

Usage of Gems, Stones & Rocks from the perspective of Chinese Medicine

Gems and Stones have been used in the practice of Chinese Medicine since ancient times

The original usage was probably within the longevity practices of *Taoist adepts*, with the first written records found around 200 BCE in the *Shennong Bencao Jing*. This Materia Medica denotes 3 Classes or Levels of Herbal substances, Gem stones being placed in the 'Upper Category'. That is those substances which are the most refined and used for the purpose of nourishing health in order to create longevity and clarity of mind.

The *Ben Cao Ganmu* is the next major Materia Medica in Chinese Medical history. Written by Li Shizhen, one of the great masters & founders of CM, the *first draft* of this enormous text was completed in 1578 CE - after his reading of 800 other medical reference books and 30 years of field study !! This text attributes stones to all categories of medical practice, but again notes that their greatest efficiency is as a 'first grade' or 'Upper Category Herb'.

Throughout its tumultuous history of social change, it has always been the Taoist community living outside of society in the high mountains of China who have preserved the traditions and precious knowledge of the past. Pursuing a life of self-sufficiency, study and contemplation, they sought inner peace through personal cultivation and longevity (with continued vitality of health !) through harmony with nature.

Dr Yuen grew up with his father and 'adopted' grandfather, learning all the traditional skills of a Taoist practitioner and specialising in medicine. He began his medical practice at age 15, has studied with a wide variety of masters, including holding direct teachings from a eunuch, aged 100 at the time, of the imperial medical lineage of China.

Having grown up and lived in NY, USA, Dr Yuen has sought to promote these classical forms of CM so that they do not become lost. His teachings integrate this traditional knowledge with the views of the modern world and are directed to their practice in the context of Western society.

Accordingly, the study of the medical usage of Gems and Stones was based upon Dr Yuen's 35 years in clinical practice and taught from the views of both Classical Chinese Medicine and of modern geology and chemistry. It also included a wealth of alchemical knowledge on Health, Longevity and Internal Cultivation from the Taoist practitioner lineages.

The importance of Gems and Stones in medical usage

As written, according their classification G & S can be used at all levels of Medical practice. That would be externally in the outer tissues of the skin, muscles & surface flesh – the level of *Qi* in CM; internally in the disease processes of the bowels and viscera (the internal organs) – the level of *Xue* or *Blood*; and deeper in the tissues of the bones & marrow, brain & NS, hormonal functions & their glands, including the genetic make-up/ DNA – the level of *Yuan Qi* or the constitution.

However, their area of optimal usage is at the level of the *Yuan Qi* and the constitution. Using simple metaphor, rock and stones were created as the earth was formed, as was the human body during the embryonic period in the womb. As the stones are the *materia prima* and structure of the Earth; so are the *Yuan Qi* and these deeper tissues that of the Body. In simple energetic terms their resonance is the same.

In the terms of CM, these tissues correlate to the functions of the *Jing* = constitutional essence, and the *Shen* = consciousness, cognition, mental functions and senses. One uses the term *Jing-Shen*, as structure & function, mind & body are not being separated, as well as mutually dependent.

The general pathologies associated with this *Jing-Shen* level are those of a chronic and debilitating nature which have often developed over many years or since childhood; inherited and congenital disorders, both physical and mental; hormonal disorders and auto-immune diseases; psycho-spiritual traits and habits, both inherited and learnt.

Specifically, it is those disease processes related to the tissues noted above: bones, marrow, brain, NS, as well as the associated psychological imbalances.

Longevity, or the idea of maintaining health with ageing, is dependent upon the vital function of exactly these constitutional tissues, with treatment being directed to their regeneration and maintenance, as well as a clarity within the mind, that is of one's personal cognition through acuity of senses and perception.

Stone Elixir Formulas

A Stone Elixir Formula consists of 4 - 5 different stones which are cleansed and then laid in mineral water in order that their minerals and/or trace minerals will seep into the water.

The minerals are seen to have a direct biological effect, whilst the trace minerals will have a vibrational influence (similar to Homeopathic remedies, as an example).

The advantage of using a Stone Formula is that it can give such a wide range of influence to the many different aspects of an individual's pathology within one treatment modality. Similar to the forming of a Herbal Prescription, a Stone Elixir Formula comprises of a number of different stones whose action is denoted a specific task or ranking of task within the intended action of the whole formula. That is, Principle, Associate and (2 levels of) Transformative Stones - the latter being equivalent to the Assistants, Envoys or Harmonisers in a Herbal Formula.

Each stone or grouping of stones work either individually or in a combined action on the varied aspects of the pathology. In general usage such formula can attend to a range of differing symptoms which might arise from the different levels of function in the Zang-Fu / Organ Qi, both physical and emotional in nature.

This is exactly the same usage as a Herbal Formula, though herbs have more action upon the level of the Blood and Organs (emotions & bodily functions), whereas gems and stones upon the level of the Jing and Shen (constitutional tissues & cognitive functions); (and needles on the level of the Meridians (muscles & movement)).

In saying that, each discipline can be used upon whichever level according to structures of theory, principles of treatment, insight and skills of practice. But definitely each is classically attested to be more effective upon certain types of Qi and function; remembering that most stones are classified as 'Upper Grade Herbs', as well as finding usage in a range of different classical Herbal Formulas.

If one is to look at the usage from the perspective of Alchemical Medicine, the usage of a singular Stone Elixir Formula becomes even wider in its ability to treat not only many different symptoms, but also many symptoms from the different layers of human organism.

Attributing the hierarchical tasks according to the following, one creates a multi-dimensional treatment modality through a simple stone formula:

- ❖ the Principle Stone to the psycho-spiritual or ancestral & 'karmic' causes
- ❖ the Associate Stone to support the psychological stability and growth
- ❖ one Transformative Stone to work on the Emotional level, supporting or dissipating
- ❖ the other Transformative Stone addressing the symptoms and pathogens directly

In this way, one can immediately influence all dimensions of human experience – body, mind, spirit; or Jing Qi Shen – within one medical modality.

Usage together with *Ba Zi*

For the purpose of a 'Life Consultation', I couple together character interpretation and diagnosis from Ba Zi (Chinese Astrology) with the writing of an Alchemical Gemstone Elixir. (Also combined with diagnosis according to body-mind energy reading, body diagnosis, pulses, symptoms and so forth).

The *Ba Zi* or the *8 Characters* (of the Stems & Branches) of your birth chart are also known as the '4 Pillars of Destiny'. These *4 Pillars* are the astrological configuration or vibration according to yearly, monthly, daily and hourly cycles. They can be seen as the resonance of the soul as it enters and expresses within the 4 realms of human life and existence.

The Yearly cycles are expressive of the deeper aspects of character, the longer term aspirations and life goals, and the more ingrained or inherited traits of daily living; whilst the hourly cycles relate to one's more immediate day to day concerns and responses and habits learnt more spontaneously from the proximate environment.

The monthly and daily cycles will represent those aspects in between, as examples: family and personal relationships, career, work and travel, activities, interests, hobbies and so forth.

With the idea that optimal health is created by the unhindered incarnation of the soul, by observing the different aspects of an individual's life (the 9 Palaces or Areas of Human Life or Activity in Ba Zi) one can readily observe or 'diagnose' if there is either a free movement or an obstructed flow.

In simple terms, ill-health and sickness arise – psycho-spiritually, emotionally or physically – when there is a lack of identification of the soul’s purpose or individual pathway, an obstruction of the soul’s incarnation or a maladaptive or unskilful approach to life’s circumstances.

Problems of development or flow within each of the 4 Realms or Cycles – Yearly, Monthly, Daily, Hourly – will give associated and expected pathologies accordingly. As example, pathologies of the Yearly cycle will be of a more chronic, deeper and encompassing psychological nature or concern about purpose and pathway in life; compared to those of the hourly cycle which will be more superficial, acute and related to ongoing stresses of daily life expressed within bodily function and movement e.g. muscular tension, aches and pains.

Monthly and Hourly cycles will give syndromes based around emotional well-being and physiological function of the inner organs (viscera and bowels).

When this information from the *Ba Zi* birth chart is combined together with a thorough Medical Case History and discussion concerning the individual’s pathway through life. It enables the practitioner to very quickly understand the areas in which the soul has or has not been able to ‘incarnate’ or manifest & express itself within life.

The areas in which one has not ‘succeeded’ - those aspects of life which have caused challenges, problems and suffering, together with emotional stresses and physical pathologies - are all compared with this basic blue print of one’s personal energies – what one would ‘expect’ to happen and the way in which it could have unfolded in an optimal way.

The Gemstone formula is written accordingly in order to realign the basic life force of the soul’s incarnation into this optimal pathway. The Principle and Associate Stones will relate to the Yearly Energies and the more encompassing Psycho-spiritual influences; and the Transformative Stones to the Monthly, Hourly or Daily Energies, and so the emotional, physical and more embodied symptoms, as presented by the patient.

Stems & Branches in CM

The usage of Stems & Branches within CM is based more directly upon the Yearly Energies of the *Ba Zi* (combined with the yearly climatic controllers) as the Constitutional Qi. In this case, appropriation of the action of the stones is thus:

- ❖ Principle Stone will balance the Stem - as aspect of Character & Core of Physical Constitution
- ❖ Associate Stone balances the Branch – as aspect of Personality and Socio-emotional energies
- ❖ Transformative Stones work on the level of the Division - as meridian & climate of the inner terrain, and directly with physical symptoms.

Origins of Sickness

Ultimately, as written, all sickness arises from the inability of the soul to effectively incarnate into the body. The forces involved in incarnation can be seen to be from three movements:

- ❖ the form & activity of the physical body (*Jing & Po*); genetic information & development of physical health
- ❖ the forming of the psyche or spirit-mind (*shen & shen-Yi*) by cultural, social & environmental forces
- ❖ the ‘*karmic*’ influences (imprinted during the pregnancy in the present rebirth) which act upon the soul (*Hun*) misaligning it from an original state of greater perfection into the condition form, known as the *Ling*.

It is the *Ling* (the soul in this conditioned) form which will obviously have the strongest influence. For it is this movement from Heaven which is both the origin of the force of the reincarnation, as well as the carrier of the traits of ‘pollution’. Or the karmic conditions of the experience of human life this lifetime.

In simple terms, it is the *Ling* which manifests as the body-mind-spirit incarnate into earthly, physical form (i.e. *Ling-po*, *Ling-hun*, *Ling-shen* of CM) bringing with it the incurrence of strengths & weaknesses, traits of health or sickness, positive or negative qualities.

Because Gems and Stones originate from Heaven as Cosmic dust and particles (‘trapped’ within the Earth as it was formed), they have the correct resonance to treat those states of human life involved in the processes of forming (within the womb) and evolving (within human life).

These processes are specifically under the guidance of the energies of the *Jing -Shen* within CM; that is the DNA, the genetic material and all the deeper structural tissues and functions, and the consciousness, comprising of awareness, cognition, senses and perception, or all the basic mental and cognitive functions.

Your treatment

You can consider that there are 4 aspects to your treatment, or rather the approach you are consciously choosing to redirect your health and your life:

❖ **Gemstone Elixir**

As explained thoroughly above, this is a treatment at a very deep and encompassing level. Based upon your Ba Zi (or Chinese Astrology) Chart, it is taking into consideration all aspects of your life - body, mind, spirit - and helping to refocus your pathway forward.

In simple terms, the mineral (& trace mineral) content together with the deeper vibrational & cosmic qualities of the stones aid in the more full incarnation of your soul. Furthermore, by creating the 'correct' resonance or frequency (i.e. mimicking those expressed in your *Ba Zi* characters) will help to redirect all levels of your energies upon the most optimal pathway within the context of your present life situation.

❖ **Constitutional Herbal Formula**

Herbal Formulas work more at the 'level of the blood'. This implies they working upon the function, nourishment and inner climatic terrain (or activity of the tissues) within the body.

A Patent Herbal Formula is similar to taking a nutritional supplement, except one which is specifically picked for not only any nutritional weaknesses (the aspect of nourishment of the blood), but also physiological weaknesses in the activity of organ function (e.g. weak metabolism or respiratory capacity), as well as the inner condition or terrain of the body (e.g. phlegmatic, being a condition of excess 'dampness' in CM; wind being excess emotional stress or fire being inflammation or irritation within tissue etc.)

By taking just 1, 2 or 4 pills each day, you will be using it as a 'Constitutional Formula'. That is, rather than addressing symptoms directly (in which case one takes larger quantities, to influence directly upon the physical function or Qi of the body), it is addressing the underlying structures which have formed and are now holding the outer presentation of the pathology.

These 'constitutional patterns of pathology' are diagnosed partly from the sequence of illnesses within your medical history, but primarily from the usage of the (yearly) Stems & Branches within CM. This yearly astrological Map shows the basic matrix or mandala of the inner dynamics of your energy system, as well as the expected patterns through which sickness will be created.

❖ **Acupuncture or Other Treatment**

If you received an acupuncture treatment from me, it would have been according to the principles of Alchemical Medicine. That is, addressing and harmonising differing aspects of Body, Mind and Spirit in one treatment (*Jing, Qi, Shen* in CM terms).

In this case, you probably received insertion of needles in each of these areas during your treatment: Head, Torso or Arm and Lower Abdomen or Leg. These are the areas representing respectively : Spirit, Mind and Body.

Acupuncture or other treatments are also used as a support for the other modalities during the treatment process. Different actions or reactions of the body can show themselves in the superficial parts of the energy system - that is the meridians, muscle, skin and external tissues - as the body works to let go of old tensions, latency of pathogens and unwanted toxins.

Needling, massage or other forms of bodywork are an essential adjunct to release these symptoms. This frees up the focus of the bodies healing energy allowing it to return to the deeper regenerative processes.

❖ **Personal Work**

This is perhaps the most important aspect of the whole treatment: that you remain conscious of the purpose and direction of your own healing. We probably discussed certain tasks - either physical or psychological - in which I suggested you engage yourself. And I hope you will studiously attend to them !

However, the most important is that on a regular basis you bring to your cognitive awareness the bigger purpose of your life and align your day to day activities and habits with that direction. By doing this, you will find that many of the emotional and physical maladies which stress you will simply drop away into the recent past.