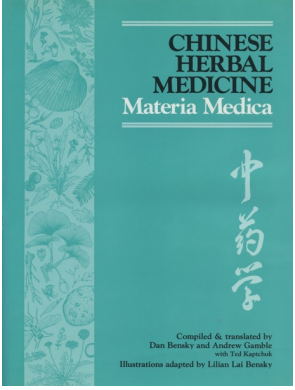




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1986



FIRST ENGLISH
MATERIA
MEDICA

2

ORGANIZED ACCORDING TO AN ACTION OF THE HERB

Release the
Exterior

Clear Heat

Drain
Downward

Drain
Dampness

Dispel Wind
Damp

Stop
Bleeding

Invigorate
Blood

Warm the
Interior

Tonify Yang,
Qi, Yin,
Blood

Calm the
Spirit

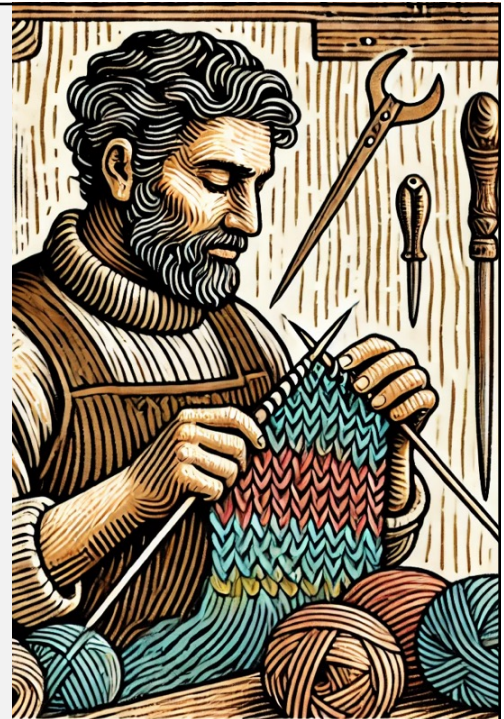
3

THE PROBLEM WITH THIS ORGANIZATION

Herbs are like people in that we have a variety of key parts to our identity. Being put into a single defining category can diminish the range of our capacities.

Joe is a carpenter

A man might be a carpenter by trade but also be a father, brother, son, husband. He might be a trade union activist which might be more important to his own identity. He might be a master knitter or gardener, growing most of his family's food. The fact that he is gay, Armenian, or a skydiver might be huge parts of his identity, companions, and life activities.



4

TWO EXAMPLES

Sang Ye is in the "Cool Acrid Herbs that Release the Exterior" category.

Even though the text also lists it as treating the eyes and lungs when they are hot and dry and cooling the blood for bleeding, It tends to get fixed in people's minds as *Sang Ju Yin*.

My Obstetrics and Gynecology teacher, Dr. Qiu Xiaomei, used Sang Ye to enrich Yin, calm the fetus, and stop bleeding. She used it consistently in cases in which a Yin deficient woman had threatened miscarriage or excessive bleeding.

In fact, its surface relieving power is extremely minimal.

Mu Li is in the "Substances that Anchor, Settle, and Calm the Spirit" category.

While it is also used to enrich Yin and help to prevent leakage and soften hardness.

My teacher used Mu Li to stop bleeding when the bleeding was due to Kidney deficiency.

Its ability to stop sweating is also only for sweating due to Kidney Qi deficiency.

The way Mu Li enriches fluids is through its salty cool ocean-dwelling nature that liquifies fluids that have been congealed due to heat.

5



THE WHOLE NATURE OF THE HERB

Mu Li is heavy and from the Salty, Cold, Yin ocean.

It is heavy and chalky, so it goes down into the water/storage phase and consolidates the root.

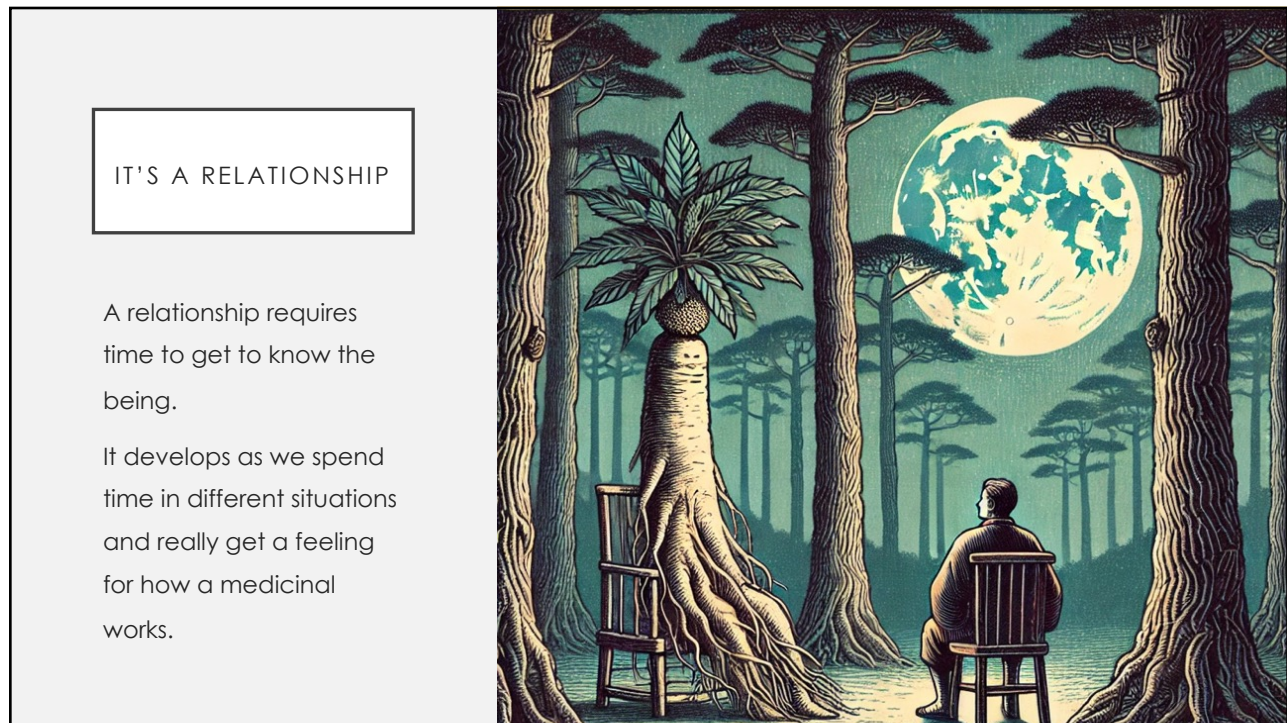
The whole list of "functions" stem from its nature.

This is true of all herbs.

6



7



8



THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS SERIES

Welcome!

9



QUALITIES TO CONSIDER WHEN SPENDING TIME WITH AN HERB

- Flavor
- Temperature
- What part of the plant or animal: leaf, root, shell, peel, poop, molting, fruit...etc.
- Color
- Where it grows or lives
- When it is planted or harvested
- What it looks like
- How it acts
- How it feels
- Suppleness and Solidity
- Translucence, chalkiness, heaviness, lightness, porousness

10

SHEN NONG BEN CAO JING

- “[There are] those that are dried in the sun or in the shade, gathered and prepared at different times and months, grown in different places, genuine or false, old or fresh. They all have their laws. There are roots, stems, flowers, fruits, grasses, stones, bones and flesh. Some are prepared as pills or powders or boiled in water or steeped in liquor, and some are simmered in grease.....You must follow the inherent character of the herb and not go against it. There are also those that are toxic and those that are not.”



11

READING THE DIVINE FARMER'S CLASSIC OF MATERIA MEDICA



Reading of the Divine Farmer's Classic of Materia Medica

Shén Nóng Běn Cǎo Jīng Dú

神農本草經讀



當歸

Chén Xiūyuán 陳修園

Translated by Corinna Theisinger

Edited by Eran Even & Jonathan Schell

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SHEN NONG BEN CAO JING

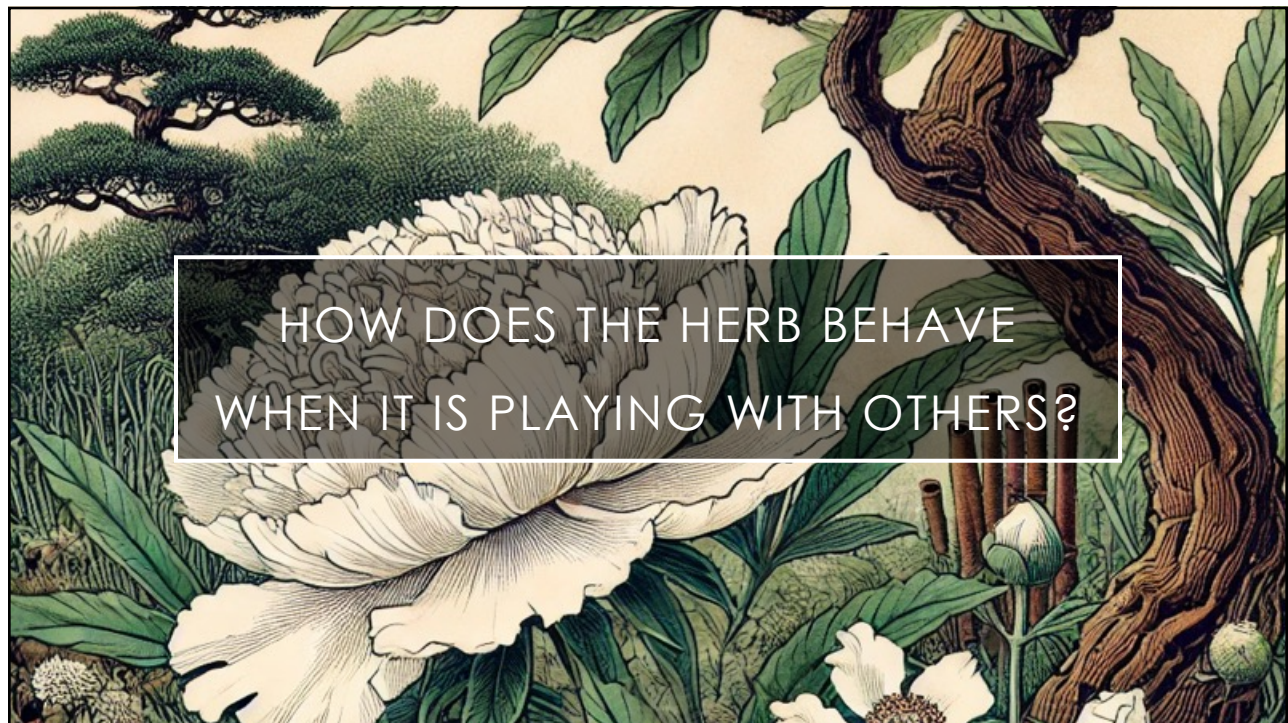
"Among herbs there are rulers and ministers, assistants and envoys. Through these roles they can have disseminating or containing effect on each other.

With herbs, Yin and Yang are combined and matched.

There are child and mother and older and younger sibling relationships among herbs.

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HOW DOES THE HERB BEHAVE
WHEN IT IS PLAYING WITH OTHERS?

14



ZHANG JING-YUE

"There are many Medicinals, each with their own respective natures. Because the countless indications and contraindications are diverse, it is difficult to know them all. If he who uses the medicinals does not grasp the essence, it is inevitable that he will make many mistakes. If he only considers that which governs or only considers the secondary actions; if he only cares about 'what benefits this but does not benefit that' or only cares about whether tonification is indicated and purgation contraindicated, then his ignorance about what is true and the rigidity in his attempts to lasso the wild horse will result in a lack of effectiveness."

From: JCM The Classical Energetics of the Five Tastes Versluys 2006

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ZHANG JING-YUE

There is only one truth for the use of herbs, and that is the mastery over their qi and taste, along with the knowledge of their yin and yang. This way, even though there are many of them, one will be able to grasp their essence.

The simultaneous use of qi and taste is the miracle of the harmonious gathering, of which the important thing is their mutual complementing of one another."

The differentiation between qi and taste is that all qi belongs to yang and all taste belongs to yin. Qi originates from heaven and has four qualities: cold, hot, warm and cool (These correspond to the temperatures of the four seasons). Taste originates from earth and has six qualities: sour, bitter, sweet, pungent, salty, and bland.

From: JCM The Classical Energetics of the Five Tastes Versluys 2006



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THE QI OF THE HERB....

The Qi of the herb is not just the 4 temperatures..it is also

Solidity/suppleness

Heavy/light

Dense/vapid

Chalky, translucent, with holes

Color

Part of plant: root, twig, leaf, flower

Mineral or bug...how the bug acts

How it grows, where it grows, when it grows

How it is prepared



17

SUPPLENESS AND SOLIDITY

"The way of establishing heaven may be said to be yin or yang; the way of establishing earth may be said to be suppleness of solidity. " The primary explanation of solidity and suppleness in medical theory is in the Nei Jing Su Wen says "Solidity and suppleness are two mainstays. If they fall from their position, will not this cause an emptiness of the movement of heavenly qi and an attendant development of disease. How then can they remain balanced" When the heavenly structure of solidity and suppleness is lost, people develop epidemic pestilence and must be treated with medicinal substances."

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace

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SUPPLENESS AND SOLIDITY

"Medicinals most often consist of grasses, woods, insects, animals, metals and minerals, all of which necessarily receive the natural qi of heaven and earth. Since they each receive a different qi, this influences the character of these, and they must be differentiated as to their solidity and suppleness. The ancient sages most often spoke of qi and flavor but dealt relatively little with the character in their discussions. However, in the Qing dynasty Shi Shoutang gave thorough consideration to the character of medicinal substances and asserted that an analysis of medicinal character promotes efficacy."

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace



SUPPLENESS AND SOLIDITY

In discriminating the character of specific medicinal substances, those which are supple, soft, and contain sap or oil are referred to as moistening medicinals, whereas those medicinals with a dry brittle character and which contain no sap or oil are referred to as drying medicinals. The moistening and drying characters of medicinal substances form two categories and because the qi and flavor of these medicinals differs they each have different merits.

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace

SUPPLENESS AND SOLIDITY

Moistening medicinals may be differentiated into pungent and moistening, warm and moistening, neutral and moistening, cool and moistening or cold and moistening qualities. Drying medicinals may be discriminated as to whether they have pungent and drying, warm and drying, hot and drying, neutral and drying, cool and drying, or cold and drying qualities. Furthermore, based upon the degree to which a medicinal substance possesses a moistening or drying character, medicinal substances may be differentiated as being, "slightly moistening" or "extremely moistening", "slightly drying" or "extremely drying" qualities. In general, moistening medicinals possess a great amount of spring, autumn or winter qi and a small amount or summer qi, while drying medicinals poses a great amount of summer, autumn, or winter qi and a small amount of spring qi. Since the heavenly qi of drying medicinals is great they are able to treat dampness, and since the earthly qi of moistening medicinals is great they are able to treat dryness.

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace

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MIXING YIN AND YANG

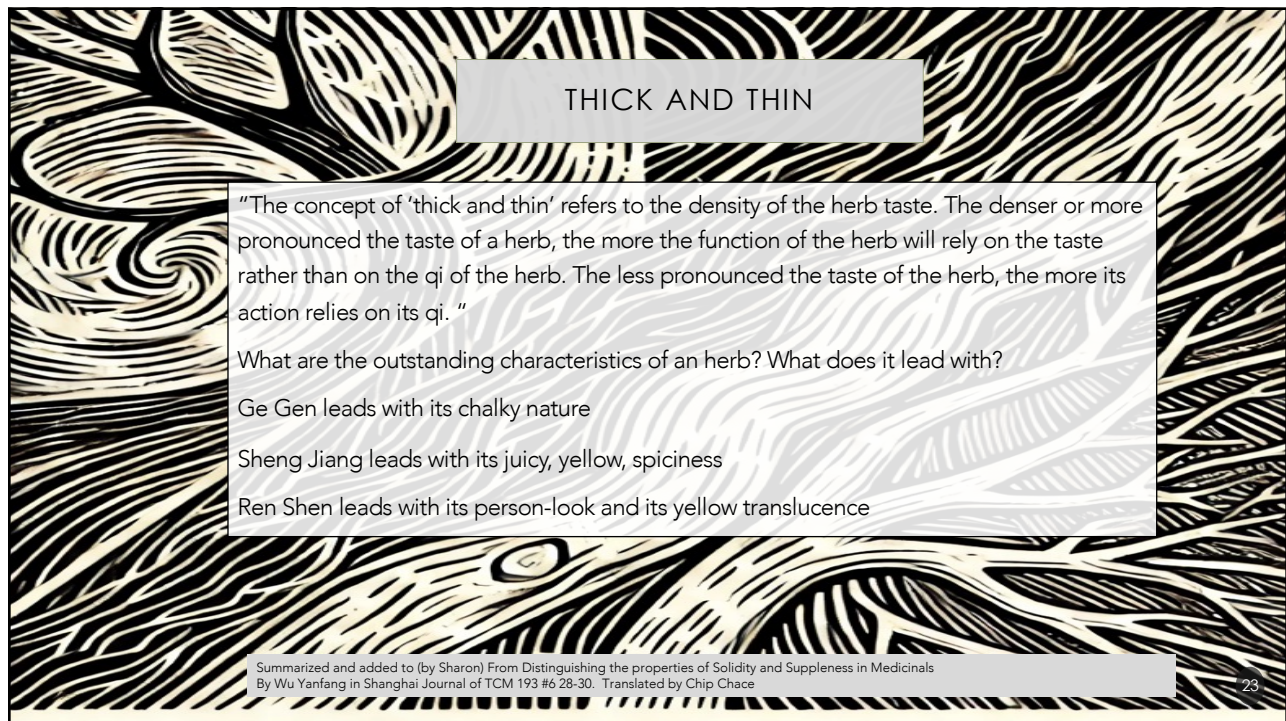
Within the context of warm and hot medicinals, our predecessors discussed medicinals substances that are not solid, drying or drastically harsh.

These medicinals are flesh and blood and have emotions such as Lu Rong, Lu Jiao, Ge Jie, and Zi He Che all of which are warming, supple and moist in nature and do not have the harsh disadvantages of the solid drying medicinals. This is a clear illustration of the use of yang medicinals within supple formulae, which are also referred to as warm supple medicinals. These warm supple medicinals have very unique applications.

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace

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THICK AND THIN

"The concept of 'thick and thin' refers to the density of the herb taste. The denser or more pronounced the taste of a herb, the more the function of the herb will rely on the taste rather than on the qi of the herb. The less pronounced the taste of the herb, the more its action relies on its qi. "

What are the outstanding characteristics of an herb? What does it lead with?

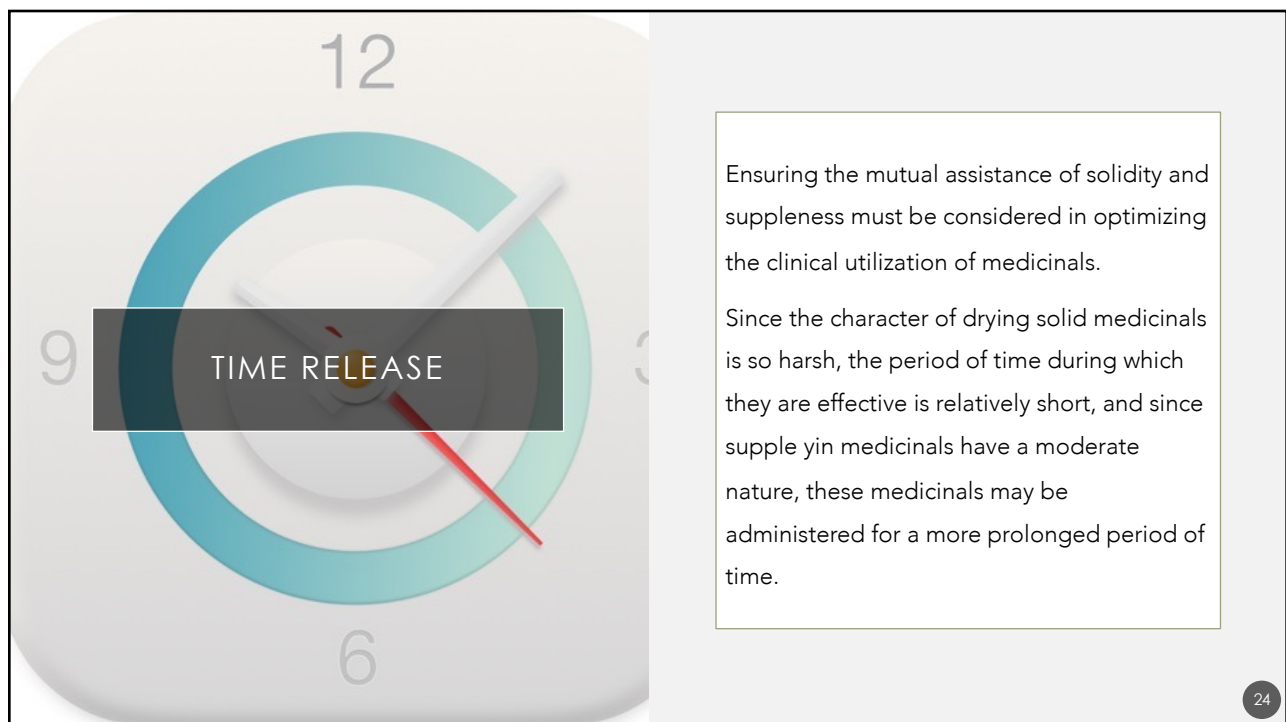
Ge Gen leads with its chalky nature

Sheng Jiang leads with its juicy, yellow, spiciness

Ren Shen leads with its person-look and its yellow translucence

Summarized and added to (by Sharon) From Distinguishing the properties of Solidity and Suppleness in Medicinals
By Wu Yanfang in Shanghai Journal of TCM 193 #6 28-30. Translated by Chip Chace

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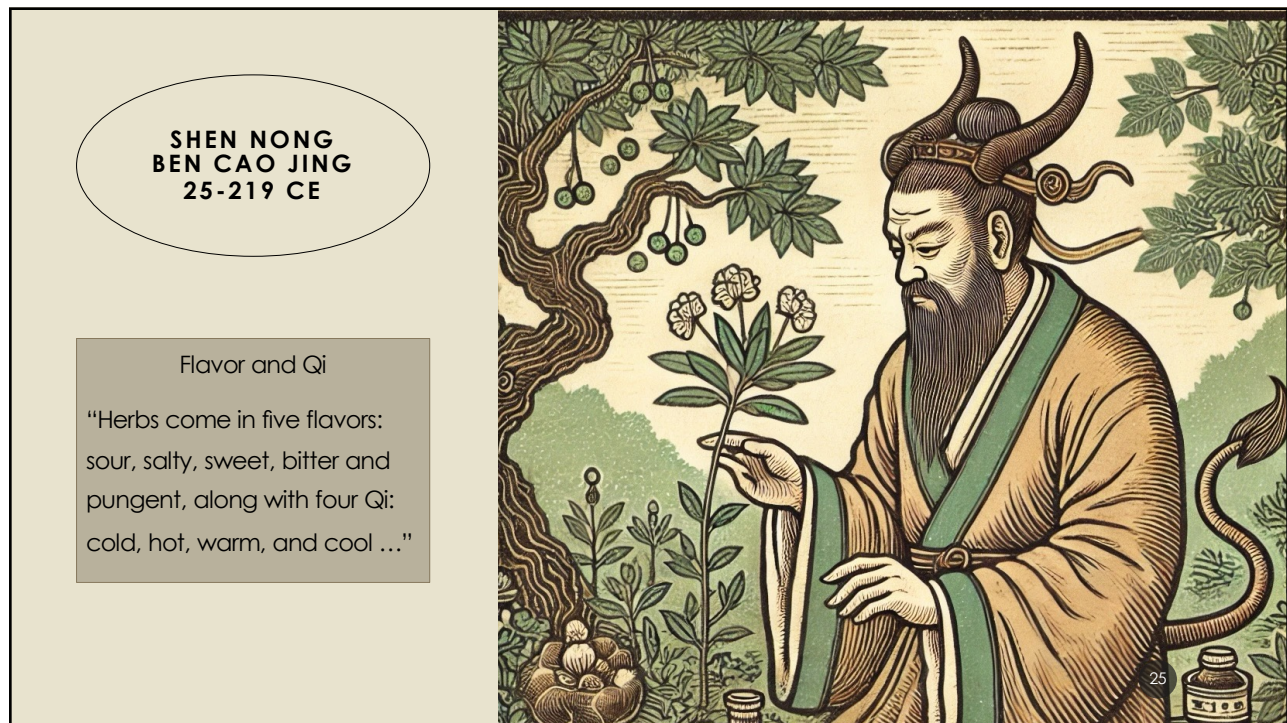


TIME RELEASE

Ensuring the mutual assistance of solidity and suppleness must be considered in optimizing the clinical utilization of medicinals.

Since the character of drying solid medicinals is so harsh, the period of time during which they are effective is relatively short, and since supple yin medicinals have a moderate nature, these medicinals may be administered for a more prolonged period of time.

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Flavor is more than the taste of the herb.

"A "flavor" 味, is substance with an action and not a taste.

"The fact that the very substance of food ...can be seen as Qi Hua, Qi Transformation: The transformation of vital matter into activity, functioning or the transformation of essence flavors into Qi. The Yin gives rise to Yang."

"It is quite obvious that when one eats, one's forces are renewed, and the body's substances replenished...food restores both what has a form and what is formless within a human being. The Yin as well as the Yang aspect of Qi in the body are regenerated through what is eaten."

A Vision of the Origin of Qi through Wind and Flavors: Rochat De La Vallee, #115, 9/17 From

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A Vision of the Origin of Qi through Wind and Flavors: Rochat De La Vallee, #115, 9/17 From

Flavor

"The quality and balance of the flavors determine the regular movement of Qi"

"There is no gap between what can be seen as substance (flavor), as movement (Qi), and as mental activity (Zhi 志). When flavors are carefully chosen and blended, their composition starts a process where body, Qi, mind and spirit benefit one another."

"The word 'flavor' then encompasses not only the intrinsic quality of a substance, but also its effect, the action triggered by the flavor within the person."

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WHAT ARE THE
FLAVORS?

THIS IS HOW LIFE
COMES TO BE.....
SU WEN 5

East brings wind to life, wind brings
wood to life, wood brings sour to
life....sour brings Liver to life

What is Sour here? Sour is a
movement and action that creates
form – puckering, gushing, gathering

South brings heat to life, heat brings
fire to life, fire brings bitterness to
life...bitterness brings the heart to life

Bitter is hardening, down bearing

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WHAT ARE THE
FLAVORS?

THIS IS HOW LIFE
COMES TO BE.....

SU WEN 5

Center brings damp to life, damp brings earth to life, earth brings sweet to life..... sweet brings the spleen to life

Sweet is moisture and form

West brings dryness to life, dryness brings metal to life, metal brings pungent to life, pungent brings lungs to life

Pungent dissipates, dries and lifts.

North brings cold to life, cold brings water to life, water brings salty to life, salty brings the kidneys to life

Salty volatilizes, softens

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WHAT ARE FLAVORS?

味

Flavors are Five in coordination with the Five Actions of the Wu Xing:

Pungent Scatters

Sour Gathers

Sweet Relaxes

Bitter Hardens

Salty Softens

The Four Qi Hot, Warm, Cool, Cold are associated with the number 4 for the temperatures of the 4 seasons.

A Vision of the Origin of Qi through Wind and Flavors: Rochat De La Vallee,
#115, 9/17 From

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NEIJING, CHAPTER 22

Primary Chapter on Using Flavors to Treat

31

31

<i>Organ</i>	<i>When..</i>	<i>Consume</i>	<i>To...</i>	<i>Longs for</i>	<i>Quickly eat, fills</i>	<i>Drains</i>
<i>Liver</i>	Tense	Sweet	Relax	<i>Dispersion</i>	<i>Acrid</i>	Sour
<i>Heart</i>	Lax	Sour	Gather	<i>Softness</i>	<i>Salty</i>	Sweet
<i>Spleen</i>	Damp	Bitter	Dry	<i>Relaxation</i>	<i>Sweet</i>	Bitter
<i>Lung</i>	Reverse Qi	Bitter	Drain	<i>Gathering</i>	<i>Sour</i>	Acrid
<i>Kidney</i>	Dryness	Acrid	Moisten	<i>Hardness</i>	<i>Bitter</i>	Salty

ORGAN/FLAVOR CHART
SU WEN 22

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The liver is Qing colored

- It is suitable to eat sweet

The heart is red

- It is suitable to eat sour

The lung is white

- It is suitable to eat bitter

The spleen is yellow

- It is suitable to eat salty

The kidney is black

- It is suitable to eat pungent

SU WEN 22

All of these correspond to "When the organ is ____, quickly eat ____
to relieve it except for salty.
"When the spleen is damp, quickly eat bitter to dry it."

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WHAT DO FLAVORS DO? SU WEN 22

Acrid disperses

Sour contracts

Sweet relaxes

Bitter hardens

Salty softens

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WHAT ARE THE FLAVORS?
 SOUR GATHERS AND GUSHES
 BITTER GOES DOWN THROUGH THE MIDDLE AND DRIES AND HARDENS
 PUNGENT DRIES, LIFTS UP AND OUT
 SALTY KEEPS US SOFT AND FLOWING
 SWEET GIVES US FORM

35

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ACRID



36

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- Acrid rises, spreads, dissipates
- Acrid opens
 - Opens the exterior
 - Opens depression
 - Opens the blood
 - Opens the Lungs
 - Opens the Spleen
- Acrid Steams upward – moistening
- Acrid Steams outward - drying
- Acrid Transforms

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SALTY

38

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Salty governs softening and its nature sinks as water flows downward, therefore it leads out stagnation.

Salty Softens Hardness

Salty Volatizes

"Saltiness travels in the blood. In diseases of the blood do not eat too much salty."

"The Salty flavor can dispel masses, reduce swellings, and relieve constipation."

Saltiness in water lowers the freezing temperature and raises the boiling temperature.

Salt water creates buoyancy.

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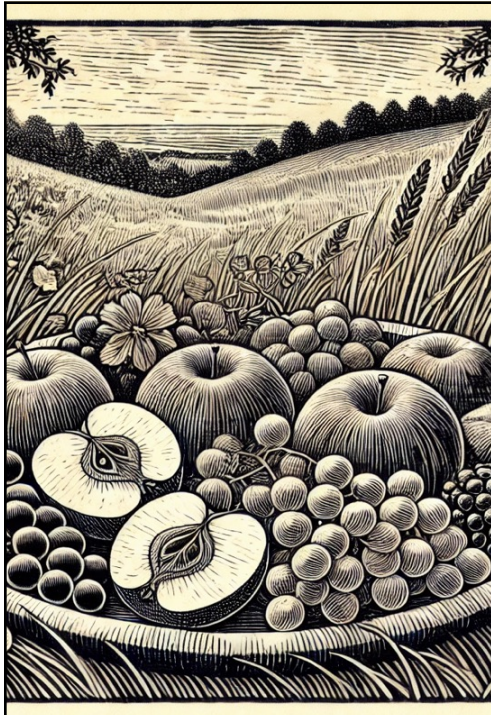
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SWEET

40

40



Sweet governs moderation and its movement ascends, therefore it tonifies the middle burner.

Sweet Creates Form

Sweet Relaxes

Sweet Stabilizes and Stays

Sweet Strengthens

Sweet Nourishes and Enriches

Sweet is absorbed upward

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SOUR



42

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Sour governs collecting and its nature astringes, therefore it treats drainage. (Zhang Jing-yue)

Astringes the Lungs

Astringes Sweat

Astringes Blood

Astringes the Intestines

Diarrhea

Prolapse

Protects and Gushes Fluids

Restores Appetite

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44

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Bitter governs purging and its movement descends, therefore it expels excess.

Bitter parches and down-bears

Parches damp/phlegm

Hardens or consolidates 堅 jian the Kidneys and Spleen

Down-bears reversal of Lungs

Down-bears reversal of Stomach

Clears heat in the Heart through the west

Purges the Large Intestine

The bitter cold down bearing causes "Ordering and Controlling Ministerial Fire"

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SU WEN 5

When speaking of Qi and
Flavor

Acrid and Sweet effuse and
disperse and are Yang

Sour and Bitter gush up and
drain down [respectively] and
are Yin

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Bland governs percolation and its nature disinhibits,
therefore it clears by separation.

Leeches out dampness, percolates dampness and
promotes urination.

Most Bland herbs are Chalky and Sweet

See Talks on Chalky Herbs and Tian Hua Fen in
the White Pine Circle

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FRAGRANT/AROMATIC

Xiang 香 : Fragrant Transforms dampness,

Transforms turbid dampness,

Disencumbers the Spleen

Opens the orifices.



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