

Chinese Medicine and the Betrayal of Intimacy: The Theory and Treatment of Abuse, Incest, Rape and Divorce with Acupuncture and Herbs Part III: Case Study

Abstract: Parts I and II of this article focused on the main types of betrayal of intimacy, e.g., abuse, incest, rape, and divorce, and the theoretic considerations for treatment from the perspective of the constitutional Five-element tradition of Chinese medicine as practiced by the author. In Part III, he takes the reader step-by-step through a detailed case study in which betrayal plays a significant etiological role in the patient's condition. Emphasis is placed on the diagnostic process including the implications of the constitutional type, pulse findings, the role of intuition and formulation of a treatment plan utilizing acupuncture, Chinese herbs and visual imagery or suggestions.

IN THE FINAL installment of this series, I present a detailed case study on the treatment of betrayal of intimacy with Chinese medicine utilizing the concepts discussed previously in Parts I and II. This case study is presented from the perspective of a constitutional Five-element tradition of Chinese medicine which I have identified throughout my writing (1) as an "inner tradition" of Chinese medicine. This lineage of thought holds that the highest purpose of medicine lies in assisting the patient in the fulfillment of their personal destiny. (2) Part III of this article is divided into two sections. The first presents my orientation toward conducting an intake and the process of diagnosis in general. This includes, in order, the questions I ask during an intake and highlights the depth of information potentially inherent in the patient's response. The second section presents a case study.

I. The Nature of the Diagnostic Process (3)

In my practice, the goal of the diagnostic process is threefold. First, it offers an opportunity to assess an individual's Five Element constitutional type (CT), as well as the important deficiencies, excesses, and stagnations, all of which may be harmonized with acupuncture and herbal medicines.

Secondly, the diagnostic process involves the collection of a detailed patient history which may be used as a reference point for assessing the patient's progress as treatment proceeds. Finally, the diagnostic session should help establish rapport between the practitioner and patient and, most importantly, initiate the patient's process of healing.

One of the most powerful approaches I have incorporated in my practice is that of assisting the patient in acknowledging the connection between their specific symptoms

and their beliefs, thoughts and actions. The opportunity for directing the patient's attention to these fundamental relationships and initiating them into the process of healing is afforded during the initial diagnostic sessions.

The verbal aspect of the diagnostic process may be divided into outer and inner components. On an outer level, the questions asked by the practitioner are necessary to ascertain specific information from the patient. Additionally, every interaction with a patient offers an opportunity for establishing trust and rapport. Therefore, on an inner level, the practitioner must have clear intention regarding the manner in which each question is asked, being absolutely clear about the nature of the messages they are sending and receiving. The energetic context for the communication which the practitioner consciously creates is just as important as the specific meanings of the spoken words.

Similarly, a patient's responses to the practitioner's questions also consist of an outer and inner component. Superficially, the content of the patient's answers is informational. During the course of the interview each answer contributes to an elaborate story. As in a book, the story changes with every sentence as the interview progresses. However, the main concern of the practitioner is not with the unfolding story but, rather, with its theme. For the practitioner, of utmost import in forming a constitutional diagnosis is the way in which the patient relates energetically to the events described during the telling of their story. Hence, one patient may display the theme of loss and grief (associated with the Metal element) while discussing their parent's divorce. Another patient may manifest neediness and a lack of sympathy (which establish an energetic theme associated with the Earth constitution) while discussing the same material. Therefore, it is the nature of the inner theme, revealed during the diagnostic process, that is of primary concern in establishing a constitutional diagnosis and assessing the quality of the patient's unique destiny.

Notes:

1. See Jarrett LS: V, VI and VII. I will also address the notion of my concept of the "inner tradition" in a future issue of this journal. 2) This view is contained in the introduction to the three sections of the Shen Nong Ben Cao.

3) The style and principles of diagnosis discussed here are based upon those taught at the Traditional Acupuncture Institute (TAI) in Columbia, Maryland (USA). I elaborate this information as it is consistent with my own style and clinical experience.