



# The Healing Point Autumn News

A publication of The Healing Point, Inc.

Fall 2004

## *The Gift of Autumn*

Every season has its challenges and each has unique gifts for us. The cool, crisp air, early sunsets, and windy rain mark the end of yet another wonderful summer.

I find myself looking back at the joys of summer and saying goodbye to the endless blue skies and warm ocean water. While I'd like to savor more beach days and fun times with family and friends, I know that they are (mostly) gone for the rest of the year. Knowing this brings me to a quiet and melancholy place as I find myself being more introspective. Essentially, I'm sad the summer is over. As I watch my daughter growing up, advancing into another school year, I see that time moves only forward. As we continue to grow, and eventually grow older, we seek to return to the simpler times of summers past.

In my acupuncture practice I work with many patients struggling with "depression". This is a very vague word that means different things to different people. For some it can translate to fatigue, lack of motivation, overwhelm, stress, or even anxiety. I find it helpful to access the feelings underneath these "symptoms". In my experience, the three most common feelings that create "depression" are sadness, anger and fear. If the root of the depression is sadness, it is very healing to actively feel the grief.

Grief and sadness are feelings that relate to loss. We are sad because we lost something or someone. We can't go back in time and return to that place, to those people, or to that happy time in our life. Words like melancholy, sorrow, and longing describe this sense of wanting to return. A part of us is still holding on and this is the source of our ache.

*Actively feeling grief* can mean experiencing the loss of separation and giving yourself permission to acknowledge the hurt. Please take care as you enter into these feelings and seek support from family, friends and trained professionals. There's something magical that can happen when we feel sadness and accept that we hurt. We are often given the opportunity to let go of the suffering that we carry. Once we release the pain of the past, we are free to open ourselves into the present moment.

The ever-changing sky with colorful clouds and gusty winds fills me with awe and longing. As the cool air moves in, I feel a sense of wonder. One year ago the fires swept across our land. Now we are drenched in torrential rains. Fate is not without a sense of irony, as the saying goes. When I'm reminded of things I've lost, sometimes I don't linger in the pain of the loss but rather I appreciate the fact that I had something. I realize that these things were precious and that what I have now is also precious. This leads me into a place where I am deeply thankful for all that is given.

This is the gift of autumn. It's the reminder that all things pass. It's an opportunity to let go of the past and write the next chapter of our lives. It's the bittersweet loss of summer and the preparation for the coming journey. It brings the abundant harvest of the seeds we've sown. It's a call to be thankful for the many gifts we have been given and for the ones we are receiving right now! ☘

If you are interested in speaking or making an appointment with Adrian, he can be reached at 619-239-7516.

His office hours are 8am to 6pm, Monday-Wed, and Friday.

## How Do Those Needles Work Anyway?

By Jeannie Bianchi

A tumble down the ski slopes leaves you with a nagging achy stiffness in your low back that won't quit. At a friend's advice, you decide to try acupuncture. After the first needles are inserted lo and behold you feel the muscles let go of that tight, annoying grip. Your breathing lengthens, and your mind lets go of that inner scowl as the sensations of pain diminish. A warm calm settles in your body.... Deep, full relaxation.

How do these hair-thin stainless steel needles produce such wonderful systemic effects in our body? This question has been answered with Oriental philosophies of energy flow for centuries. With the rise of acupuncture stateside, however, science is trying its hand to explain the mechanisms of acupuncture needles as well. I will talk briefly about both systems, starting with the Western system most of us are more familiar with.

Dr. Bruce Pomeranz, a neuroscientist and Harvard-educated physiologist, has produced one of the most thorough bodies of research on acupuncture. His experiments demonstrate the pathways by which acupuncture affects pain signals in the body. Although acupuncture works on many systems of the body (neurological, endocrine, respiratory, digestive, etc.) such a scope is too exhaustive, so we will limit ourselves to one subject—acupuncture's effect in pain syndromes.

Dr. Pomeranz has conducted research over the course of 20 years, and verified a theory based on endorphins through thousands of experiments. Basically, the experiments show that acupuncture interacts with peripheral nerves to release endorphins, and thereby block pain signals. Additionally, his research proved that endorphins work on a "potentiating" effect. In other words, if they are activated multiple times through a series of acupuncture treatments, the endorphin receptor pathways are set up in the body, and the effects are increasingly powerful and long-lasting with each treatment. In essence, our body learns how to receive and initiate those responses more and more quickly until it takes back control for regulating that area and no longer requires the outside stimulus (acupuncture).

Of course, however, the body is a system of interrelated reactions. Therefore, whether you have pain from damage to a muscle, ligament, tendon, or bone, those other structures are inevitably affected. Most common is the tightening of surrounding muscle groups up and downstream from the area of injury or stress. These tissues will contract, or shorten, in the attempt to stabilize the body from further injury. Over a period of time, the result is an uneven push-pull by muscle groups, some chronically contracting or shortening, and the opposite groups being pulled into an over-lengthened state. In the over-contracted or

*(Continued on page 4)*

---

## What is Tempo Bodywork?

By Carl M. Balingit

It is a unique method of massage therapy and a celebration on non-conformity.

To practice non-conformity is to question everything, to forget about routine and standard methods of doing things, to follow your instincts and discover what truly works for you, to experience what you know, and to act spontaneously.

This is also the essence of Tempo Bodywork.

Tempo Bodywork is therapeutic for all aspects of your mind-body-spirit composition, whether you seek to:

- Slow down because you are always "go-go-go"
- Speed up because your feeling "blah"
- Flush out the soreness that accompanies an active lifestyle
- Treat your injuries or chronic pain syndromes

The bodywork sessions are spontaneous. To experience a session is to understand that knowledge comes more from the creative movement of the mind and the body than from the imitation of technique.

Tempo Bodywork aligns with the universal principle of yin and yang which states that polarity (i.e. the law of opposites) provides balance. Thus, Tempo Bodywork is relaxing *and* invigorating... spiritually uplifting *and* mentally grounding. ☯

If you seek to celebrate non-conformity feel free to contact Carl. He can be reached for appointments at 619-994-2119

By Nicola Moll

# Acupuncture in the Age of Stress

We live in a hectic world these days -working long hours, sitting in traffic and raising our 2.5 children. We all experience stress on a daily basis. And stress shows its ugly face in many different forms. Some of us get stomach pains, others can't fall asleep at night, then there are headaches, tight shoulders, hypertension, decreased appetite, too much appetite, pimples and newly defined disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome. It is hard for us to take a minute out of our days to stop and smell the roses and notice how shallow we are breathing and how far our shoulders are drawn up. We'd like to yell and scream or simply just cry to let out our pent-up frustrations.

But why not try and give acupuncture a chance?

Studies have shown that acupuncture releases endorphins and opioids in the brain, which not only reduce pain, but also cause relaxation and are considered our "happy chemicals". Not only does acupuncture itself help stress induced disorders, the whole experience allows one to unwind and relax, for at least one hour. The New York Times published an article called "Acupuncture Moves towards the Mainstream" on September 28th of this year. It contained following testimony:

Three years ago, Alfred Szymanski could not seem to get his blood pressure under control. He ran 10 miles a week, stuck to a healthy diet and was on a hypertension medication, all to no avail. His doctor suggested switching medications, but Mr. Szymanski, wary of side effects, decided to try something he had always wondered about: acupuncture.

After three 20-minute sessions, each covered by his medical plan, his blood pressure plunged 20 points. "Every time I left I was so relaxed; it was like euphoria," said Mr. Szymanski, 61, who lives in New York. "My blood pressure stayed down for quite a while." Like Mr. Szymanski said, acupuncture is relaxing and even slightly euphoric. So I think we owe it to our bodies, our mental sanity and the people around us, to nip stress in the butt. Pretty much all of my patients have reported that they have gotten a good night's sleep after a treatment and that they have felt calm and relaxed. If you are not one for acupuncture - despite it being rather painless and even soothing- you can also try various Chinese herbal formulas, which not only treat the stress-induced symptoms, but will also help you relax. So pamper yourself for at least an hour a day, if not with acupuncture, than at least with a walk along the beach, a quite moment to yourself to take some deep breaths or a good workout. You owe it to yourself and your health!☯



Nicola is one of our newest Associates at The Healing Point.  
She can be reached for appointments by calling our main line at 619-239-7516



The place to improve the world is first in one's own heart and head and hands and then work outward from there. –Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

## Our Mission

The Healing Point is committed to the well being of the whole person through an integrative, cooperative approach. As a multidisciplinary group of healthcare practitioners, our intention is to recognize and address the unique needs of each individual. Active participation between the client and practitioner is an integral part of the healing process. Our vision reaches beyond individual care into the larger community through education, support, and the commitment to the wholeness and oneness of humanity.



The Healing Point  
2645 First Ave.  
San Diego, CA 92103  
www.thehealingpoint.com

(Continued from page 2)

tight areas, the local capillary beds are “squeezed” and deprived of full nutrition and blood flow. This uneven pull and local ischemia causes what we experience as tight ropy bands of muscle, and that deep, dull achy pain.

Acupuncture reverses this vicious cycle of tightness and pain through its ability to penetrate close to or directly into those tight sore areas, and thereby reset the muscle group. It is thought that the needle and the twirling or manipulation of the needle stimulates the short fibers to lengthen. Consequently, the uneven tug of war between muscle groups is normalized. (Or in other words, the *relationship* between muscle groups is re-balanced, harmonized. More in a minute).

The cascade effect from here is that the *nervous system’s* communication with that muscle group is also reset. We tend to be creatures of habit and so do our nervous systems. Once muscle fibers actually relax, the nervous system receives that information, and its habit of sending “pain”, “tight”, and “sore” messages is broken. Also as the fibers open, more blood and nutrients can flow to the local area and the body can begin to heal the area on its own. (I.e., acupuncture sets the stage for the body to heal *itself*.)

Now let’s look at the ideas of harmony, balance, flow, and self-healing. In the East before microscopes and cellular biology existed, these concepts flourished to explain all disease, including pain. More specifically, the body is said to be nourished and irrigated by an intricate network of channels, or meridians. Qi and Blood are the two major components that flow through our meridians. These two together keep us animated, supple, and alive. Any blockage of Qi, and/or Blood however, causes what is known as stagnation. And pain in the body always reflects stagnation.

From a Chinese medical perspective, pain must be addressed by unblocking the affected meridians, and harmonizing the flow of Qi and Blood. The patient’s emotions are usually taken into account as well, as pain usually produces at least a low level of mental and emotional strain. When the applicable meridians are unblocked and the flow of Qi and Blood to the area is harmonized, the stagnation, or pain begins to lessen. With a series of treatments, the Qi and Blood can return fully to their functions without outside help, and the body is once again in balance.

In 2004 we use science to explain what we see, whereas in 204 the Chinese had only their sharp senses and keen empiricism to describe phenomena. Interestingly, the research of the last few decades reflects the concepts observed in ancient times—that balance and harmony between and within systems is key in good health. These diverse theories on acupuncture have many ideas in common. So whatever ideas make the most sense to you, embrace those as you receive treatment. Because the result of acupuncture-- relief of pain and enhanced well-being--is about the same whether you think about Qi, muscle fibers, or prefer not to think so hard at all. ☪

Jeannie can be reached at 619-239-7516 and is available for appointments Tues./Thurs 8-6 and Sat..

