

FIVE DRAGONS  
ACUPUNCTURE COLLEGE  
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



LESSON 4  
OF  
31 LESSONS

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**Acupuncture Correspondence Course in 31 Lessons**  
For Educational and Teaching Purposes.

Recommended books to simplify your research are as follows

*Essentials of Chinese Acupuncture*  
*Gray's Anatomy*  
*The Merck Manual*  
*Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*

The people of the entire English-speaking world owe a debt of gratitude  
to the acupuncturists and medical researchers  
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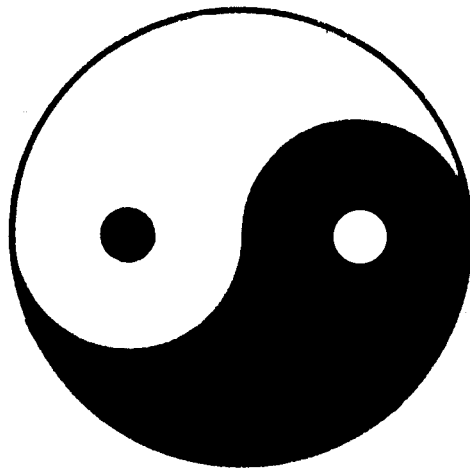
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MODERN & TRADITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE


LESSON 4

YIN / YANG SCIENCE



In this lesson, we are going to investigate further some of the basic principles underlying traditional Chinese medical thinking. These principles are generally not compatible with the view of Western medicine, as practiced and taught today. However, unless one can comprehend these principles, it is almost impossible to grasp the useful therapeutic procedures of traditional acupuncture, or the strange but accurate method of pulse diagnosis in the Chinese manner.

All traditional Chinese medicine is based on the ancient philosophical concept that in composition and function, man is a microcosmic image of the universe, and is subject to identical laws. This means, that man is a small universe by himself, and at the same time a replica of and part of the larger, entire universe. Thus, every function of the body or mind is governed and controlled by the same natural laws that govern our universe---the same forces of energy that keep our universe functioning.

The ancient Chinese were awed by the immutable course of nature---the ever-recurring changes from night to day, from darkness to light, from season to season and from life to death. These changes, they said were guided by and caused by 'Tao' and that 'Tao' brought about the creation of the world in the very beginning. Tao means the infinite origin, from which flows all existence. 

In the West, Tao is often simply interpreted as meaning a law or path (The Way). These terms only remotely convey the Chinese concept of Tao. Tao is absolute, unique, and a mystery. Tao could be likened to our Western concept of a 'God' although 'Tao' to the Chinese is a philosophical idea rather than a religious idea.

'Tao' created heaven and earth out of a state of chaos, and emanating from Tao is the power which creates or destroys everything which exists. The two forces through which Tao is said to act were named YIN and YANG.

Tireless observers of nature, the Chinese arrived at the conclusion that the fundamental phenomenon of the universe was constant, rhythmical change. They observed that everything evolves, that is everything is in a state of CONTINUOUS CHANGE. All things and happenings are linked, dependent, and interdependent. And, that all existence is a result of the interplay of two forces---positive and negative---Yin and Yang. Without these two forces emanating from Tao neither cosmos nor man could exist.

In the universe, the harmonious working of these two forces YIN and YANG, expressed itself in the rising and setting of the sun, the growing and ripening of crops, the action of the moon and the tides, and countless other sequential, natural phenomena. Droughts, floods, storms, tidal waves, and other disasters of nature were thought to be the result of an imbalance of Yin and Yang. Likewise, in animals and humans, health was the result of a harmonious balance of the Yin and the Yang (homeostasis)---diseases were thought to be due to an imbalance of these forces.

The old Chinese conceived the whole universe to be filled with a vital energy called 'Ch'i'. The word itself means "breath" or "to breathe", and attached to it is a connotation of "spirit" and of "force". The word Ch'i really cannot be translated though, as for the Chinese scholar Ch'i constitutes an overall verification principle of life and matter.

Traditional conception is that man breathes in Ch'i and assimilates it as a vital energy or force. In the body, the vital energy (Ch'i), consisting of a harmonious mixture of Yin and Yang, is believed to be conveyed throughout the body through all the meridians, and hence through the various organs of the body. Once inside the body, the Ch'i is assimilated by the organs or systems of organs, which it sustains and maintains in good condition and mutual harmony, unless affected by harmful internal or external influences.

If the harmony is disturbed, disease or illness arises. Therefore the main idea of traditional Chinese medical treatment is to restore the harmony in the flow and regular supply of Ch'i, which under normal conditions moves constantly in a closed system of pathways (chings).

From Lesson Two, we know that the twelve main chings or pathways correspond to certain organs or organ functions of the body. Ch'i is flowing through these chings slowly and gradually in a continuous cycle, starting with the lung meridian and on through all others to the liver meridian, only to flow back again to the lungs, and so on.

In disease or illness, when conditions become abnormal, Ch'i cannot properly penetrate some paths and the respective organs of these paths. The pathways become congested (FULL) with Ch'i---or because of a blockage in one meridian, other pathways in the line of successive flow do not receive enough Ch'i (EMPTY). There is an imbalance in the flow of energy and hence there is disease or illness.

In pulse diagnosis, the acupuncturist's task is to determine how much Ch'i a given organ contains at any given moment or, in other words, if that organ (or its pathway) is "full" or "empty". Having determined this, the acupuncturist knows what meridian must be treated to eliminate the blockage. Then prescribed acupuncture points on that meridian can be acted upon to adjust the energy flow back to its proper balance of Yin and Yang. Harmony is thus restored, and health is restored.

From all this, it should become obvious that the Chinese did not recognize a variety of diseases---at least by name as we know them. They saw only disease as such, brought about by one cause---the imbalance of Yin and Yang within the vital energy or force---Ch'i---which could affect different parts of the body and show up as various classifiable symptoms.

From here on in, how successful you are in learning traditional acupuncture will depend on one thing. Namely, whether or not you are willing to accept the Oriental concepts briefly outlined on the three preceeding pages. Knowing and accepting certain basic premises, most of them founded on Chinese philosophy, will enable you to master this therapy. We are not asking you to believe them blindly. Simply accept them as a working hypothesis until such time as it can be replaced by a more satisfactory theoretical framework.

Here perhaps is where a background in Western medical knowledge could be a disadvantage and a hindrance. One may have become so conditioned in, and prejudiced in favor of the Western ideas, that acceptance of them is impossible. Until such time as modern science either validates them or replaces them, practice of traditional acupuncture must and will best consist of applying these ancient principles and premises. Remember, they have proved trustworthy for billions of people through almost 50 centuries, relieving pain, restoring health and prolonging life. Enough said?

Let us then take for granted (for the time being) that Ch'i energy actually flows through all of the meridians and vessels. These meridians connect to vital organs and also to each other (branches, etc.). To the Oriental mind, these meridians form a definite anatomical system in the body, another complete system, just as we think of the circulatory system, the nervous system, the lymphatic system, etc. The "system" carries Ch'i energy throughout the whole body, and reaches every part of the body with a complex network of meridians, branches and sub-branches.

Ch'i itself, we can think of as a life force or life energy. When present it imparts life to the body, and when it is withdrawn, death results. Ch'i is the difference between a living person and a dead person.

THE LAW OF POLARITY: YIN / YANG SCIENCE

The Law of Polarity (Yin / Yang) in a general sense is a part of all philosophical thinking of Old China. It is the unique principle which rules all things and beings and which explains all phenomena. It is a law that has been researched and studied by the Chinese for more than five thousand years. It is the polarizable monism of Yin and Yang, which can be applied to all sciences, techniques and arts. Traditional Chinese medicine is only one application of the philosophy or science of Yin and Yang---the Law of Polarity.

Yin and Yang is a very subtle and profound philosophy. It can be applied to everything, on all levels of the universe, to galaxies as well as to atoms. Yin and Yang are seen as two opposing but interrelated aspects (poles) always present in everything in the macrocosm of the universe and all of its microcosms---including man.

The Chinese see the universe (macrocosm) as filled with oscillations between the activities of Yin and Yang. All of the beings and happenings (phenomena) which appear and disappear are nothing but multiple and varied combinations of these two activities. Everything is the constant change of this monism (one ultimate principle) with various proportions between Yin and Yang.

Beings such as the microcosm (small scale universe) of man and all phenomena are in reality only dynamic equilibria between Yin and Yang. Nothing is absolutely stable in this universe---nothing remains completely constant. Everything is in perpetual movement (a constant state of change) because the action of the two activities which is the source of all beings and phenomena is itself in perpetual movement. Yin and Yang are constantly moving and ceaselessly attracted to one another and at the same time opposed to one another.



This idea of Yin and Yang embraces a never ending change of all, cosmical and terrestrial: Universe, earth and man---all are subject to oscillations between the two poles. They are the opposing and balancing forces of ONE ENTITY, like the two ends of a bar magnet---with a positive pole and a negative pole. The two poles not only oppose one another, they are also allies---complimentary (interrelated) by an incredibly complex and subtle set of relationships.

All this results in a duality which is repeatedly encountered in all of nature---man and woman, positive and negative, day and night, yes and no, cold and warm, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, war and peace, heaven and earth, sweet and sour, health and sickness, and so on.

YIN is negative, dark, cold, wet, feminine, interior, etc. It is the earth, the moon, absolute zero, matter and all that seems black, silent and immobile.

YANG is positive, light, warmth, dry, masculine, exterior, etc. It is the sun, the sky, infinity, energy, and all that seems bright, active and creative.

In Chinese traditional medicine the flow of energy in the body is interpreted by means of the Law of Polarity, with Yin and Yang representing two opposed and at the same time complementary energies or forces.

EXAMPLE: Yin energy is interior (inward) while Yang energy is exterior (outward). How does this fit in with the last two paragraphs of Lesson Two, Page Nine?

If a disease seems to be going deep into the body, depressing the functions of the organs, it is considered a Yin disease. If it seems to be coming to the surface and the organs are overactive, the disease is Yang. Yin is always deep in the body whereas Yang is more superficial. If a disease is due to the cold or to dampness it may be considered a Yin illness. If a disease is due to extremely hot or dry climate, it may be considered a Yang illness.

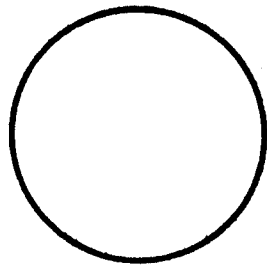
Without these two forces emanating from the Tao neither cosmos nor man could exist. Although the two forces of Yin and Yang are opposed to each other, they are generating each other at the same time for they are complementary. To separate these two forces means death.

Let us compare Yin and Yang to the positive and negative poles of the flow of electricity. Each of them is separate and distinct in activity or expression, but both of them are a part of the current. The current (monism) itself cannot exist or function without the dual polarity of its two elements---positive and negative---Yin and Yang as the Chinese would have called it (polarizable monism). Separate the two poles of the electrical current and the force is extinguished (death).

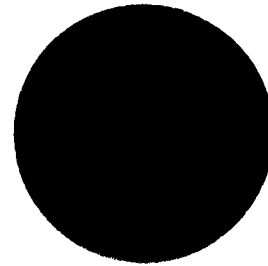
The idea of Yin and Yang is symbolized in the form of the so called "Chinese Monad", pictured on the next page and on the cover (page one) of this lesson. The symbol is a closed circle divided by a sine curve into equal halves of a different color. Unless printed in black and white, the colors are usually red for Yang and blue or green for Yin.

In each half of the circle there is a smaller circle of the opposite color and opposite polarity, indicating that nothing is completely Yin, or completely Yang. Lacking these smaller circles, the 'Chinese Monad' would be wrong and incorrect. The Chinese would say that in the bosom of Yang the root of Yin is sleeping, and in the bosom of Yin the bud of Yang is sleeping. Sometimes Yin and Yang are represented as a pair of dragons---red and green---closed in eternal combat, but with intertwined bodies, symbolizing the basic unity.

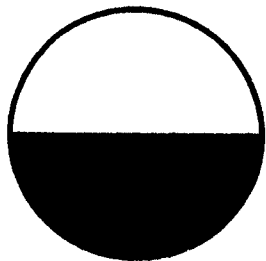
Graphically, the Chinese Monad stands for the perpetually dynamic cycle of Yin and Yang, and also the complementary nature of them. **YIN PRODUCES YANG and YANG PROTECTS AND ACTIVATES YIN.** Think about this for a few moments before going on to the rest of this lesson.



YANG

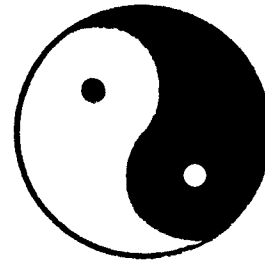


YIN

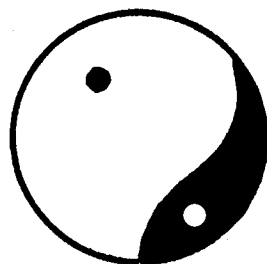


YIN AND YANG

IN BALANCE

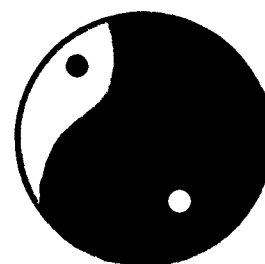


CHINESE MONAD



DEFICIENCY OF YIN  
OR EXCESS OF YANG

OUT OF BALANCE



DEFICIENCY OF YANG  
OR EXCESS OF YIN

Let us now delve into Yin and Yang as applies to man further. You will recall from our discussion in Lesson Two on page 5, paragraph one, we spoke of some meridians being predominantly Yin and others being predominantly Yang. In the body, as in everything, Ch'i is always both Yin and Yang ....never Yin or Yang. This is important! By looking at the "Chinese Monad" you can see that there is a little Yin in the Yang, and a little Yang in the Yin.

In principle man (male) is YANG. He corresponds to force and movement, and he produces the sperm (seed). This 'seed' (just as is planted in the earth) is taken into the woman's interior. The result is new life. As a whole woman is YIN. However, man and woman each contain Yang and Yin in a balanced although unequal proportion. Women are predominantly Yin, and men are predominantly Yang.

In health, a very delicate balance exists between the negative energy of Yin and the positive energy of Yang. This balance can NEVER be static (constant) and can NEVER really be exactly equally divided (except possibly momentarily in process of change). Like the ebb and the flow of the tides, a slight but constant fluctuation and variation from Yin to Yang and Yang to Yin is normal. Those normal fluctuations must of course be considered when determining possible disease causing abnormalities by pulse diagnosis.

By now you should either be totally confused, or have gained a marvellous insight to the beautiful relationships of Yin and Yang, and how easily they can be applied to anything and everything. If you are still confused, don't panic. Read on, and the fog may clear. A review of what has been said so far in this lesson might be helpful.

The concept of Yin and Yang is not a difficult one to learn and apply. Simply realize that it is the Chinese way of looking at all things. Just as every coin has two sides, they visualize the world (universe, man, anything and everything) as being predominantly one or the other---YIN or YANG---at a certain given time, in a given situation, for a given place or location.

SOME APPLICATIONS OF YIN / YANG "SCIENCE" TO THE BODY

- The upper half of the body is YANG. The lower half of the body is YIN. Can you explain why? Hint: Feet touch the ground, which is earth, which is Y\_\_\_\_\_.
- The left side of the body is YANG. The right side of it is YIN. In the northern hemisphere man faces south in order to make the best of the sun and in so doing turns his left side towards the East. The sun (Yang) rises (is starting to grow) in the East and thus his left side corresponds to Yang. The left side is regarded by the Chinese as the side of honor, for ceremonies, etc., contrary to our way of thinking.
- The back of the body is YANG, the front of the body is YIN. The Governing Vessel is a Yang meridian, while the Conception Vessel is a Yin meridian, and so on.
- The interior of the body is YIN. The exterior or surface of the body is YANG. Each meridian has both a Yang course (surface pathway) and a Yin course (inside).

EXAMPLES OF YIN & YANGYIN

bad  
water  
death  
weak  
matter  
yielding  
shady  
decay  
inert  
reactivity  
silent  
centrifugal  
expansion  
blue  
potassium  
sugar

YANG

good  
fire  
life  
strong  
energy  
dominating  
sunny  
growth  
dynamic  
creativity  
noisy  
centripetal  
contraction  
red  
sodium  
salt

Anything in the universe can be classified under the categories of Yin or Yang according to its characteristics. Feelings, moods, and intangible things can be classified one or the other as well. For example: movement and rest, stimulation and inhibition, material and immaterial, matter and activity. They are all opposing forces which at the same time are complementary forces responding to each other. But, it is not quite as simple as that.

Although everything in the universe represents one or the other (Yin or Yang), everything in the universe also contains both. One of the two is always predominant or exists in a greater proportion, but both are always present. Yin and Yang are not criteria of an absolute position but rather criteria of a relative position. Yin and Yang can not exist without each other.

The activities of the body require nutrition (matter) in order to work properly. On the other hand though, the action (Yang) of the organs is needed for the food to be transformed into nutrition, which in turn helps the organs to fulfill their function. Thus matter (Yin) produces activity (Yang) which in turn produces matter (Yin) and so on forever.

Matter, which is stationary is Yin, and activity or movement is Yang. Yin maintains the Yang, while the Yang exerts its influence upon the Yin. They stimulate each other and simultaneously also maintain each other. YIN PRODUCES YANG AND YANG ACTIVATES OR PROTECTS YIN.

Classical Chinese literature states that the Yin is inside the body and conserves the Yang. The Yang is on the outside and supports the Yin. The Yin energy is contained in the inner parts of the body to provide for the requirements of Yang energy, which maintains the body functions and defends the Yin against external influences (cold, etc.).

Yin and Yang cannot exist without each other. Thus, without the Yang the Yin cannot produce, and the Yang cannot prosper without the Yin. Without the two of them together all beings and all matter would cease producing, moving, and transforming each other. This of course would be the end of the universe.

But don't get the idea that this opposition of Yin and Yang means stability without transformation. Although opposite forces they maintain each other by continuously provoking phenomena of alteration. One side is weak or passive, the other side is strong or active. One side is progressing, the other side is declining. On the basis of this alternation of Yin and Yang, all beings and all things evolve and develop. Under normal conditions, this transformation will not result in an imbalance. Controlled by the Yin, the Yang will not be too much in excess. Assisted by the Yang, the Yin will not be too weak. The evolution of Yin and Yang is constantly kept in a state of balance under normal conditions.

Thus, the transformation, growth and decline of Yin and Yang are the essential conditions for the constant development of the human body in which the physiological balance has to be maintained. Yin and Yang are always and everywhere present in the body. Any structure and any function of the body can be explained in terms of the Yin and Yang.

The opposition and union, growth and decline, balance and imbalance of Yin and Yang can explain the relationships between anything and everything, as well as their transformation and development. In Chinese medicine we use these fundamental concepts of Yin and Yang, as a science, to solve the problems of the human body as regards illness and disease, etc. As you can see, the ideas of Yin and Yang are most important and most helpful in explaining, diagnosing and treating the body in traditional Chinese medicine.

Our internal environment, like our external environment is nothing but a combination of changing proportions of Yin and Yang. Sickness is nothing but a more or less serious disequilibrium or imbalance between Yin and Yang.

Because sickness is a disequilibrium caused by the excess or the deficiency of one or the other of Yin and Yang, we can classify all sickness and disease into two basic categories. A Yang sickness is produced by an excess of Yang activity or the lack of Yin activity. A Yin sickness is due to excessive Yin activity or a lack of Yang activity.

External therapeutics such as acu-pressure, acupuncture, moxibustion, etc. are also based on Yin or Yang. They can be classified into two categories as well---Yin and Yang. A Yin treatment can be applied to a condition of excess Yang, and a Yang treatment can improve a Yin condition.

The human body has a built in capability of maintaining itself in balance (homeostasis)---that is, keeping itself in a state of balance between positive and negative, Yin and Yang, whatever you want to call it. Homeostasis is defined as the tendency toward maintenance of a relatively stable internal environment in the human body through a series of interacting physiological feed-back processes. An example of this would be the body's ability to maintain a fairly constant degree of body heat (temperature) even under widely differing external temperatures.

When properly functioning, this homeostatic mechanism (controlled through the nervous system) is capable of coping with all but the most extreme environmental stresses, and can keep the body relatively stable and healthy. Sometimes these processes simply fail to function normally, for reasons yet unknown, or they are overwhelmed by excessive stress. When the homeostatic mechanism cannot cope with environmental stresses, etc. the body becomes ill or diseased.



EXTERNAL forces such as excessive cold, excessive heat, germs, or poison; OR, INTERNAL forces such as emotional upset, stress, or organic malfunctions, can interfere with the body's balance or homeostasis. Interference in homeostasis results in an imbalance of ch'i energy within the meridian system (excess in some areas and deficiency in the others), which can bring about the occurrence of illness.

Through either Western or Oriental (pulse) diagnosis, the imbalance of ch'i within the meridians can be determined and discovered. As a result of this, an acupuncture treatment plan (prescription) can be formulated to remove the interference in homeostasis (flow of ch'i) and restore the balance between or within the meridians. This acupuncture prescription can be filled by selecting the proper type of meridian therapy (acupuncture, acu-pressure, moxibustion, etc.) and applying it to specific acupuncture points.

Most students advise that this is a fairly difficult lesson to understand at first. We suggest you read and re-read it a few times. Each time, you will get more and more out of it. Don't let the fact that it is a philosophy, as opposed to technical and scientific facts, scare you away from it. Remember, it has served people in the Far East well, for thousands of years--there must be something to it!

Better yet, start trying to apply what this lesson says about Yin / Yang to the events, beings, things, etc. on all levels, in your daily life. Those who will do this constantly, without exception, will become more and more free and happy. You will, after a short period of time find it a most simple, practical and beautiful philosophy by which to guide your ship of life. It is certainly a most refreshing and rewarding way to 'look' at this brutal, scientific, plastic world we live in. Try it, you might like it!



All questions must be attempted. Return both pages of completed question paper to Institute for evaluation (use pre-gummed address label supplied). The bottom of the page is the return label for use with a window envelope, please fill it in neatly. Use a separate piece of paper to ask questions.

1. Why do the Chinese place the lungs first in the classical order of ch'i flow through the twelve chings (meridians)?
  
2. If there is a blockage or fullness in the Kidney meridian which meridian would most likely be deficient or empty as a result? Give a short reason for your answer.
  
3. If Yang energy in a body was drastically reduced causing a serious imbalance, what sort of illnesses or diseases could one expect to occur?
  
4. Classify as to 'Yin' and 'Yang' in the spaces provided.

(Example) winter Yin summer Yang  
 war \_\_\_\_\_ peace \_\_\_\_\_  
 fast \_\_\_\_\_ slow \_\_\_\_\_  
 ice \_\_\_\_\_ steam \_\_\_\_\_  
 north \_\_\_\_\_ south \_\_\_\_\_  
 soft \_\_\_\_\_ hard \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE ANSWER THE TWO QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE AND RETURN

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	STREET
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	STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____

PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS - DO NOT WRITE IT

SEND ME LESSONS \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ENCLOSED

5. In your own words explain the following statement:

"Man is a small universe---a microcosm."

6. Explain in your own words WHY there can be no neutral or neuter in Yin/Yang philosophy.

YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COURSE ARE HELPFUL AND APPRECIATED