



## Lonny S. Jarrett, MAc

Lonny Jarrett has been practicing Chinese Medicine in Stockbridge, Massachusetts since 1986. He holds a master's degree in neurobiology and a 4th degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do. He is a founding board member of the Acupuncture Society of Massachusetts, and a Fellow of the National Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Lonny is author of *Nourishing Destiny: The Inner Tradition of Chinese Medicine* and, *The Clinical Practice of Chinese Medicine*. He also moderates the Nourishing Destiny list serve which can be subscribed over his web page at [spiritpathpress.com](http://spiritpathpress.com).

### Chinese Medicine and the Evolution of Consciousness *An Interview with Lonny S. Jarrett, MAc*

Interview by Matt Laughlin

**UE** (UnifiedEnergetics™): You've been active in this field since 1980, and in many respects a pioneer for the voice of the inner tradition of Chinese Medicine. Were you always drawn to medicine and specifically to the inner, spiritual significance of Chinese medicine from the beginning?

**LJ** (Lonny Jarrett): At a very young age, probably around five or six, I wanted to go into medicine, which really means I had no idea what I was getting into. (Laughter) I think something occurred along the lines of my mother was reading me *Bambi*, and *Bambi's* mother got killed and I started crying. She said, "well, when you grow up you can become a veterinarian, a doctor who takes care of sick animals." And I decided, "okay, that's what I'm going to do."

I'm 48 years old; during the time period I grew up in, there was a great emphasis on consciousness, at least in the developing countries. This was evident in the music of the time, The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix. And it was evident in the literature. My mother was an English teacher and had an extensive library, which included text books from the great traditions. I was about thirteen years old when I stumbled on *The Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Tao Te Ching*, the *I Ching* and the writings of Confucius.

**UE** Wow! At such a young age you were attracted to that kind of writing?

**LJ** Yes; I started reading these books, not that I really knew what they meant. This was at a time when many eastern traditions were coming to the west and consciousness was expanding. There were eastern teachers like Krishnamurti and western writers like Allen Ginsberg, Aldous Huxley and Allan Watts. By the time I was fourteen, I knew who they were and was reading all of them. In 1975, I wrote my college entrance essay at age seventeen on the theoretical differences between western philosophy and eastern philosophy and in that I discussed Chinese medicine. (Laughter)

While I was interested in these things at an early age, back then, it was not like a white, seventeen-year-old, from Long Island who wanted to be an acupuncturist had a place to go; there was no career to pursue. The only people practicing at that time would have been Asians in Chinatown; it's unlikely that they would have paid any attention to me and I wouldn't have even known how to find them or approach them.

So, I went to Hampshire College to study developmental neurobiology, a college that was on the cutting edge back then. I spent my last year of school publishing research at the Albert Einstein medical school. During that time, I took a ten week course on Chinese Medicine from a local acupuncturist; I fell in love with it and knew that this is what I was going to do with the rest of my life. Still, there were not many places to go at that time to study Chinese medicine.

There were only two schools in the whole country, there was no financial aid available and I only knew one person doing it.

So I went to graduate school for neuroscience and eventually defended a doctoral proposal in front of the medical school faculty on researching the neurological and neurochemical basis of acupuncture. As a result, I was basically asked to leave the program. I was told that nobody was going to get a doctorate and use it to further Chinese medicine, which most of the faculty considered witchcraft. This was in 1982.

I took a master's degree, and went back to Albert Einstein medical school, worked and continued doing research and saved enough money to go to an acupuncture school. After school, I started to practice immediately and apprenticed with Leon Hammer, a well-known psychiatrist applying Chinese medicine.

My interest my whole life has really been consciousness. I can remember being about six years old, pressing on my eye lids, and trying to decide if the patterns I saw were real just because I could see them, or if they were just an artifact of pressing. I was thinking about consciousness very early on.

**UE** And this interest in consciousness led you to pursue a career in Chinese medicine?

**LJ** Yes. In essence, I pursued a career in Chinese medicine from the very beginning, always for the sake of understanding the enlightenment teachings; how to alter and how to raise consciousness in a vertical direction; how to use Chinese medicine to help advance the evolution of consciousness in a hierarchical direction. While I had been studying developmental neurobiology, with a strong interest in the evolution of consciousness, I discovered that you can't find consciousness in an electron microscope, on an oscilloscope screen, or in a test tube. It turned out that neuroscience didn't concern consciousness and only pertained to the physical structures of the nervous system. Chinese medicine literally exploded into my awareness as the other half of everything I hadn't learned in my scientific education. Based on the Tao Te Ching and the ancient texts, there was great, great depth there. I went very deeply into it.

Back then, I was astounded at the close-mindedness I encountered in neuroscience and the western sciences. I was shocked by how little physicians understood the strength and weaknesses and limits of their own form of inquiry. I assumed I was leaving this and going into Chinese medicine where I would encounter open minded people with deep core values and a real fascination. To my surprise when I got there, this was not necessarily the case.

Just as my neuroscience teachers couldn't answer my questions, many of my teachers of Chinese medicine couldn't answer my questions. It was

clear to me that many were also practicing at a technical level without understanding the historical context, or theoretical foundations, of the medicine. They had learned Chinese medicine through a window of the emerging postmodern consciousness at the time, and they didn't have an understanding that corresponded to the sophistication of the classical texts or to the higher implications of the holistic perspective emerging in the early 80's. In short, many had either a postmodern, humanistic, psychological approach (the green <sup>V</sup>Meme), a dogmatic classical approach (blue Meme), a western scientific core value system (orange <sup>V</sup>Meme), or were caught up in magical thinking (purple <sup>V</sup>Meme). The <sup>V</sup>Memes are stages of development in consciousness in a system called Spiral Dynamics and eloquently described in Ken Wilber's work. In Chapter 37 of my Clinical Practice book, I've written a survey of the 4,000 year development of Chinese medicine from the perspective of Spiral Dynamics.

**UE** For our readers unfamiliar with Spiral Dynamics - which I understand is a human developmental scheme originated by Clare Graves and later refined by Don Beck - would you give a brief description of its presentation of developmental levels?

**LJ** Very, basically, and again, Ken Wilber's work is a great place to learn more about this, you could say Spiral Dynamics is a scheme of ten general levels, or <sup>V</sup>Memes of human development, each with distinct values, and world perspectives. Having nothing to do with race or gender, and everything to do with the type or <sup>V</sup>Meme a person or group is in, Spiral Dynamics is really a useful model for understanding the evolution of human consciousness. Each <sup>V</sup>Meme, or level, was given a color as a mnemonic device. The "first tier" begins with beige which is representative of a basic, human level of survival and instincts and moves up through six stages to arrive at the "green <sup>V</sup>Meme" or the egalitarian consciousness that emerged in to 1960's. These value systems are dominated by ego - the separate self sense. In the 1970s-1980s a jump occurred to 2nd Tier, the yellow and turquoise memes representing holistic and integral stages of consciousness. These are dominated somewhat less by ego as systems theory and a valuation of a whole greater than one's self begins to emerge. The highest <sup>V</sup>Memes identified so far are the 3rd tier coral and teal <sup>V</sup>Memes which can be considered to be cosmic - and god - centric consciousness respectively. Again, this is a simplification just to clarify the discussion.

**UE** You mention that at the time you studied Chinese medicine, the consciousness of the majority of your colleagues seemed to be predominantly in the Blue <sup>V</sup>Meme. What kind of view did they have of Chinese medicine?

**LJ** Many did seem to be in the Blue <sup>V</sup>Meme, a very concrete and literal level in its orientation. They might argue over what some dead person meant 1,500 years ago in a sentence of text. Or they were in the Orange <sup>V</sup>Meme, meaning they were concerned about rationally codifying everything; “this acupuncture point has this physical function.” They still talk about points as if they were buttons you could push to make things happen in a very physical and mechanistic way, which precisely reflects the dominant materialism of our culture.

My recent article called Primacy of Spirit was an answer to a letter written about my work from the chief editor of a journal of Chinese medicine, who just a year ago, declared that Chinese medicine can’t address the mind, the emotions, or spirit. This view is clearly a reflection of an Orange <sup>V</sup>Meme materialistic worldview. The furthest Chinese Medicine had evolved when I was originally studying, at least in my teachers, was the Green <sup>V</sup>Meme. Very simply, the Green <sup>V</sup>Meme is known as ‘The Sensitive Self’ and values egalitarianism and feelings and fails to recognize hierarchy. Despite the greater degree of caring for earth and other peoples its greatest limitation is narcissism or an over inflated sense of self.

Around 1985, I started moving pretty deeply into holistic and integral awareness and systems theory. I could really perceive the moral corruptness of much of new age healing though I didn’t really have a language to describe it at the time (this was later provided by Spiral Dynamics). This corruptness was evident in the Collusion Evident in the green <sup>V</sup>Meme’s value of non-judgement masquerading as “unconditional love.” I also had difficulty with the Purple <sup>V</sup>Meme’s emphasis on magical and tribal thinking; the flakiness of crystals and newage music and iconography. Of course, not much has changed! (Laughter)

At the time I wrote my first book, I found that there was really something going on in healing that is of interest to me and that was not explored in the broader world of medicine. No one could answer my questions and I just had to find out.

I spent a good fifteen years researching my first book looking for the historical foundations for the transformation I saw occurring in my patients. By the time I was finished writing, I had done about thirty thousand clinical sessions. The first book represented my attempts to really ground myself in the deepest, traditional orientations of Chinese medicine. The classic herbal text, the Shen Nong Ben Cao (believed to have been written in its original form around 300 bce) held that the highest aspect of healing corresponded with the fulfillment of destiny, and destiny is really synonymous with enlightenment. I really wrote the first book to explore the relevance of the enlightenment teachings to medicine;

what does destiny mean practically in a human life?

I finished that book, and it did really well. It’s an international standard now and sells all over the world. I finished that book with an understanding, in my own experience, of how one gets original nature, loses it, and of how we can even sort of start making our way back to ourselves. But I still had no understanding of the enlightenment aspects of the teachings. Zero. I could have lectured about it for days, and did. But in my own experience, I didn’t know what was being pointed to.

**UE** How did that come to change for you before the publication of your second book?

**LJ** My spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen has his international community centered a few miles from my house. I went to a couple of his teachings. The morning of the first retreat I did with him, I closed my eyes to meditate and there was an explosion. Nothing has ever been the same since. In one trillionth of a second, I knew I had found exactly what I was looking for. I said, “oh my God, enlightenment is real and here it is.” It was a perfect integral teaching of enlightenment with no myth or superstition involved emerging directly in my own experience.

With regard to my second book, I had to rewrite it more than three times to really bring it into line with what I had discovered. It’s really looking toward a cosmic-centric perspective of medicine. A big interest of mine centers on ideas of the spiritual practice of medicine. We all talk about it. You can find a thousand books on it. And what I’ve come to realize is nobody knows what it is. In all the literature and discussions about what spiritual medicine is, there is a lot of pretense. If you look at the 15 billion year evolution of matter, and maybe a million year evolution of consciousness, and the 50 thousand year evolution of our species, human consciousness is only just beginning to wake up to a recognition of itself as spirit.

I am really interested in questions like, “in the context of the polar ice caps melting, and religious fundamentalists trying to get their hands on nuclear weapons, and the fact that we are in the middle of the largest species extinction in a quarter of a million years, what is an appropriate context for the practice of holistic medicine?” There is no problem with the context of the practice of western medicine. If someone shoots you with a gun, or you’re in a car accident, if you’re injured, the goal 10,000 years ago would have been consistent with the goal 1,000 years from now: stop bleeding and save life. If you break your leg, mend the leg. Western medicine isn’t in crisis in the way I’m talking about. But holistic medicine should be in crisis. Holistic medicine should now be in the kind of crisis that physics was in when quantum mechanics was being proposed. Physicists couldn’t

reconcile that a photon could appear both as a wave or as a particle depending on how it was examined and this resulted in the emergence of a new paradigm.

The challenges that face humanity are unprecedented. If any one of them comes through, it's going to be a disaster. In essence, every one of them is a problem of consciousness; or rather, a lack of consciousness. The illusion of being separate carried over evolutionarily through the first tier <sup>V</sup>Memes, is a great source of all illness internally; and it's the source of many of our challenges externally. When I say it's the source of all illness, that has to be qualified. It's the source of what in Chinese medicine we would call all the internal syndrome patterns. It's not necessarily the source of getting diabetes if you have four relatives with it.

The greatest challenges on the planet are largely a matter of consciousness. If the goal is the evolution of consciousness and evolution only occurs under stress, never in the presence of comfort, where does that leave holistic medicine whose deepest core value seems to be helping patients feel comfortable?

**UE** Given your description of these challenges we face, and the opportunities to support an evolution of consciousness available in Chinese medicine and other holistic approaches to healing, what in your mind is the answer to these challenges?

**LJ** I'm quite convinced the answer is this - that the most important limiting factor in our ability to help raise consciousness in patients is the level of our own consciousness. Almost nobody is serious about taking themselves on in that way. Many people will say, I'm Buddhist, I'm Taoist, I go to the desert on vision quests, I pray, I meditate, I do this and that. Yet, when you really look at it, there is no transformation taking place. The motivation behind the practice for most people is comfort, feeling more relaxed and at ease and escaping the burden of having to interact in this complex world.

You could say the motivation for most people engaged in some sort of practices is to cope with ego, rather than to destroy it.... And when you talk about destroying it, people say, "well that sounds very dualistic, it's all one, after all, the ego is an expression of God, too." The Green <sup>V</sup>Meme gets very aggressive; they'll sit there and say, "well, Hitler was an expression of God, it's all one." When asked to make an honest discernment between the vertical development of Hitler and Nelson Mandela, they can't, or won't. And if you're treating from that flatland place,

none of your patients are going to transform. So my goal is to take myself on as seriously as possible, and hopefully always tell the patient just a little more truth than they can handle. I always endeavor to open up just a little more perspective than is comfortable.

**UE** In your experience, how do you balance compassionately meeting patients where they are while simultaneously pointing to something beyond their development?

**LJ** I think the goal is less to meet the patient where he or she is and more to push myself to live what I know. Consciousness is directly transmittable. If I have a higher perspective, because I've seen more, and I'm living up to it, this creates an "evolutionary tension" a natural pull in the best part of a patient that wants to come further. People literally have to become the type of patients who don't have their problems and that means changing.

One thing for sure is that if we're really mostly

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aligned with the sensitive part of ourselves that needs to be handled delicately, that victimized self, then we're not going to take anyone else on. If we think that we as practitioners

are these sensitive selves that can only take so much, and that we don't want to be judged or held to live up to anything, then we're sure not going to do that with patients. What I try to do is to recognize what level of development a patient is at, and further recognize that within that level, within their <sup>V</sup>Meme, their tier, how advanced are they and what are they living up to?

What I try to do with patients is to make a connection between whatever it is they're complaining about, and how they behave and what they believe. Ultimately, so they can see that they are making choices and are not victims. What I find is - to paraphrase my teacher, Andrew - everyone wants to get better but nobody wants to change. For example, my basic finding is that conservative people go to physicians to get drugs and surgery so they can feel better without having to change. Liberal people come to acupuncturists and homeopaths, take herbs and get acupuncture so that they can feel better without having to change. In both cases, nobody really wants to change. Even among very educated people, many don't recognize hierarchy or the absolute so they literally feel no pull to move ahead; in fact they may not even be aware it's possible.

**UE** They misinterpret hierarchy to mean differ-

ence in equality?

**LJ** Yes. In other words, there are certainly inalienable rights for all people. Everyone should have the right to clean water, air and nutrition. But that doesn't mean that everyone is as competent as everyone else. We sit in a circle and reach a consensus, which means find a solution that incorporates some of what the least competent person thinks and some of what the most competent person thinks. Instead, wouldn't we want to find the best solution without regard to people's feelings? For instance, the Green <sup>V</sup>Meme, doesn't recognize hierarchy; in other words, "nobody knows better than me." If you're a healer and your fundamental position is everybody has their own truth, how can you make the clinical discernment needed to bring somebody higher? If the patient's perspective on why he or she is making bad decisions is considered as valid as your perspective as a practitioner on why they should stop, where does that leave you?

**UE** There is no recognition of an absolute truth?

**LJ** Yes, it all becomes about feeling. You stick the needles in and ask how are you feeling? They say, "I feel good," and you take the needles out.

**UE** How do you meaningfully work with people that refuse to acknowledge hierarchy?

**LJ** Most of my students come in not recognizing any hierarchy. It's really bizarre to have people pay a large amount of money, travel half-way around the world to take a course, when they think their perspective is equally valid to that of the teacher. With students or patients, it all gets subtle and takes a lot of expertise; you have to ultimately be willing to lose patients, to lose students, and to lose friends for something you have absolute conviction in.

**UE** In the context of understanding hierarchy and the absolute, what are your thoughts on the destructive nature of relativism, this error that there is no independent universal truth, that all is arbitrary differences in interpretation, that morality has no basis and therefore restrictions and laws are ultimately repressive? Specifically, how do you see the errors of relativism influencing the practice of medicine?

**LJ** I would say one of the deepest sources of illness in our culture, psychologically, spiritually, emotionally,

comes from relativism, because nobody can have whole-hearted conviction in anything. In anything! I've treated people ordained in lineages, Buddhist priests or teachers who come to me with anxiety attacks, and insomnia wanting to get off Prozac; despite meditating once a day for thirty years. You realize there is no development occurring. The reason for this lack of development is because there is no concept of the absolute and there is no notion of vertical development. You can only develop along the absolute axis, otherwise it's all lateral development which means one just learns more and more about what one already knows and continues to hold it in the same, limited, perspective.

I could speak to it very simply. It could take quite awhile to go into the historical background of relativism. But clearly we come from a culture of holistic healing in which the attitude is, "you have your truth and I have my truth, nobody knows the truth, walk a mile in my shoes, you don't judge me I don't judge you, let's leave each other alone, there is no absolute truth." What you notice is that if you talk

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about something with absolute conviction, regardless of how positive what you're saying is, people will get upset. Not at the meaning or the inferences you're making which they may agree

with, but they will freak out just because you have no doubt.

The thing is, holistic healing or integral healing, in its most superficial meaning is interpreted by people to mean, "I see the patient for who they are, body, mind and spirit." But you can only really do that to the degree you, yourself are integrated. And ideally, integral medicine would mean the goal is One. The goal of a real, holistic, integral medicine would be to move the patient ever closer towards being wholesome, unified and One. This means strengthening the presence of everything that is real in the person's consciousness and helping them get rid of everything that is not real, which would be seen as stagnation in the context of Chinese medicine.

Speaking of relativism, what is interesting is how dominant this view is among many holistic healers; how materialistic they are. They'll freak out at this and say, "how can you say "this isn't real" or "that isn't real?" – it's all God, how can you judge?" Again, you ask them to make a discernment between Nelson Mandela and Osama Bin Laden and they can't do it! Yet ask such a practitioner how much blood stasis is healthy and they'll say "none." Well how much phlegm is healthy? "None." How much heat, in the pathological sense, is healthy?

“None.” At the materialistic level, so long as it is dealing with the physical body, people are very clear, it’s black and white, a substance has a positive or destructive physiological influence.

When you get into behavior, it’s suddenly all kinds of gray and “we’re all doing the best we can” – immediately it becomes relativistic. You start to understand that many practitioners themselves, for the most part, have no moral compass, no north star, no center that never changes regardless of the weather. You realize that, oh my God, they just recognize the Absolute itself as just another relative position. Traditionally, there is the archetype of the Sage who is held as the embodiment of perfection. But to the relativist, the sage’s attainment is viewed as equal to, and just different from, his own condition. Thank you very much Lao Tzu for your opinion! (Laughter)

There is no recognition of hierarchy. Literally, the president of an acupuncture school told me emphatically that, “evolution is a concept that white people thought of.” He then pointed to a goat and stated, “that goat doesn’t need concepts. There is no such thing as hierarchy in nature, it’s an illusion.” I’d rank that statement alongside my neurology professor’s insistence that “nothing exists that cannot be measured.” What have things come to when a sophisticated and well educated adult can’t discern a nuance of difference between his own consciousness and that of a goat’s? The green Vmeme makes the whole world flat, and it’s constraining our potential to move ahead.

There has to be an insistence on hierarchy and that hierarchy has to be held by the practitioner. Many new age healers have this idea that, “when I go into the treatment, I am channeling.” And that’s code for, “it doesn’t matter how messed up my life is, it doesn’t matter how overweight I am, or how little I exercise or how I much drink, or how crazy I act under stress, because when I go in the room I am just a vessel.” And it’s not true. As a matter of fact, any impurity in us is going to taint anything coming through us. We have to take our own level of development very seriously. You know you could move to a monastery, live there fifty years and practice twenty hours a day; it doesn’t mean you’re serious or that any real change is occurring. What is the context in which your holding your experience in, and is that evolving?

**UE** You write how essential it is for a practitioner to evolve their consciousness. Could you say more about that?

**LJ** We live in a victimized culture; for most of us, our greatest sense of self is as a victim. 100 billion galaxies, 100 billion constellations and there is me and I’m separate. “It’s doing it to me.” It is imperative that the practitioner gain as much as experience as

possible with the part of themselves where there is no problem, where nothing ever happened. We could call that the absolute Self out of which explodes the authentic Self, the evolutionary impulse itself. It’s important that the practitioner gain so much experience with these untainted aspects of the Self, that they are so identified with them, that this is all they recognize as real in themselves and in the patient.

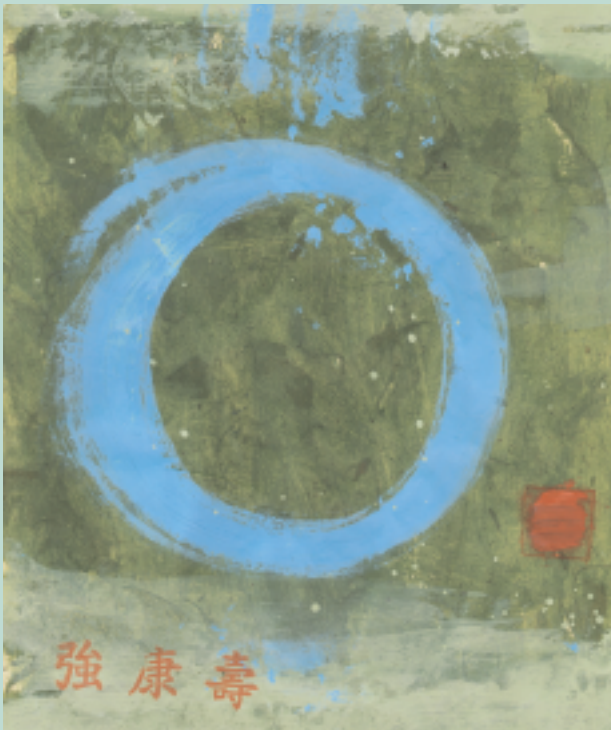
Metaphorically, the more the practitioner is willing to look at his own life in a black and white context, and get rid of the black and just move toward the white, the better he will serve the patient. It puts the practitioner in a hierarchical place relative to the patient, where the practitioner will only recognize as true in the patient that part which is always evolving. Only that will be recognized as real, so the practitioner will only engage in a relationship with that best part of the patient. When you do that, what you will often find is that the ego’s position is, “you’re not listening! What about me? I get an opinion, too, don’t I? Your not taking care of me!”

**UE** You write of three influential factors in transformation and healing – the grace of Spirit, the level of development of the practitioner and the motivation or willingness to change in the patient. Would you speak to your experience with the latter?

**LJ** What I find is that all patients are divided. There is the person who finds out about me, makes the call, makes the appointment, comes up the stairs and sits in front of me, wanting to get better and change; they’re motivated. And then there is also the patient sitting in the chair who is literally the disease itself. Where one of them will begin a sentence, the other will finish – ‘I really like what you’re saying about having to change; *but* here are all the reasons I can’t, or won’t, do it now.” (Laughter)

Part of holding the hierarchy is learning to recognize the degree to which the patient has awakened the aspirations of consciousness itself. Being able to discern what the patient actually knows, and then empower him or her to live up to it. If we could just assist people in living up to the highest that they already know, without even teaching them anything else, we would see a huge difference in this world. If we could just help them live up to what they know in their own experience; without even having to take anything on faith. What you find out is when you recognize the highest a patient already knows and then push them to actually embrace it, they will immediately start to move away from it and deny it, like the parable of Peter the apostle, denying his knowledge of Christ.

The issue here really is one of conscience. For the sake of this discussion I’ll define conscience as the knowing and feeling sense that arises when we allow ourselves to experience the gap between what



we know is true and how we are actually living. Because the postmodern mind does not recognize hierarchy, our general relationship to our own conscience, the voice of divinity within us, is “nobody tells me what to do. You (the authentic self) have your truth and I (the ego) have my truth.” The most significant part of any holistic or integral medicine would be to support people to face into and close this gap between the recognition of higher truths and their actual state. It means awakening conscience through the application of medicine. We as practitioners are the limiting factor in treatment, so it is imperative that we take this challenge seriously in our own lives, for the sake of our patients.

**UE** And when you align with what is real in the patient, the authentic Self as you put it, do you find that despite the resistance that arises, a spark is also lit?

**LJ** It really depends. I’ve had patients come in for an initial interview and I’ve watched them make a decision then and there to overcome severe mental illness. One person was on Lithium for years, manic depressive, and literally made a decision there based on that spark you just referred to, and enacted change in her life. Years have passed now and she has never returned to medications and is leading a healthy and productive life.

The hierarchy of body, mind and spirit is related to this. From my perspective and understanding, I would define Spirit as the part of us not touched by life. Now Chinese medicine is very interesting. Chinese medicine started in the Purple <sup>V</sup>Meme, so there is a lot of nonsense about spiritual illness.

There are all these numbering systems in Chinese medicine, one through twelve, the five elements, the six divisions, the eight principles and so on. What I am really interested in is the basic impersonal mechanism in every human being that personalizes life experience, which is the most profound source of illness. This mechanism works the same in everyone.

From a Green <sup>V</sup>Meme perspective, people are really interested in Chinese medicine because it can generate a unique diagnosis to each individual. All the sensitive selves feel like they’ve really been seen. But in reality, that cycle of the five elements is a cycle of conditioned weather, thought, and feeling. And, the point was to escape it, to move from the five back to the two, and ultimately back to the one, from duality to nonduality. This is the absolute perspective available only at the center of the circle. And since the absolute is not recognized among Green <sup>V</sup>Meme practitioners or patients, what holistic medicine has become is a way to use the five elements to celebrate diversity and help everybody “harmonize” with nature, which is just really code for ‘feel good’. It’s a very relativistic and primitive notion of nature that we are harmonizing people with - one of seasonal change on earth. The goal of the highest practice of medicine is to attain the perspective of that place that never changes regardless of the weather. We now know the universe has 100 billion galaxies in it, what, I wonder, does it mean to become one with that? To take it one step further; to push into my teacher Andrew’s perspective, what does it mean to recognize one’s responsibility for driving the entire process?

I remember when I was a kid, my friend’s mother had a TV tray with thirty-seven different medicines on them. People now have these herbal medicine chests. I have patients who come into see me after seeing several previous practitioners, and they bring fishing tackle boxes with different products in every little box, forty different things to take. Like, “oh well, when I’m feeling a little tired I’ll take this or if I am feeling a little tense I’ll take that.” This misses what I would say is the most profound medicine from a spiritual perspective, namely, consciousness awakening to its own nature. I’m quite convinced that Chinese medicine can be used powerfully to do that, to aid it, but the context has to be there. And that means we practitioners have to lead the change I’m pointing to.

**UE** Would you speak to the importance of recontextualizing Chinese medicine in a way for it be meaningfully understood or applied?

**LJ** Essentially, it means reframing the medicine in an evolutionary and developmental context. The ancient Chinese saw time as circular and not developmental. Just look at a five-element chart of Chinese calendar and you’ll see what I mean. What if qi

(chi) doesn't flow in a circle but in an upward spiral. The flexible - minded Taoist shouldn't have a hard time making this leap, but it is a perspective that changes everything!

The profession really needs to move past the green <sup>V</sup>Meme if it's going to remain relevant. Everybody is talking these days about 'spirit'. "Spirit this and Spirit that." In my own experience, Spirit is unbearably beautiful, absolutely unbearably beautiful. Every relative part of me can't bear it. So in my greatest experience of Spirit, I have to admit that I choose to move back away and establish some kind of control or boundary with it. You know, we all talk about Spirit, but I think it would be really good to be humble in this regard. What would it mean to merge with spirit and never return? Death to the ego. And that's terrifying to the part that has to die. A person of character keeps pushing ahead despite his or her resistance and that is where real development takes place. I guess, I'm just saying that there is a certain kind of seriousness that comes from having one's eye on the center of the target, we need to eliminate the new age, feel good fluff, especially as it pertains to our own image of ourselves as "spiritual healers."

**UE** And the realization of Spirit is really at the heart of your two books, especially your most recent?

**LJ** The books are pointing the way towards some-

thing. The first book points more toward the nature of the perennial teachings, and it ends with a quote from Bruce Lee. It is a beautiful quote I found the night before I published the book and I put it on the last page immediately because it pointed toward something I was intuiting. Mr. Lee says, 'The way to transcend karma lies in the proper use of mind and the will. The oneness of all life is a truth that can be fully realized only when the false notions of the separate self whose destiny can be considered apart from the whole are forever annihilated.'

I started writing my first book with this idea of individual destiny, and as I got deeper and deeper into it I could see the individual self is an illusion. I think that my book is very successful, in part, because the Green <sup>V</sup>Meme really picked up this notion of individual destiny. The second book is really pointing towards a kind of medicine which honors the uniqueness of each person in the medical sense of making a differential diagnosis but also looks into the impersonal nature of the mechanism that generates a separate self sense, with the idea of annihilating everything that brings about separateness. I'm quite sure that the illusion of separateness is the real internal source of illness. And that the source of all healing lies in surrender to that best part of ourselves where nothing ever happened and whose highest aspiration is to always move ahead. Thank you.

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