

Eastern Perspectives on Mental Health

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Introduction

- Mainstream mental health research and practice has been dominated by Western approaches which have a number of limitations and issues (e.g., reductive materialism, dualism). (Samuel & Deane, 2019)
- Alternatives to mental health such as traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Yuan Shi Dian medicine (YSD) present different perspectives that provide effective treatment for mental health issues. (Barnett, 2014)
- There has been a call for collaboration between mainstream biomedical and traditional and alternative approaches for integrative mental health (Kpobi & Swartz, 2018).
- This presentation will discuss theories & practices of TCM & YSD in comparison to Western approaches.

What is TCM?

- TCM is primary traditional medicine developed in China for thousands of years.
- It is now used in most countries & has become one of the most influential medicines in the world.
- It includes both theories and practices including acupuncture, moxibustion, herbs, tuina, cupping, gua sha, taijiquan, qigong, dietary therapy, etc.



Resources:

- ✓ WHO info on TCM: <https://www.who.int/>
- ✓ World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies 世界中医药学会联合会: <http://www.wfcms.org/>
- ✓ China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences <https://www.cacms.ac.cn/>

Tu Youyou

Nobel Laureate in Medicine

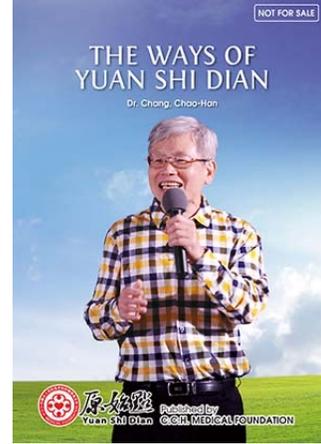
Tu discovered artemisinin, which was inspired by traditional Chinese medicine. The drug she developed has slashed malaria deaths and has become a mainstay in fighting the mosquito-borne disease.



What is Yuan Shi Dian (YSD) Medicine?

- As a new alternative, YSD has rapidly developed since 2006.
- It has effectively and successfully treated numerous “incurable” & tough diseases (e.g., schizophrenia, depression, anxiety disorder, cancer, heart diseases, autism, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, PVS, COVID-19).
- YSD appears to be effective, fast, safe, reliable, simple, practical, natural, wholistic, non-intrusive, non-medicational, replicable, precise, patient-centred, daily-life based, DIY, not-for-profit, & at a minimal cost.
- Its prevention & treatment plan is standardized including 6 core components: 1) Antui (pressure point); 2) internal heat sources (e.g., diet); 3) external heat sources; 4) appropriate exercise; 5) sufficient rest; & 6) peaceful mind.

✓ Resources: <http://www.cch-foundationusa.org/en/>

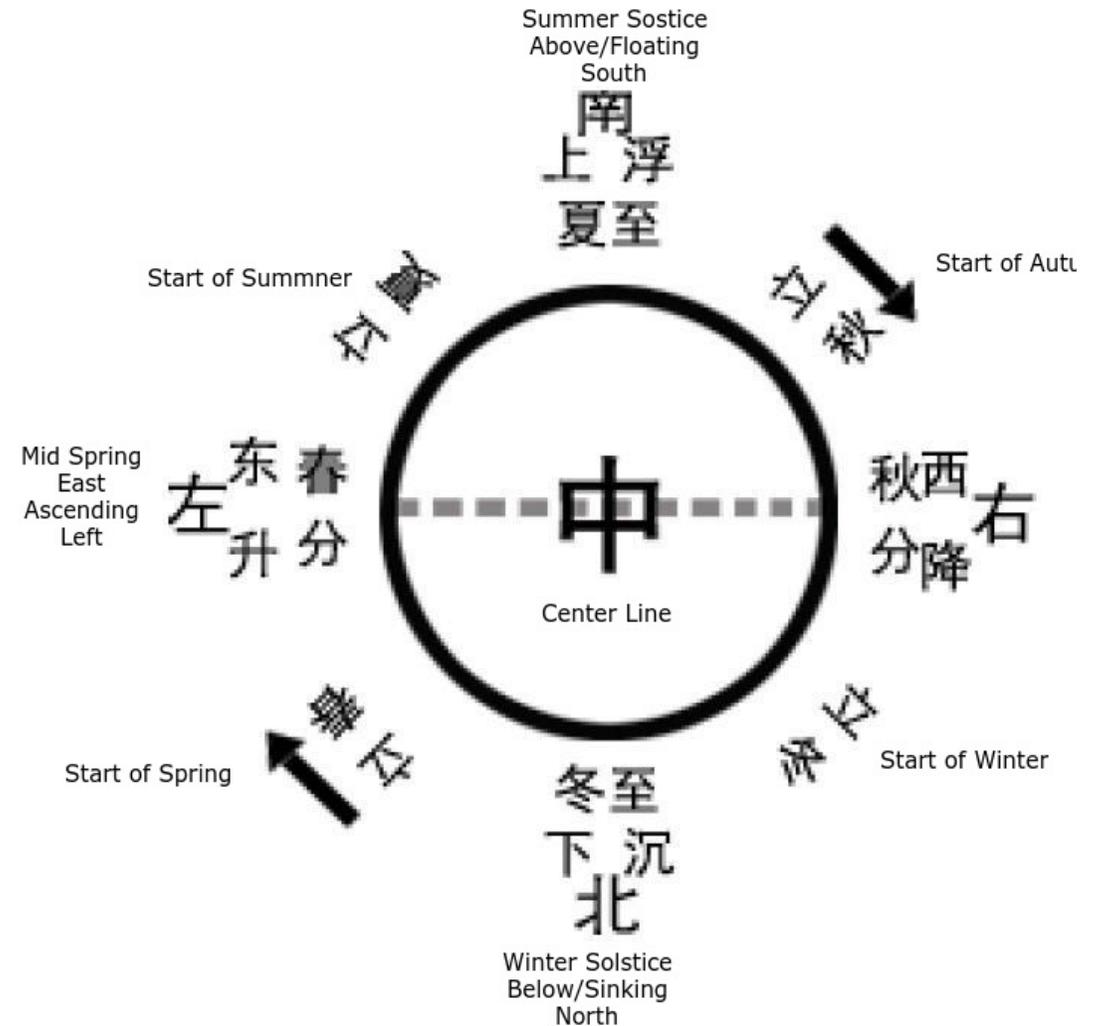


Strengths & characteristics of Eastern approaches (e.g., TCM, YSD) (Chai, 2007; Lu, 2006, 2008)

- 1) Wholism: nature-human unity; human body as a whole and a miniature of universe.
- 2) 形 (physical, body) 神 (soul, spirit) 合一 (unit): physical-mental unit, body-mind integration.
- 3) Prevention is far more important than treatment.
- 4) Treating the root while treating the symptoms (depending on acute or chronic illnesses).
- 5) Cultivation of life 养生; preservation of health 保健: not exist in Western health & medicine; positive medicine; the principle of cultivation of life 养生原则 includes body-soul cultivation 形神兼养.
- 6) Definition of *health*: harmony, balance, interdependency, wholism, unity, etc. (vs WHO's: "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.")
- 7) Eastern approaches may explain and treat many physical and mental illnesses that Western approaches do not do well.
 - a. "I do everything right, but why do I still get sick?" (e.g., TCM balanced yin-yang qi; YSD in bodily impairment and insufficient heat energy)
 - b. Mental health issues mostly have their physical roots in the physical-mental unit.

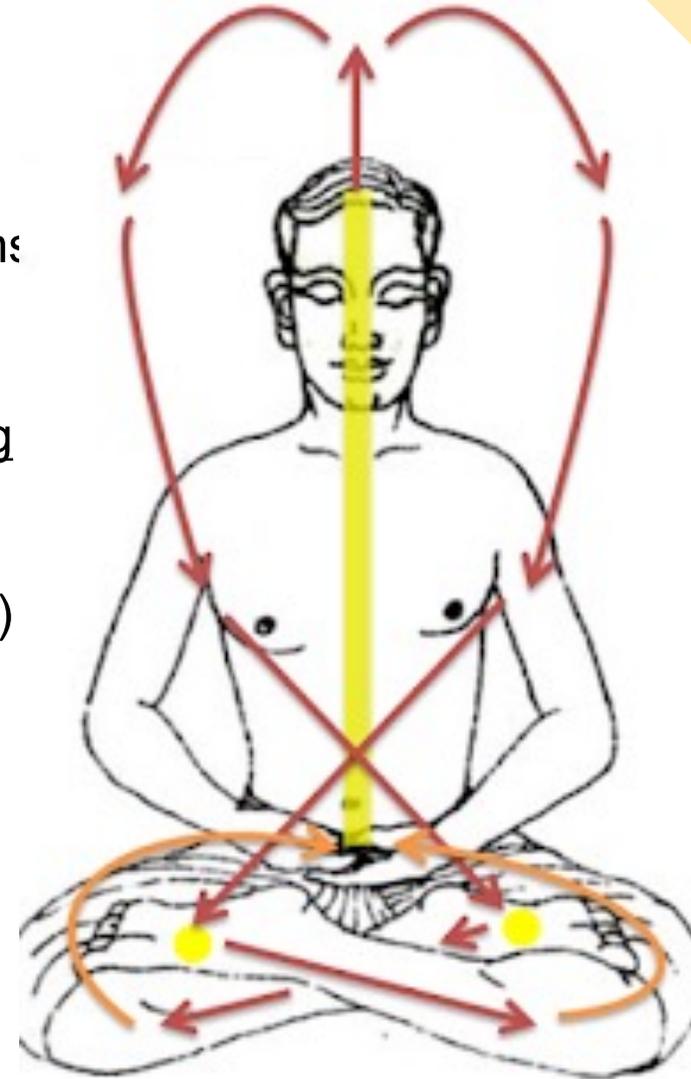
Specific theories (Chai, 2007)

- 1) **YSD**: Fundamental causes or roots of illnesses: bodily impairment & insufficient energy
- 2) **Universe-Human Oneness** 天人合一 (Daoism):
 - a. Stay in nature as much as possible: outside, the sun, house windows ajar;
 - b. Follow nature:
 - Seasonal routine (sow in spring 春生、develop in summer 夏长、harvest in autumn 秋收、store in winter 冬藏); wear more in spring & less in autumn 春捂秋冻
 - Daily routine (e.g., bowel movement, bedtime);
 - Aging (e.g., accept aging, take it easy)
 - c. Stay away from unnatural resources as much as possible: non-organic foods or drink, minimal use of modern tech, etc.



3) Qi Theory 气论

- a. Qi refers to “air” (narrowly used); It also refers to anything (widely used).
- b. Qi monism 气一元论: Qi is the fundamental and primitive particle that forms the universe. Everything in nature results from Qi movement and change.
- c. Illness results from weak, stagnant, imbalanced, or inharmonious yin-yang Qi.
 - “正气存内，邪不可干；邪之所凑，其气必虚 When your good Qi is strong, bad (pathogenic) Qi cannot affect you; if bad Qi affects (invades) you, your good Qi must be weak (insufficient)”.
- d. Application & implication:
 - Strengthen good Qi: innate (non-overwork), acquired (foods, fresh air).
 - Stay away from bad Qi (e.g., hospitals, cemetery, negative people, pathogenic virus)



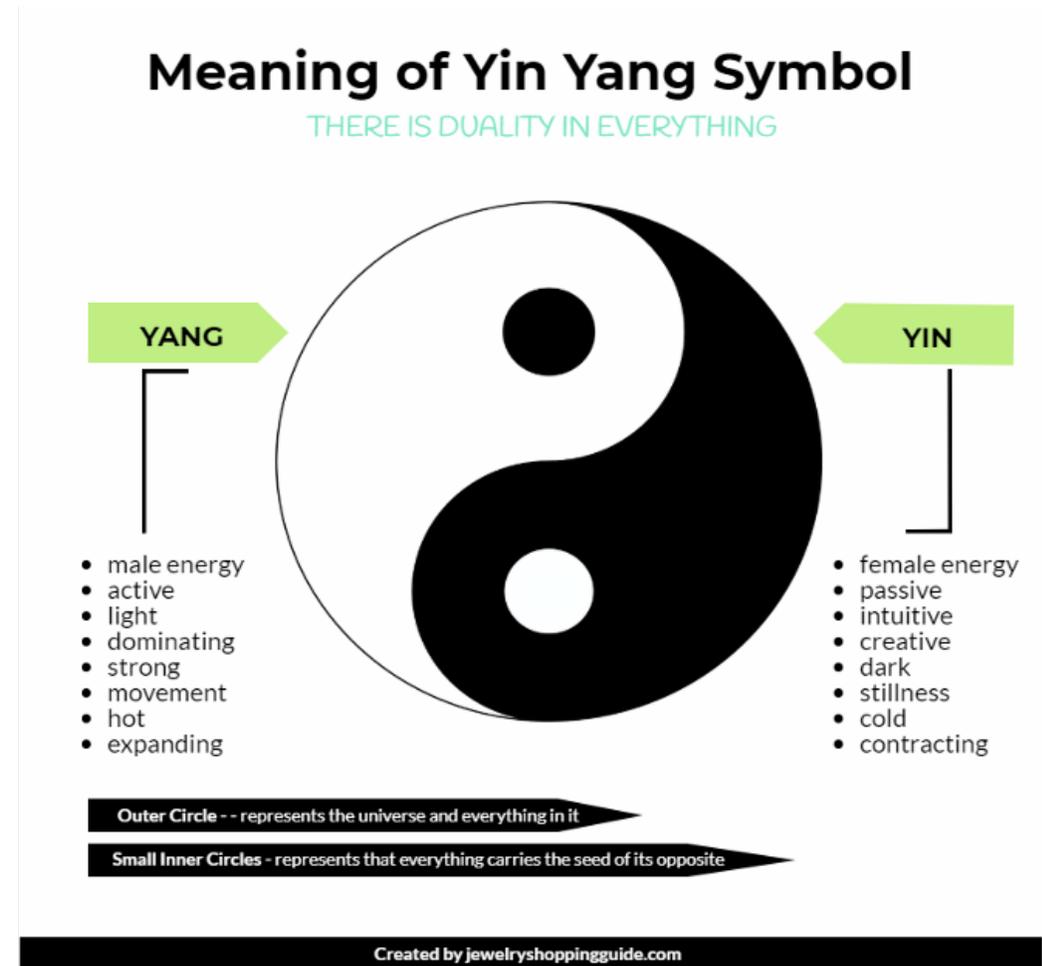
Taijiquan 太极拳: A physical or mental activity? For physical or mental health?



4) Yin-Yang theory 阴阳理论 (Daoism):

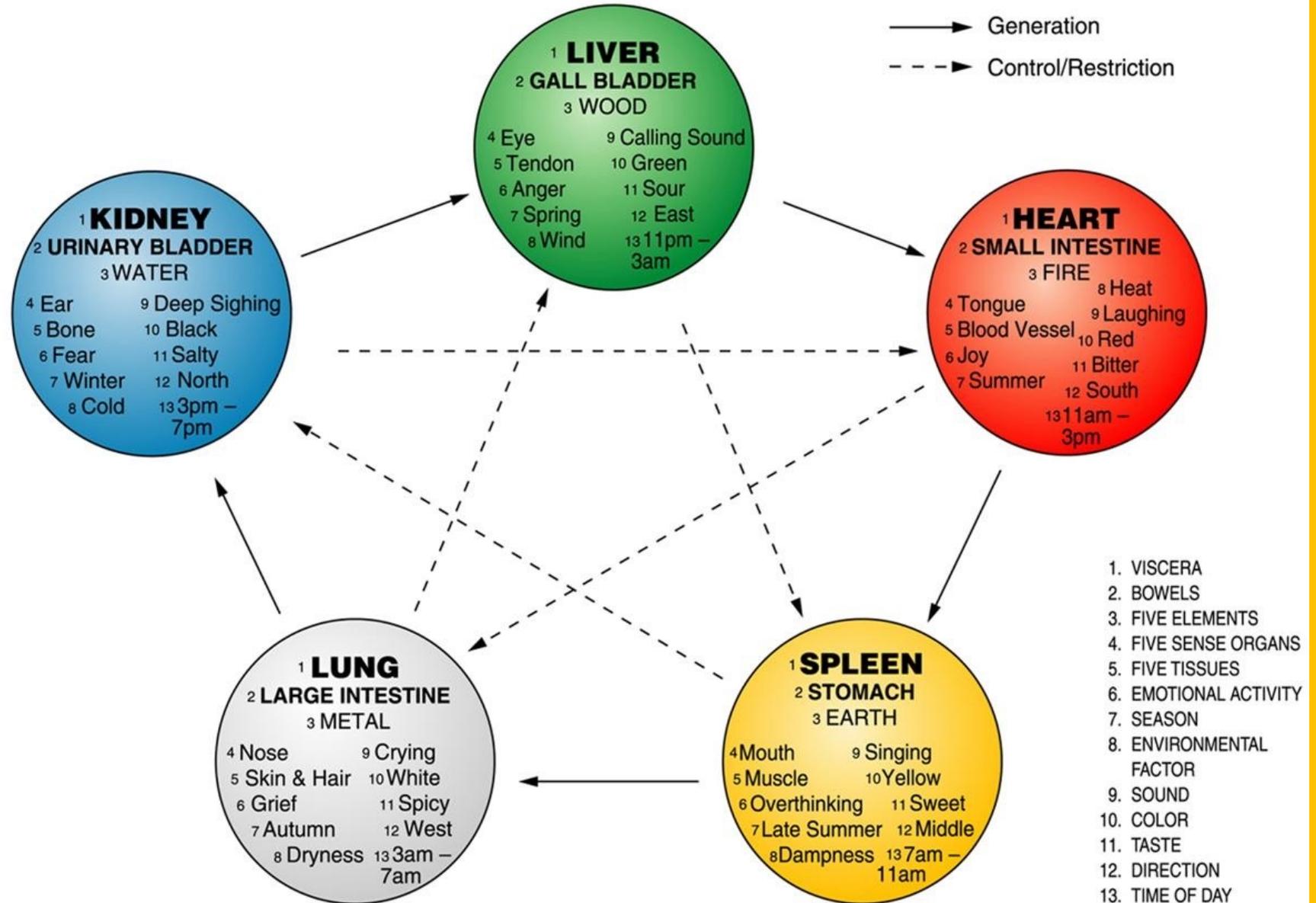
- Yin-Yang relationships
 - 1) Opposition 对立,
 - 2) Interdependence 互根,
 - 3) Restriction 互制,
 - 4) Reciprocity 互用,
 - 5) Wane-wax 消长,
 - 6) Transformation 转化,
 - 7) Balance 平衡.

- Application & implication: healthy relationships
 - 1) Between nature and humans,
 - 2) Between humans (family, friends, teacher-students, employer-employees),
 - 3) Between your organs, etc.



5) Five Elements Theory
五行理论 (e.g., emotions):
harmony, balance

CLASSIFICATION OF THINGS ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

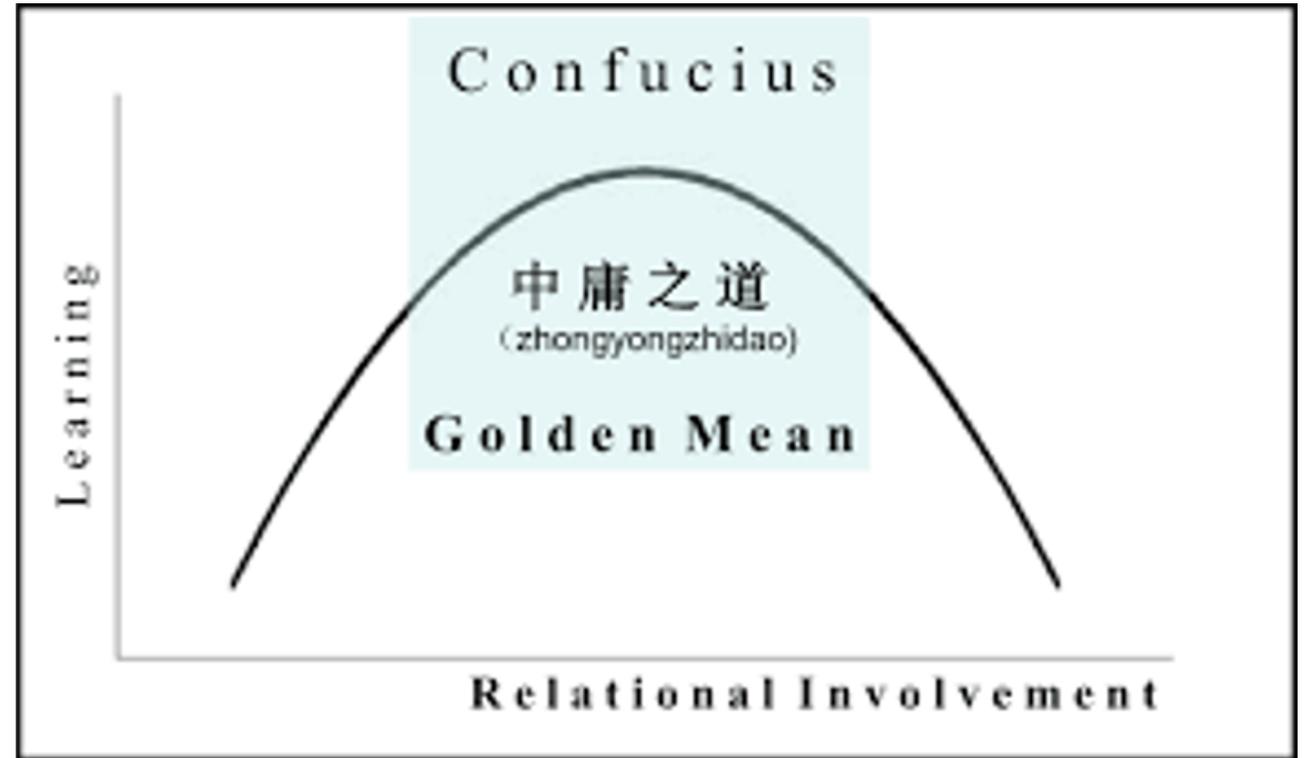


Five Elements Theory 五行理论

Movement	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Planet	Jupiter	Mars	Saturn	Venus	Mercury
Mental Quality	Sensitivity	Creativity	Clarity	Intuition	Spontaneity
Emotion	anger	happiness	anxiety	grief, sadness	fear, scare
Zang (yin organs)	liver	heart/pericardium	spleen/pancreas	lung	kidney
Fu (yang organs)	gall bladder	small intestine/San Jiao	stomach	large intestine	urinary bladder
Sensory organ	eye	tongue	Mouth	nose	ears
Body Part	Tendons	Pulse	Muscle	Skin	Bones
Body Fluid	Tears	Sweat	Saliva	Mucus	Urine
Finger	index finger	middle finger	thumb	ring finger	little finger
Sense	sight	speech	taste	smell	hearing
Taste	sour	bitter	sweet	pungent	salty
Smell	Rancid	Scorched	Fragrant	Rotten	Putrid
Life	birth	youth	adulthood	old age	death

6) Golden Mean Theory 中庸之道 (Confucianism): vs “The more, the better” (Western)

- a. Mental health issues result from extreme or problematic behavior (e.g., thinking, acting, 5 sensors)
- b. Application & implication: overwork (physical, mental, sexual)



7) Etiology 病因 in TCM: Disharmony of the relative balance (4 categories) :

Endogenous pathogens 内伤病因:

a. The 7 emotions 七情内伤

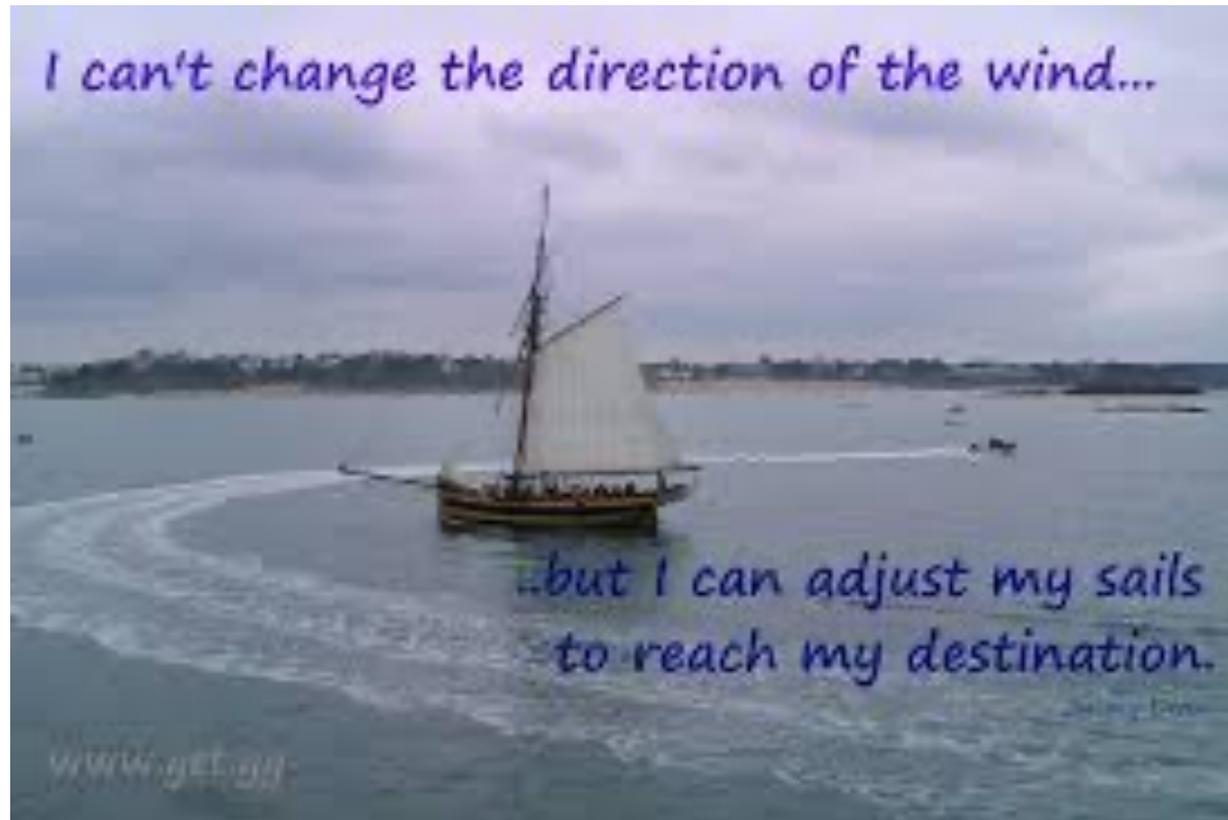
➤ Heart-broken, grief 伤心

➤ Wisdom story “Being the master of your own emotions” (emotion mastery);

b. Improper diet (immoderate, insanitary, or imbalanced diet): e.g., animal milk

c. Overwork (physical, mental, sexual) and maladjustment of rest (excessive rest: lack of work and exercise); 失精 jing (essence), 气 qi, 神 shen (spirit); (vs Western “The more, the better”).

Wisdom (Indian proverb):



- Thank you!
- Questions & comments: Lu@brocku.ca
- Dr. Lu's website: <https://brocku.ca/education/faculty-and-staff/dr-chunlei-lu/>