

## Emotional Well Being with Taoism and Chinese Medicine

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What has become apparent in clinical practice is the amount of people who are struggling with emotional pain and lack of direction, contentment or purpose in their life. Taoism, Buddhism which was part of Chinese Medicine history have developed tools, concepts and beliefs in the understanding of self and emotional well-being, which can give people a more compassionate view with the complexities of life for themselves and others. What is alarming is the amount of people on medication for depression and anxiety, which has increased considerably over the last few years. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), self- help books and mindful meditation incorporate principles of Taoism and Buddhism in there techniques and theories.

Oriental psychology asserts that there is no separation between the spirit, mind and body. The notion of separateness between subject and object, self and other, the observer and the observed, is seen as incorrect and creating imbalance and separateness from our true inner nature and connectedness to others. Often people complain of feeling lonely, unsupported and misunderstood. The human mind is often wandering, meditation and self-reflection are tools used to help create stillness, acceptance and clarity. Resisting the self-talk of good or bad, desirable or undesirable. Releasing fear and negativity with conscious thought, to transform old patterns.

The environment or our outer reality controls our mind, we keep on reminding ourselves of who we are through our past history, learning, beliefs and experiences. This becomes our identity; the thoughts keep us in a pattern and we often recreate more of the same. Our mind can be a potential battle field or a wild horse, which we need to tame. The aim is to find a natural state, our inner knowing, dropping expectations and the past by releasing we become more energized and present. By harnessing and embracing gratitude and love, we can focus on the positive not the negative. We often need to break the addiction of our thoughts and create new neural pathways that are beneficial, through mindful change, using contemplation, meditation, awareness and practice. Being still and present, we find our spiritual path and inner knowing, initially this often needs guidance through an experienced meditation practitioner or other health modality.

Real knowledge is immediate knowing which is inherent and not developed through prior learning. Opposed to conscious knowledge which is manifested from everyday life through past influences, beliefs, training and experience. This is considered a conditioned state which freezes into a personality, temperament and judgements. We need to unfreeze and create fluidity, to help create the clarity and awareness to manifest change. By emptying the mind of its conditioning or personal drama through releasing habitual thought, beliefs, societal expectation and judgements. We can start to begin to experience calmness and acceptance of self and our true nature, and listen to our inner knowing or spiritual guide. This in turn will also create a vibrant pathway in life. Not fighting our true nature and developing our inner spiritual path, a basic concept of Taoism.

Chinese Medicine's history which is steeped in Taoism and Buddhism, the spiritual components, are used to guide people in times of trouble. Taoism includes the concept of Wu Wei, going with the flow, not fighting your path, accepting what comes your way and lear-

ning from it, and Zi Ran, finding our natural state, this includes eating organic seasonal produce, reducing chemicals and preservatives, reducing stress with walking, yoga, tai chi or qigong, and being in nature as much as possible. These beliefs also coincide with the yoga tradition of being in the moment and connecting in to self, in the hope of finding answers and a clearer perspective to our personal life questions, and attaining a sense of purpose and an ease in connecting to others and self.

These concepts are integral to life, so we as humans can manage to see life's beauty and not get caught up in our past story and our future life's expectation. Projecting into the future or holding on to our past manifests many unpleasanties and ultimately creates imbalance in the body, if a human is not content or is struggling with life, the body as a result, can reflect this with disease or disharmony. Chinese Medicine was based on preventative medicine keeping the body healthy and calm. Ancient Practitioners were not paid if the patient became ill. This meant they were not doing their job. Meditation or stillness is imperative in connecting mind body and spirit.

Connecting in to our truth and spiritual path is where we can feel at peace, releasing the past, expectations, beliefs, religious thought, scientific thought and traditions. Maintaining contemplation and creating an empty heart and mind and creating space can give an individual clarity to see their true nature and space to manifest a healthier path in this life.

By knowing who we are, we gain everything. A feeling of contentment, with absolutely nothing else to gain in life. Spirituality is not blind faith; it is the ideology that eliminates darkness and acceptance of self. It is the principle that teaches us to face any adverse circumstance or obstacles with ease, not a battle. Creating steadiness and calmness of the mind is then reflected in our daily life, manifesting steadiness of thought and action. Maintaining equilibrium in mind, body and spirit. Flowing with whatever is happening in life and letting the mind be centered and accepting.

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