



For better
mental health

**Making sense
of traditional
Chinese medicine**

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Making sense of traditional Chinese medicine

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Making sense of traditional Chinese medicine

This booklet provides an introduction to traditional Chinese medicine for anyone with a personal or professional interest in coping with mental health difficulties. It looks at Chinese herbal medicine, acupuncture, moxibustion and tuina, and explains how it can help with problems ranging from panic attacks to psychosis, how to find a practitioner and what to expect from a consultation. It also includes information about some of the herbal preparations that are suitable for self-medication.

Why do people choose traditional Chinese medicine?

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is a holistic healthcare system that aims to treat the whole person rather than just the disease. It has been the main medical system used in China for more than 2,000 years, treating a whole range of conditions. Its long history testifies to the wealth of wisdom, knowledge and experience it can offer. No synthetic drugs are used, and the treatment methods are natural. It aims to rebalance the body's energy systems, so that it can heal itself.

People often express concern about certain aspects of Western medicine – that it treats the symptoms rather than the cause, produces side effects and has a fragmented approach to health. TCM seeks to deal with the causes of conditions rather than just the symptoms, and stresses the importance of diet and lifestyle. If provided by well-qualified and experienced practitioners, it's unlikely to produce any side effects (see page 19).

TCM has a good record in treating chronic conditions in situations where prolonged use of Western medicine would be a cause for worry. It's also shown itself to help some conditions, such as eczema and pain control, for which Western medicine can do little other than treating the symptoms.

TCM sees mental health as no different from physical health, since both relate to energy imbalance. This means there's no stigma attached to mental health problems, in the way that there has been in the West. TCM puts the emphasis on restoring mental health, not on treating mental illness.

What's the thinking behind it?

TCM uses quite different language to talk about medical conditions and classifies them quite differently from Western medicine. (In this booklet, any English terms that would have a different meaning or significance in Chinese are written with a capital letter.) What we would regard as a basic commonsense approach to health and treatment is actually firmly rooted in our own medical tradition.

TCM sees a much closer relationship between mind and body. They are seen as influencing each other and being mutually dependent. The idea of natural balance is fundamental in Chinese medicine, and the key to good health. When the body functions well, the mind will also function well, and vice versa. If you are anxious, for example, your blood pressure will tend to go up; if you are frightened, your heart beats faster.

The Organs

TCM holds that any mental stimuli will affect various different body systems. These body systems are each connected to, and named after, a particular organ. For example, the Heart Organ will actually include the whole nervous system (and is written with a capital to distinguish it from the heart itself). Each Organ system is governed by yin and yang forces and by one of the Five Elements. These also dictate how the Organs relate to each other, because they are all interdependent.

Yin and yang

Traditional Chinese medicine stems from Taoism, a Chinese philosophy. It states that the universe, and everything in it, is underpinned by two complementary and yet opposing forces, yin and yang, rather like the mathematical symbols plus and minus. The sun, day, heat and solid matter come under yang; the moon, night, cold and emptiness come under yin. They can be thought of as complementary pairs – one can't exist without the other. Although they are opposites, the boundary between them is fluid and ever changing, in the same way that day shades into night and night into day. Cosmic order is considered to be in balance if yin and yang are balanced and this is just as true for a healthy Organ. TCM aims to rebalance these complementary and opposing forces, as necessary.

Qi and the body's energy

TCM thinks of the human body as a dynamic energy system, in which a particular kind of energy or life force, known as qi, is created and transformed. It runs through the whole body, along particular channels called meridians. The free movement of this energy is vital to good health.

The Five Elements

The Five Elements is a way of understanding the world in terms of cycles, such as growth and decay. The elements of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water are each associated with one of the five major Organs. Each Organ supports another Organ, but is controlled by a third. For example, Liver (Wood) supports the Heart (Fire), but is controlled by the Lung (Metal). If there is something wrong with this interaction between the Organs, ill-health is likely to follow. Other parts of the body, such as the eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and tongue, are each associated with a particular Organ, and so are our emotions.

The Organs

- Liver

Element: Wood.

Supports the Heart (Fire) and is controlled by the Lung (Metal).

Connected with the eyes and tendons.

Emotion: anger.

- Heart

Element: Fire

Supports the Spleen (Earth) and is controlled by the Kidney (Water).

Connected with the tongue and blood.

Emotion: panic.

- Spleen

Element: Earth.

Supports the Lung (Metal) and is controlled by the Liver (Wood).

Connected with the mouth and muscles.

Emotion: pensiveness.

- Lung

Element: Metal.

Supports the Kidney (Water) and is controlled by the Heart (Fire).

Connected with the nose, skin and hair.

Emotion: sadness.

- Kidney

Element: Water.

Supports the Liver (Wood) and is controlled by the Spleen (Earth).

Connected with the ears and bones.

Emotion: fear.

What causes illness?

The body's energy can be disrupted or blocked if, for instance, the relationship between the Organs has gone wrong in some way. This will disturb someone's natural balance. TCM can categorise disease according to this disruption:

- Deficiency – when energy supplies are interrupted or depleted.
- Excess – when too much energy has accumulated somewhere.
- Stagnation – when the energy isn't circulating properly.

Emotional difficulties, a poor diet, injury, viruses, parasites or stress can all set this off, as can outside forces, such as Wind, Heat, Cold, Dampness, Dryness and Summer Heat. So, someone might be described as developing the symptoms of a cold because they have 'Cold and Wind in the Lungs'. TCM believes that it's not possible for someone whose energy is harmonious to become ill, and for this reason not everyone exposed to a cold virus will succumb to it.

There are three common methods of restoring the body to health:

- herbal medicine
- acupuncture and moxibustion
- tuina (Chinese medical deep massage).

How does Chinese herbal medicine help?

Usually, practitioners will prescribe a mixture of different herbs. For example, eczema can be a symptom of the body having too much Heat and Damp. It may call for a mixture of herbs that are Cool and Dry by nature, to counteract this. These herbal mixtures are based on tried and tested formulae from medical books that date back over hundreds of years.

Every herb has its own characteristics and effects, and combining different herbs helps to increase their potency and minimise any unwanted consequences. Rather like a football team working together to strike, defend and score goals, the herbs work together to achieve maximum benefit for clients. The basic formulae are often modified slightly according to the person concerned and their problem.

Herbs can come in a dried form, or as herbal capsules, tablets, ointments and creams. Dry herbs are available only on prescription, from a practitioner. They are more powerful than capsules or tablets, but are often more expensive. They are also more time-consuming to use, because they need to be brewed into drinks. The resulting brew may well taste rather bitter, because most herbs are derived from roots, tubers or tree bark and the stems of plants, flowers or seeds.

Practitioners will often prescribe dry herbs first, because of their potency. Once the condition they are treating improves or stabilises, capsules or tablets can be used, instead. Because they are so powerful, long-term repeated prescriptions of dry herbs can be harmful. Practitioners often change the formula, after a while, to maximise the benefits and minimise any risks.

People are sometimes concerned about animal products being used in traditional Chinese medicine. Some treatment programmes do include such products for their medicinal properties, but the majority of remedies use only plant materials. Chinese herbal medicine should not contain any endangered species, and this is, in any case, illegal in Britain.

How does acupuncture work?

This takes the form of inserting very fine needles into the body's energy lines, or meridians. There are 14 major meridians in the human body, 12 of which are dominated by the major Organs. Each of these links energy points across the whole body, which are all related.

The needles are inserted at special points on the meridians, where the energy can be regulated. It may be helpful to think of this in terms of the electricity supply to a room. The meridians are the wiring, the acupuncture points are the light switches, dimmers and fuses, and the Organs are the electrical appliances. Practitioners will choose a combination of points to achieve the desired effect. The choice is guided by long-standing formulae, modified to suit each individual and problem.

Needles come in different lengths, which are chosen according to where they go and what they are treating. They are always sterilised and often disposable, and so perfectly safe. The practitioner may use from 5 to 15 needles, leaving them in place for just a few minutes or for up to half-an-hour. When the needles are inserted correctly, they cause a sensation known as 'de qi', which is a slight tingling, heaviness or numbness at or around the needles. This is a sign that the needle is working on the energy channel and that the Organ is being properly stimulated. Acupuncture should not be painful, however. Indeed, the experience can produce a deep sense of relaxation that promotes a general feeling of wellbeing.

It's also possible to have a modern variation of acupuncture, using magnets, small amounts of electricity or even lasers to stimulate the energy points. These may or may not also involve using needles. Ear acupuncture is another new departure in the field, used to help treat problems with addiction, for instance.

Moxibustion

Moxibustion is a traditional alternative to acupuncture. It involves burning a cigar-shaped block of the herb moxa (common name ragwort) and placing it as close as possible to an energy point, without burning the skin. It's preferable to ordinary acupuncture for pregnant women, young children or anyone who is afraid of needles.

What is tuina?

Tuina is a medical form of deep massage meaning, literally, 'push and grab'. Again, it involves targeting the energy channels and points. Although the treatment is less invasive than acupuncture, the manipulation can be strong when the condition under treatment requires it.

It's possible to treat yourself for simple problems, such as a headache, by applying gentle pressure on the correct points.

What is Qi Gung?

Qi Gung ('gung' meaning exercise) is a way of training people to harness and focus the energy flow in their body to achieve an enhanced state of body and mind. Those who practise it as a martial art say they can protect themselves from injury by summoning and moving qi around the body.

This form of exercise can be used as a therapy in its own right or combined with another treatment method. It can help with healing because the energy systems are better organised, to the benefit of mind and body. However, Qi Gung is not usually considered appropriate for helping with mental health problems. If practised wrongly, it can cause harm and make the condition worse. It should always be undertaken with the help of a suitable teacher.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi (meaning 'the ultimate energy') is one of the most common forms of Qi Gung, and its origins lie in the religious beliefs of Taoism. It exercises the energy system through slow but highly regulated movements of the body. A formal class of Tai Chi may take between an hour and an hour-and-a-half each time. For the best results, it's essential to practise three times a week (but not necessarily in formal classes).

How can I try TCM?

There is a limited range of TCM herbal remedies that are suitable for self-medication. A list of commonly used and safe formulae can be found on p. 22. However, obtaining them can be difficult, because only a few pharmacies stock them. It's important not to use any dry herbs without consulting a practitioner, as they are powerful and can be harmful when used inappropriately.

As yet, there are no statutory regulations to cover practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine. There are some self-regulating bodies, which guarantee certain minimum standards. (For more information, see *Useful organisations*, on p. 24.)

Always check exactly what kind of training and experience a practitioner has. You should look for someone who has been educated to degree or equivalent level, and who has at least five years' experience of TCM practice. Those trained in China will have completed a full-time, five-year medical training programme, and will have practiced in a hospital. A properly trained practitioner will have a thorough knowledge of the theory and practice of herbal medicine, acupuncture, moxibustion and tuina. They would also have some basic training in Qi Gung. They will choose the most appropriate method for your condition – most commonly herbal medicine and acupuncture.

It's now been estimated that there are at least 3,000 Chinese medicine shops operating in high streets across the UK. The staff may be qualified TCM practitioners, or they may not. They are under no obligation to be members of professional bodies or to be covered by professional insurance, although many do have this kind of cover. This means it is very important to check up on the qualifications of anyone whose advice you are seeking.

How much will it cost?

Fees vary according to the area, the practice, and the treatment. As a rough guide, in a general TCM clinic, a consultation followed by a week's worth of dry herbs can range from £30 to £50. A consultation followed by acupuncture, tuina or moxibustion might cost between £20 and £40. There are some specialist clinics whose fees may be higher, but these are few and far between. Over-the-counter remedies are usually from £5 to £8 a bottle, which will last for just over a week.

What happens during a consultation?

A consultation usually takes about half-an-hour and the practitioner may use various methods for diagnosing your problems.

Observation

The practitioner may scrutinise your complexion, eyes, tongue, and movements to gain insight into how your Organs are functioning. The tongue is a particularly important source of information, and its colour, body, coating, and moisture will all be taken into account.

Feeling and listening

The practitioner 'feels' the patient's energy and atmosphere by detecting smell and using other senses to gain an insight into a complaint. Sometimes, this could involve touch.

Taking a history

To gain a full picture, the practitioner will ask detailed questions about your complaint and your medical history. He or she will want to find out whether your problems vary at all according to the time of year and your diet, feelings or emotions.

Pulse diagnosis

This can provide a highly sensitive and detailed picture of your general health. The practitioner will be taking a number of different 'pulses' on three fingers of each hand. This enables him or her to gain further information about the quality and functioning of the five major Organs. The practitioner will take account of your general health and strength, as well as all of your symptoms, whether they seem to you to be connected or not. This will be the basis for deciding on the best treatment.

Number of sessions

Western medicine often maintains the same course of treatment over a number of years. In contrast, TCM requires frequent follow-up sessions, especially to begin with, to modify the treatment as you respond to it. You may need a consultation every week or fortnight for the first few weeks, at least. After six or eight weeks, it may be appropriate to change to ready-made herbal tablets or capsules. Further sessions should be much less frequent, and may not be necessary at all.

Can I get TCM on the NHS?

It is possible to find a very limited range of TCM services on the NHS. Many NHS pain clinics offer acupuncture. However, this is usually provided by doctors, nurses or physiotherapists with some training in acupuncture, rather than by fully trained TCM practitioners. While they may be able to treat relatively simple complaints, their training and experience may be insufficient to treat more complex cases. Hospital doctors may sometimes refer patients to see TCM practitioners, but this happens only rarely, on a one-off basis, and the NHS will not pay for it.

A small number of GPs now have TCM practitioners attached to their surgeries, although they can't refer patients to them, as such. This is a private arrangement and the patients have to pay fees. But treating patients under the same roof in this way means that Western medicine and TCM can be combined, in appropriate circumstances, for maximum benefit to the patient.

How can TCM help with mental health?

TCM recognises five broad types of mental-health problem:

- depression
- insomnia
- panic attacks
- manic depression
- psychosis

It's possible for very different causes to produce symptoms of these mental health problems, and so they can require quite different approaches. Practitioners may also vary in their choice of treatment, according to the person, the particular circumstances and the range of symptoms, but it may be along any of the following lines.

Depression

Depression may be regarded as a Liver Stagnation syndrome. TCM believes that the Liver system has a particular role in governing emotions. Unresolved problems in work and daily lives may result in unhappiness, causing malfunctioning of the Liver and particularly of its qi (energy), which can then lead to depression. The two most common causes of this Stagnation are a blockage of the energy channel and a malfunctioning of the Organs involved in mobilising qi. In women, this may lead to irregular periods, PMT or pain before or during a period.

The treatment for depression therefore focuses on revitalising the Liver qi. The common herbs used are thorowax root, curcuma root and albizzia bark. (See p. 22, for more information.) Acupuncture can also be effective in mobilising the Liver qi.

Insomnia, panic attacks or manic depression

Traditional Chinese medicine believes that this group of mental health problems can come from a malfunctioning of the Heart (the Organ that includes the nervous system). This may be due to mental overload, or to a weak constitution following a long illness. As a result, the Heart can become Deficient. When the Heart is undernourished, it causes problems such as panic attacks and manic depression.

The Heart is also closely involved in sleep. If blood in the Heart system is Deficient in some way, this may cause insomnia, frequent night waking or difficulty in getting back to sleep. In some people, blood deficiencies can result in palpitations, or both insomnia and palpitations. These may also be responsible for memory problems.

Treatment would normally focus on nourishing the Heart and calming the spirit. The common herbs used are lilyturf root, Chinese senega root and jujube fruit. (See p. 22, for more information.) There are also acupuncture points used to help with nourishing the Heart.

Insomnia and panic attacks

These problems can be associated with Heart and Kidney yin Deficiency. Too much hard work, physically and mentally, can be the cause. The balance of yin and yang become disrupted and the excessive yang affects the Heart, causing insomnia and panic attack. Treatment would concentrate on replenishing the yin, by using herbs such as wolferry seed, wild jujube seed and anemarrhena tuber. (See p. 22, for more information.) Acupuncture points can be utilised to redress the balance of yin and yang.

Insomnia, panic attack and psychosis

Phlegm can mean more than a build up of mucous in the nose and throat. Phlegm Heat can accumulate in the body over time, as a result of alcohol abuse or dietary imbalance. Heat, once formed, can disrupt the Heart, causing a range of problems, including insomnia, panic attacks and psychosis. Herbs that clear Heat and dissolve Phlegm include mandarin peel, tabasheer of bamboo and lotus plumule. (See p. 22, for more information.) Acupuncture could also be employed.

Psychosis

TCM believes that one common cause of psychosis is a combination of Liver qi Stagnation and the formation of Phlegm that blocks energy channels in the body. Together, they cause a malfunctioning of the Heart. The channels in themselves are normal, but are blocked by the Phlegm. The aim of TCM would be to revitalise qi and dissolve Phlegm, possibly using immature bitter orange and processed pinnellia tuber. Selected acupuncture points on the Liver, Stomach and Heart meridians should, together, mobilise the qi and dissolve Phlegm.

Does TCM offer other advice about staying healthy?

TCM stresses the importance of a good diet and of supplements, if necessary, for the benefit of mental health. It suggests several ways in which people can help themselves, and also believes that some form of guidance or counselling may be appropriate, in some cases, to help strengthen a patient's reserves and maintain a positive outlook on life. Learning some simple relaxation techniques is also regarded as helpful in getting people to unwind.

Regular and gentle sport is seen as good for recovery. It's important that this should be something that suits the individual, and which they can stick to. Examples might include jogging or going for a walk, or a regular Tai Chi session, which is both a form of meditation and a relaxation exercise. TCM favours a simple life-style, whenever possible, and is an advocate of the healing power of nature. Regular walks in the countryside, for example, and a daily routine of eating healthily and getting enough sleep are advocated. It also recommends avoiding nightlife, especially for conditions caused by undernourishment of the Heart.

Diet

A practitioner can develop an individual dietary programme especially for you. In general, however, TCM recommends that people should avoid, for instance:

- oily and spicy food, cigarettes and alcohol
- dairy products and too much meat, if the condition is caused by Phlegm
- too much cold or iced food, if the condition is caused by Stagnation of the Liver
- mutton and seafood, in conditions caused by Heat
- tea and coffee in cases of insomnia.

Are Chinese herbs ever dangerous?

During the last few years, there have been reported cases of kidney failure in Belgium and in Britain in connection with the use of Chinese herbal medicine. This was due to two herbs being contaminated, at source, by toxic varieties from the same plant families. The now-banned herbs are tetrandra root and akebia, which are, of themselves, perfectly safe. There have also been some reports of shops passing off Western steroid cream as Chinese herbal cream. For this reason, it's important to consult a qualified practitioner.

Traditional Chinese herbs can be as powerful as Western medicines, and should be treated with just as much respect or caution. Any medicine may be harmful, if used in the wrong way.

How long will TCM take to work?

Chinese herbal medicine is designed to eliminate the toxins in your body. Toxins are anything that that body doesn't need or which might do you harm, such as a virus. To begin with, you may feel worse rather than better, although this will depend on how many toxins are present. As the herbs start to work, symptoms may temporarily worsen, in some people. This is why weekly or fortnightly consultations are advisable, so that the practitioner can monitor progress closely.

Chinese medicine is a natural therapy, which tackles the causes rather than the symptoms. In general, it works more slowly than orthodox Western medicine. Progress also depends on how serious the condition is.

For stress, depression, migraine or insomnia, you should feel an improvement after one course of treatment, which usually means four weekly sessions. Severe and chronic problems, such as schizophrenia, are harder to treat and the outcome also tends to be less good. But, a patient using antipsychotic drugs to control their symptoms may nonetheless find Chinese herbal medicine helpful in alleviating the drug's side effects.

Is there any research into mental health and TCM?

There has been very little research, in the West, into the effects of TCM on mental health. However, more and more research is now being done into its success in treating physiological problems.

Some research about mental health has been published in China, but this does not meet standard Western research criteria. Taken together, however, it points to some promising results, which may be worth further research. It suggests that some Chinese herbal medicine formulas have been beneficial in treating schizophrenia and in alleviating the side effects of psychotic drugs. Acupuncture was also reported to alleviate the symptoms of dementia.

Can Chinese herbal medicine be used with Western medicine?

Chinese herbal medicine and Western medicine are routinely used together in China. In fact, it's rare to find a hospital in China that does not use both together in some form. The two kinds of medicine are structurally different chemically, one natural, the other synthetic, so they are broken down by different enzymes in the body.

If you are using both at the same time, try to leave a two-hour gap in between each intake to ensure that your body responds to them well.

Ready-made herbal capsules

It's possible to buy some herbal remedies over the counter, in capsule form. Some of those available are listed below. The capsules are herbal combinations based on well-known formulae. However, since the capsules are less potent than dry herbs, they are only able to deal with relatively mild mental health conditions.

As with any self-medication, it's important to exercise caution. If you have a cold, or flu, always stop the remedies until you recover, as your constitution changes and the herbs will not be effective. If you develop a reaction, contact the supplier as soon as possible. Pregnant or breastfeeding women should never use any remedy without talking to their doctor or a fully qualified practitioner.

Thorowax root formula

This is useful for stress and depression, irregular periods, premenstrual tension and period pain. It contains thorowax root, field mint, Chinese angelica root, white peony root, white atractylodes, tuckahoe, licorice root and ginger. For depression, take the capsule for up to two or three months. For stress, take until the condition subsides.

Tree-peony bark formula

Used for treating premenstrual tension, depression, and conditions that result from Liver Stagnation and getting too hot. This condition may directly affect periods. These conditions are Heat related, and women in particular may experience irritability and anxiety as a result. The formula contains tree peony bark, gardenia fruit, thorowax root, field mint, Chinese angelica root, white peony root, white atractylodes, tuckahoe, licorice root and ginger. For depression with anxiety and irritability, it should be taken for between two weeks and three months. For best results, people should avoid oily, highly spiced food, which can cause a build up of Heat in the body.

Lovage tuber formula

This may be taken for unexplained headache or migraine. It rids the meridians of Wind invasion, a major cause of headache. In recent years, there have been a good number of clinical reports confirming how useful this formula is. It contains lovage tuber, notopterygium root, dahurian angelica root, ledebouriella root, schizonepeta, field mint, licorice root and wild ginger. It should be started as soon as a headache begins. The earlier it's taken, the better. It can be continued for up to two weeks. This regime should be repeated when the next attack comes. It should gradually help reduce the number of attacks.

'It possesses a calming effect on the central nervous system.'
Chinese materia medica (1998)

Biota seed formula

Used for treating insomnia and palpitations, the formula works by strengthening the Heart, which is seen as the cause of the problem, not by targeting the nervous system. It does not affect performance, has no known side effects and does not lead to any kind of dependency. It contains raw rehmannia root, Chinese angelica root, red sage root, figwort root, lilyturf root, asparagus root, biota seed, wild jujube seed, tuckahoe, schizandra root, Chinese senega root, codonopsis root, sweet flag rhizome, curcuma root and balloon flower root. To feel the benefit, take it for seven to ten days, in the first instance. Continue taking it for three to six months to clear up the condition.

'The component of fatty oil in Biota can lubricate the bowel and ease bowel movement. Biota seed tranquillises the mind by nourishing the Heart, relaxing the bowels to relieve constipation.'
Chinese materia medica (1998)

References

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'Using acupuncture to treat dementia' (*World Journal of Acupuncture and Moxibustion* 1998, 8, 4, 7–11) (in Chinese).

Reviewed in: *Acupuncture in medicine* 1999, 17, 1 (in English)

'Using Chinese medicine to treat 48 cases of Schizophrenia' Y. H. Wang, L. Ma (*Beijing Journal of TCM* 1997, 1, 11) (in Chinese)

Service for patients with pain Clinic Standards Advisory Group (Department of Health 1999)

Useful organisations

Mind

Mind is the leading mental health organisation in England and Wales, providing a unique range of services through its local associations, to enable people with experience of mental distress to have a better quality of life. For more information about any mental health issues, including details of your nearest local Mind association, contact the Mind website: www.mind.org.uk or MindinfoLine on 0845 766 0163

British Acupuncture Council

63 Jeddo Road, London W12 9HQ

tel. 020 8735 0400, fax: 020 8735 0404

email: info@acupuncture.org.uk web: www.acupuncture.org.uk

The UK's main regulatory body for the practice of acupuncture

British Register of Complementary Practitioners

PO Box 194, London SE16 7QZ

tel. 020 7237 5165, fax: 020 7237 5175

email: info@i-c-m.org.uk web: www.i-c-m.org.uk

Information about complementary medicine practitioners including TCM practitioners

College of Integrated Chinese Medicine

19 Castle Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7SB

tel. 0118 950 8889, fax: 0118 950 8890

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Information about TCM practitioners based at GP surgeries in London

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Mind works for a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress

Mind does this by:

- advancing the views, needs and ambitions of people with experience of mental distress
- promoting inclusion through challenging discrimination
- influencing policy through campaigning and education
- inspiring the development of quality services which reflect expressed need and diversity
- achieving equal civil and legal rights through campaigning and education.

The values and principles which underpin Mind's work are:

autonomy, equality, knowledge, participation and respect.

For details of your nearest Mind association and of local services contact Mind's helpline, *MindinfoLine*: **0845 766 0163** Monday to Friday 9.15am to 5.15pm. Speech-impaired or Deaf enquirers can contact us on the same number (if you are using BT Textdirect, add the prefix 18001). For interpretation, *MindinfoLine* has access to 100 languages via Language Line.

Scottish Association for Mental Health tel. 0141 568 7000

Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health tel. 028 9032 8474

This booklet was written by Shun Au and Prof. Yang Li
First published by Mind 2001. Revised edition © Mind 2004

ISBN 1-903567-12-2

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Mind (National Association for Mental Health)
15-19 Broadway
London E15 4BQ
tel: 020 8519 2122
fax: 020 8522 1725
web: www.mind.org.uk



**For better
mental health**