

West on the Wheel Acupressure

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Chinese Five Elements:

The Season of Wood

by Karen Shaw

Wood is the name the Chinese use to describe the energy of Springtime. Wood is the essence of the Spring energy. Observe what is around us now: instead of barren tree forms, there are now limbs, soft, pliable and bright green. Some have burst into magnificent blossom almost overnight. This is the intensity of the Wood energy; that overnight, there is tremendous energetic movement and nothing is able to stop it. There is growth even in the concrete areas upon which we walk; every open crevice has green shoots of the new growth coming from it—the energy is

up and out and all around us.

We can recognize the contrast between the Water energy of Winter and the Wood energy of Spring, and know that this is in us also. It makes sense now why it is so important to gather our reserves during Winter in the season of Water, so that we may meet the Spring season of Wood with the energy that is called for.

In our physical bodies, the Wood element governs the organ systems of the Gall Bladder and the Liver. The Gall Bladder Meridian pathway begins at the outer corner of the eye, the zig-zags down the side of the

body and legs, to the nail of the fourth toe. The Liver Meridian pathway begins on the big toe, and goes up the inner aspect of the legs to the abdomen, ending just under the rib cage. The time of Wood energy at its peak in the Gall Bladder is from 11pm to 1am, and the Liver is from 1am to 3am.

Energetically, the Wood energy is our own creativity; the new shoots of expression burst forth from within us. It is our vision that comes clear to us from the potential of Water. The Gall Bladder energy is what allows us to decide to move in whatever path we

envision and the Liver makes the plan to carry out the goal. This happens with the motivational power of the Wood energy. What is important to remember is that the balanced Wood energy is flexible, like soft new shoots of growth in Nature. It is strong yet flexible and yielding. In Spring, we must be strong yet flexible in the intensity of our aspirations in the coming year. Anger or frustration can occur when the Wood energy is stifled; inability to create a plan to guide us is another stifling of the Wood energy.

The Wood energy is very powerful, but also very sensitive and vulnerable. How can our awareness of the Wood energy help us in our day-to-day life? That awareness can let us know that

the anger someone is feeling is from the frustration over the interruption of their life's plan. Perhaps they have to make a big decision; maybe it wasn't in their plan to have an illness, injury or even death occur. They are angry and frustrated, they don't have the reserves to cope, either financially or emotionally or both (this aspect speaks of the Water element).

We can help create movement by deep listening and warm connection, which will both nourish the Wood energy and allow it to release. We can be the warmth of the Fire, which is the next element on the cycle as we move from Spring to Summer. The warmth of connection and support will calm the intensity of the Wood energy. This is true also with animals to whom we tend.



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Mission: To the best of my ability, being calm in center, open and gentle in heart, hold the space to allow the vast, powerful, gentle, healing modality of Acupressure to flow through me to others, two-legged and four-legged, bringing balance, integrity, harmony and oneness to our relationship with Mother Earth, ourselves and all our relations.