

Foreword by Allen Parrott

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ESSENTIAL TEXTS in Chinese Medicine

The Single Idea in the Mind of the Yellow Emperor



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4. The Rhythm of the Seasons



春三月，此為發陳。

IN SPRINGTIME THERE ARE THREE MOONS,
This is a time for breaking out and bursting.

天地俱生，萬物以榮。

夜臥早起，廣步于庭，被髮緩形，以使志生，
生而勿殺，予而勿奪，賞而勿罰。
此春氣之應，養生之道也。

The skies and the earth both give birth and all myriad creatures
prosper.

Go to sleep at nightfall and rise at dawn.

Take large steps out in the courtyard.

Uncoil your hair and stretch out the body, thus to set the will on
birth.

Help bring forth life and do not slaughter,

Help donate and do not take away,

Help reward and do not penalise.

This is a response to the qi of spring
And the Art of caring for life.

逆之則傷肝，夏為實寒變，奉長者少。

If you go against it you injure your liver.

In the summer the weather will stay wintry, and there is little to
support any growth.

Li Zhongzi: The order of the four seasons is spring – birth; summer – growth;
autumn – closure; and winter – storage. To use these several rules is to
encapsulate the arts and ways of caring for the qi of life.

夏三月，此為蕃秀。

During summer there are three moons,
This is a time for blooming and blossoming.

天地氣交，萬物華實。

夜臥早起，無厭于日，

使志勿怒，使華英成秀，使氣得泄，若所愛在外。

此夏氣之應，養長之道。

The qi of the skies and the earth can interpenetrate,
And all myriad creatures strengthen and flower.
Go to sleep at nightfall and rise in the dawn, do not be tired out
by the sun.

In such a way you enable your will to be freed from anger,
And help flower forth lushly into full blossom, and let it out and
go –

Just as if you loved all that lay beyond you.
This is a response to the qi of summer
And the Art of caring for growth.

逆之則傷心，秋為痾瘧，奉收者少，冬至重病。

If you go against it you injure your heart.

In the autumn you suffer coughing and repeated fevers, and there
is little to support any closure.

Then winter arrives and heavy sickness.

秋三月，此謂容平。

During the autumn there are three moons,
This is a time for sizing and settling.

天氣以急，地氣以明。

早臥早起，與雞俱興。

使志安寧，以緩秋刑，收斂神氣，

使秋氣平，無外其志，使肺氣清。

此秋氣之應，養收之道也。

The heavenly qi is hastening,
The earthly qi is strengthening.
Go to bed early and rise up early,

Copying the behaviour of the cock.

In such a way you enable your will to stay peaceful and delay the
penalty of the autumn.

Keep close and take in your mental strength

To enable the settling of the autumn.

Do not allow your thoughts to stray without,

To enable the lung qi to clear.

This is a response to the qi of the autumn,

And the Art of caring for closure.

逆之則傷肺，冬為飧泄，奉藏者少。

If you go against this you injure your lungs.

In the winter you suffer from diarrhoea and there is little to
support any storage.

冬三月，此為閉藏。

During winter there are three moons,

This is the time for storage and shutting up.

水冰地坼，勿擾乎陽。

早臥晚起，必待日光。

使志若伏若匿，若有私意，若已有得。

去寒就溫，無泄皮膚，使氣極奪。

此冬氣之應，養藏之道也。

The streams freeze over and the soil cracks open,

Do not dare disturb the Yang.

Go to bed early and rise up late,

You must wait for a sight of the sun.

In such a way you enable your will to be subdued and hidden
away –

As if you had secret thoughts,

As if your ideas were of what you had already attained.

Flee the cold weather and draw near the warmth,

Not letting the skin perspire at its surface.

Thus you enable the qi not to steal constantly away.

This is a response to the qi of winter,

And the Art of caring for storage.

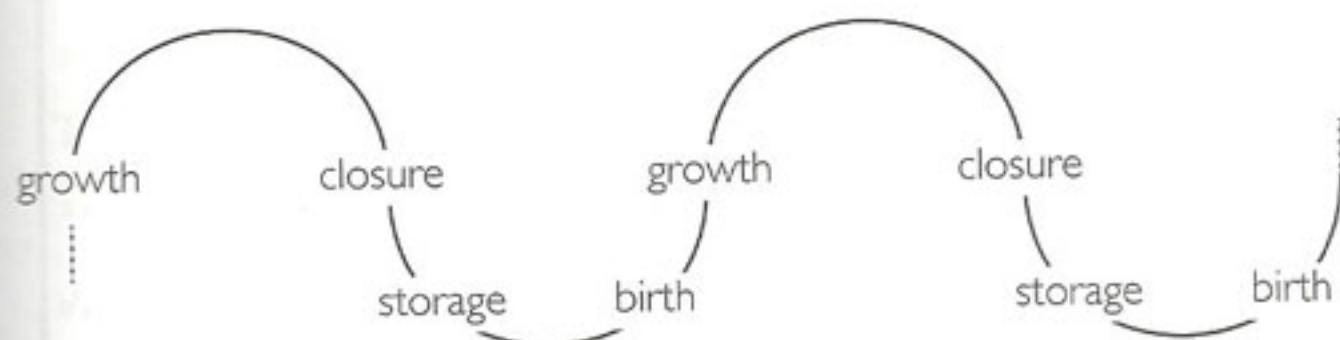
逆之則傷腎，春為痿厥，奉生者少。

If you go against this you injure your kidneys.

In the spring there is wasting and withering, and little to support any life.

This section beginning with ‘in springtime there are three moons’ explains, in nuanced fashion, the responses of humankind to the passage of the year. There is a ‘mutual interaction’ 相应 *xiangying* or exchange between our internal organs – the five ‘treasuries’ 臟 *zang* or organ systems of traditional Chinese medicine (heart, lungs, kidneys, spleen and liver) – and nature. We have the rise and fall of Yin and Yang within us, echoing the world outside. The shifting sun and moon, arrival and departure of day and night, warmth and coolness of heated summer days and winter nights, these impinge on us all.

Playing on a theme of self-responsibility, the seasons reveal a rhythm. Their regularity is achieved through tolerating change. There is a marked mode to life, naturally stepped to the beat of Yin and Yang. Above there is the sky, with its moving constellations – below, the shifting seasons of the year. How can we sustain mental power and strength? Simply by watching nature. Observe the common pattern: birth and growth in spring and summer, closure and storage in autumn and winter. ‘Birth and growth, closure and storage’ 生長, 收藏 *shengzhang, shouzang* – these four characters depict the *yinyang* code for the world, as for all human society. Through them we learn an added dimension of care – understand the demands of the moment and adapt appropriately to the true but shifting connection with things. We know to care for birth, growth, closure and storage – and thus avoid harm.



– summer – autumn – winter – spring – summer – autumn – winter – spring –

The Yin and Yang of birth and growth, closure and storage

RHYTHM OF LIFE

	three moons of spring	three moons of summer	three moons of autumn	three moons of winter
<i>the natural world</i>	the skies and the earth both give birth and all myriad creatures prosper	the skies and the earth can interpenetrate, and all myriad creatures strengthen and flower	the heavenly energies are hastening, the earthly strengthening	the streams freeze and the soil cracks open, do not dare disturb the Yang
<i>its action</i>	breaking out and bursting	blooming and blossoming	sizing and settling	storage and shutting up
<i>sleep and wake</i>	sleep at nightfall and rise at dawn, take large steps out in the courtyard, uncoil your hair and stretch out the body	go to sleep at nightfall and rise in the dawn, do not be tired out by the sun	go to bed early and rise up early, copying the behaviour of the cock	go to bed early and rise up late, you must wait for a sight of the sun
<i>recipes for life</i>	help bring forth life and do not slaughter, help donate and do not take away, help reward and do not penalise	help them to flower forth lushly into full blossom, and be let out and go – just as if you loved all that lay beyond you	keep close and take in your mental energies, do not allow your thoughts to stray without	as if you had secret thoughts, as if your ideas were of what you had already attained
<i>the will and emotion</i>	set the will on birth	enable your will to be freed from anger	enable your will to stay peaceful	enable your will to be subdued and hidden away
<i>care path</i>	caring for life	caring for growth	caring for closure	caring for storage
<i>organ affect</i>	if you go against this, you injure your liver	if you go against this, you injure your heart	if you go against this, you injure your lungs	if you go against this, you injure your kidneys
<i>resultant</i>	there is little to support any growth, and in summer the weather stays wintry	there is little to support any closure, and in the autumn coughing and repeated fevers, winter arrives and heavy sickness	there is little to support storage, and in the winter you suffer from diarrhoea	there is little to support any new life, in the spring there is wasting and withering

1. The Method of the Pulse Exam



診法常以平旦，陰氣未動，陽氣未散。

飲食未進，經脈未盛，絡脈調勻，氣血未亂，故乃可診有過之脈。

THE METHOD OF EXAMINATION is regularly done at dawn.

When the Yin qi has not yet stirred and the Yang qi not yet scattered,

Food and drink have not yet been taken, and the main channels not yet filled.

The subsidiary channels are attuned and the qi and blood not yet distributed.

At that moment you must diagnose which pulse is at fault.

Li Zhongzi: In the body the nutrient and defensive qi travels by day in the Yang, and by night in the Yin. Then at dawn both meet up at the 'inch-wide mouth' at the wrist. Thus the pulse exam ought to be regularly done at dawn.

Zhang Jiebin: The hour of dawn is the connecting-point of Yin and Yang. Yang commands the day, Yin commands the night. Yang commands without, Yin commands within. 'At fault' means the pulse has not found its mean position, but slipped off.

Ma Shi: In general, people have disease – just as in any affair, mistakes are made. This is why the text mentions the pulse 'at fault'. The whole of the *Neijing* was written to protect against this.

切脈動靜而視精明。

察五色，觀五臟有餘不足，六腑強弱，形之盛衰。

以此參伍，決死生之分。

When you cut into the beat of the pulse, look also into the purity in the eyes.

Examine the 'five colours' and observe which of the 'five *zang*' has excess or not enough;

And then see which of the 'six *fu*' is working or failing,

And whether the body is strong or in decline.

Thereby by contrasting and combining these signs

You may decide their lot of life and death.

Li Zhongzi: Look at the 'five colours' and you observe the weakness or strength of the organs; inspect the physical body and you determine whether the sickness is filling or failing.

Wu Kun: Within the eye lies the pupil – it shows the activity of the mind.

Zhang Jiebin: Picking up three differing things is 'combining' them, taking up five of the same kind is 'contrasting' them; in general this and that reflect each other, difference and sameness show linked symptoms – which means we have a special need to work out carefully all the detail. Just as the *Yijing* states: 'Contrast and combine (*canwu*) the changes...pick up the main threads of the count and you will begin to understand.'

Hua Shou: Use pulse and colour, *zang* and *fu*, body and *qi* – combine them together, put them down, contrast them, then lay them out straight!

尺內兩旁則季脅也，尺外以候腎，尺裏以候腹中。

附上左外以候肝，內以候鬲，右外以候胃，內以候脾。

上附上右外以候肺，內以候胸中。左外以候心，內以候膻中。

The 'inner foot' position, both sides, shows the pattern of the floating ribs.

The 'outer foot' position may be used to attend to the kidneys,

The 'inner foot' position may be used to attend to the belly.

Attached in front, at the outer left, you may attend to the liver,

While within, you may attend to the diaphragm.

On the outer right you may attend to the stomach,

While within, you may attend to the spleen.



This selection of the key texts on Chinese medicine, taken from the *Huangdi Neijing* (the Yellow Emperor's Medical Classic), provides the passages vital for students and practitioners to understand and work with in their practice today.

The Chinese text is given, with a new translation, supported by a commentary that explains the meaning and importance of the lines and their core relevance to modern practice. Ming doctor and scholar Li Zhongzi's selection is taken as a basis, and additional texts from the *Huangdi Neijing* on topics relevant for modern practitioners, such as the spirit in treatment, a resonance with nature, the art of needling, and the Five Elemental body and personality types, are included.

'This book is a mentor, gently holding students' hands, and the content is practice orientated. The introduction section alone accelerated my learning by years and the accurate and insightful translation of the key words illuminates some of the crucial background of Chinese thinking.'

– Cheng-Hao Zhou, BM(TCM, China) MRCHM MBACc, Lecturer
and Year Leader, Northern College of Acupuncture, York, UK

"Gather wood without the forester and you will soon become lost in the forest," advises the *Yijing*. Bertschinger is a consummate guide through the forest of China's earliest medical writings. This insightful and beautifully wrought commentary on the Yellow Emperor's Classic is essential reading for the beginning, middle and end of your studies.'

– Charles Buck, Chairman of the British Acupuncture Council and author
of *Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine: Roots of Modern Practice*

Richard Bertschinger studied for many years with the Taoist Master, Gia-fu Feng. He is an acupuncturist, teacher of the healing arts, translator of ancient Chinese texts, and author of *The Great Intent: Acupuncture Odes, Songs and Rhymes*, *The Secret of Everlasting Life*, *Yijing*, *Shamanic Oracle of China* and *Everyday Qigong Practice*, also published by Singing Dragon.



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