back of skull, behind eyebrows
Earth	Cradling the Baby	Dissipate worry	Cheekbones
Metal	Old Man and the Tide Pool	Release grief	Top of head

EP application: Use the Elemental Neurovascular Points as tapping points



Resources

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