

Zen Shiatsu

Asian Bodywork Therapy

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Seasoned Reflections

We are in the transition of winter into spring these days. The late snow and freeze are thawing and melting away. The sap is running in the trees. The breeze carries breaths of freshness, the earth cleansing herself in preparation for the upcoming glorious décor of Spring with bursting colors of early flowers, budding trees, and the return of migratory birds.

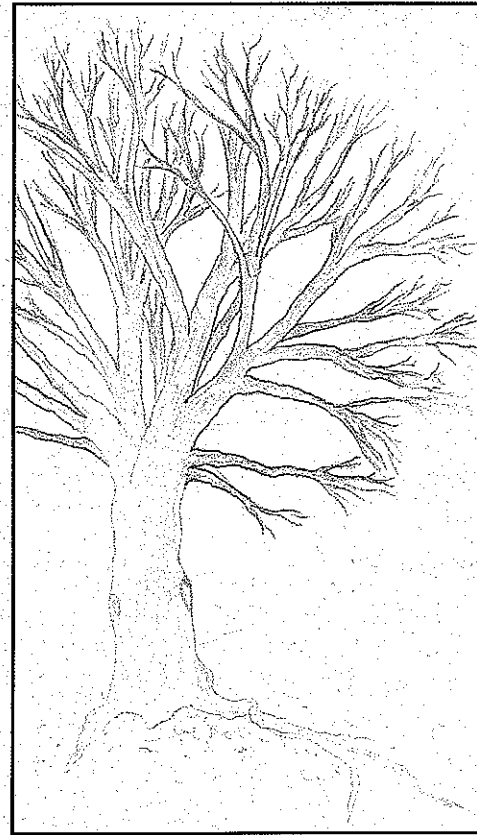
Our meridians are affected by this season in a similar way as the world around us. As the sap begins to run in the trees, our energy is waking up and is starting to run. As the melting snow cleanses the earth (providing us with lots of mud first), our bodies are ready for cleansing as

well. As our energy reawakens following the winter hibernation, let the mud that gets stirred up within us be gently washed out.

May we be like the trees bursting with sap this season: growing, stretching, and reaching for the sky, for all that we dream to be or to have. May we be able to bend with flexibility in the buffeting winds and other challenges in our lives. May we be able to sink our roots deep into the earth and drink deeply. May each of these qualities let us stand steady and strong as we move forward in the upcoming months.

In Healing Light,

Lucy



From the Futon...

The meridians most affected by spring are the liver and gall bladder. As the liver filters the blood, it assists with the smooth flow of blood through the body. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), the Liver meridian is in charge of the smooth flow of blood and qi. Blood or qi stagnation in the Liver meridian can cause migraine headaches, PMS symptoms such as menstrual cramps and irritability. It can also cause stiffness in the tendons and ligaments. The Gall Bladder meridian runs along the sides of the body and so is often involved in structural misalignments affecting the hips and knees.

On a mental level, these meridians can affect our ability to have perspective of the big picture or in planning the details in our lives. Sometimes we get overly focused on the minute details. Imbalances can affect our ability to make decisions, our ability to turn

from side to side and weigh all the options. A large decision in our lives can affect the condition of the meridian. An imbalance in the Gall Bladder meridian could mean it becomes difficult to make the smaller decisions—which snack to eat, which item on the to do list to tackle first.

The emotions connected with the Liver & Gall Bladder are those of anger, frustration and irritability. This can be thought of with the image of the tree that is growing and reaching towards the sun. What happens if we are not able to grow and reach for our goals? How does that affect our mental and emotional energy?

Sour and bitter are the flavors that can help to control Liver imbalances. Some of the bitter foods are rye, romaine, asparagus, quinoa, and dandelion greens. Lemon juice or vinegar mixed in water, along with the bitter foods can be helpful in alleviating liver stagnation.



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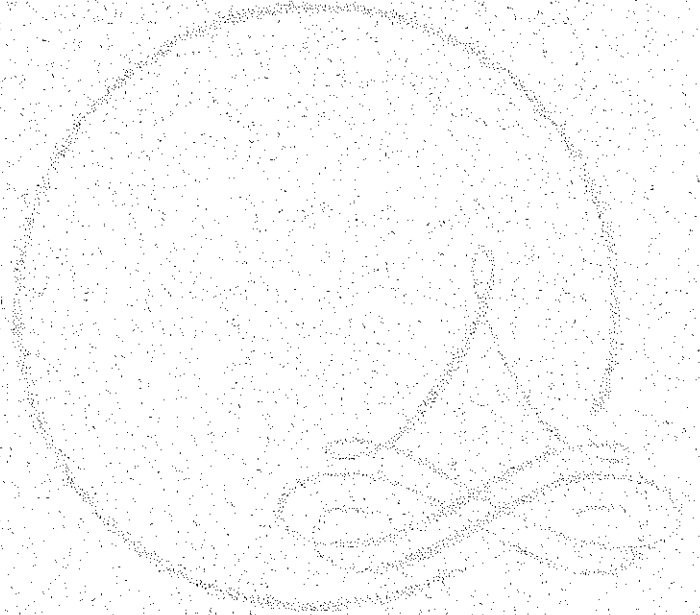
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