



Fascial Kinetics Newsletter

Practising Bowen Therapy

No 7: May 2011

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✚ The Element of Earth & Bowen Therapy

The last few Practitioner Newsletters have focused on how the elements of air and water impact on the balance and health of the body, and how we can work with those elements with Bowen Therapy. The elements earth and fire will be explored over the next few newsletters. An understanding of the elements is an important tool for us - practitioners of TCM, Ayurveda and alchemy see disease resulting from an imbalance in the elements and humors or fluids of the body. Healing can occur when balance is restored.

Earth is seen as the container that gives form to the other elements in the body. It has even been described as the matrix - a term we are very familiar with in Fascial Kinetics. Our earth element needs to be strong and balanced to allow the other elements to be expressed.

Where water was associated with emotions, and air with thoughts, earth is about the senses. A person whose earth element is in balance is centred in the body and in touch with the state of their physical body. If someone is too strongly earthed they may feel heavy and weighed down, and become inflexible and stuck. If there isn't enough earth element present, a person will present as being out of touch with their body and bodily sensations, and become very head and thought focused. In either case of imbalance, the principle emotion is worry and over thinking.

In TCM, the earth element is associated with the stomach and spleen and governs the function of digestion. Healthy digestion is a sign of a well balanced and functioning earth element. Bloating and indigestion are often signs that the earth element is out of balance. The spleen meridian also controls the condition of the flesh and muscle tone, so a client who is limp and flaccid with poor flesh and muscle tone needs a boost to their earth element.

The key Bowen procedures to consider, as well as the Basic Relaxation Moves, would be the Lower Mediastinum or Lower Respiratory moves, Coccyx and the Abdominal moves. It is also useful to include the Foot procedures if they are too centred in their heads, or too heavy to move forward. Refer to your FK Manuals for appropriate tissue salts. Diet also needs to be a focus, with regular meals comprising simple foods, eaten slowly and chewed well, and limiting intake of processed sugars.

Also remember to consult the muscle meridian chart. For example, a client who presents with a chronically tight neck, with no obvious cause for the neck tension, may have an imbalance in the earth element and the stomach/spleen meridians. The treatment outcomes would be unsuccessful if you only treated the neck, and didn't also address the earth element imbalance.

Did you know

☀ 7am to 11 am are optimal times for the stomach to digest food and for the spleen to complete this transformation as these are the times that these meridians are strongest. Hence the saying "breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dine like a pauper." We need the most energy at the beginning of the day, and the least energy at the end, when most daily tasks are over and we are relaxing.

Good websites to visit:

🔗 For more information on the earth element & spleen in Chinese medicine www.yinyanghouse.com. (In the page "participate/find, submitted articles".) It is a commercial website, but has good information about TCM that is fairly unbiased.

Good books to consult:

- 📖 "A New Earth", Eckhart Tolle, Penguin, 2005.
- 📖 "Nine Ways to Body Wisdom", Jennifer Harper, Thorsons, 1997.
- 📖 "Healing with Whole Foods", Paul Pitchford, North Atlantic Books, 2002.

Fascial Kinetics Quote:

"The word 'spleen' in TCM terms relates to the whole digestive system, so the Chinese had a saying: a well fed spleen ensures a healthy body. The ideal in food is to balance the taste and the colours in a meal in order to bring greater balance. Too much of one thing can create imbalance and lead to disease.

An overactive sweet tooth injures the spleen, leading to weight gain. Excess salt affects the kidneys and may cause fluid retention. Too many refined foods dehydrate the Large Intestine and Spleen leading to dryness which will manifest as thick phlegm, and dry cracked skin. "

From Workshop Manual 'The Link between TCM & Bowen Therapy.'

Practitioner Tips

Earth imbalances can show up in ourselves when we are overworked, or haven't taken enough time to look after mind and body. Our energy will be low, our colour paler; our digestion may be impaired; and we will lack vitality. In addition to this, decreased spleen energy will mean that it is more difficult to maintain a healthy posture while working. We may find ourselves worrying more, especially about less important issues. Because our minds and bodies are totally interconnected, physical imbalances can produce mental imbalances, and vice versa. We often give ourselves a hard time for worrying, when we just need to pay more attention to our physical health. It's time to focus on your own health, especially diet. Have a break and get outside to enjoy fresh air and sunshine!

Refine your technique

The Fascial Kinetics Practitioner Workshop "[The Link between Bowen Therapy & TCM](#)" explores the five elements, and how they relate to health. Imbalances in the expression of the elements in our daily habits and lifestyle lead to sickness and disease. We discuss how to use your understanding of the elements in your assessment process and then to use this understanding to refine your treatment protocols. This workshop also gives additional tools to work with clients and assist with their lifestyle management.

The advanced theory and understanding taught in the Fascial Kinetics Practitioner Workshops are excellent, and allow you to advance to a higher level of competency. Ask your instructor when the next workshop is planned for your area.

Marketing Tips

A monthly or 3 monthly newsletter is a great way to promote yourself and educate your clients about what you do in your clinic. Have a simple and clear layout, and make sure your clinic name, your name, logo and address are clearly shown. Keep the information basic: not too complex as clients can make an appointment to see you if they need to know more. Although the newsletter is to sell yourself to your clients, it should be presented as a service to make them value you and know more about what you offer, rather than just talking about your clinic. It can include health information; diet, exercises and self help tips; and interesting case studies (with the client's identifying details removed).

As well as supplying meaningful information that your clients can use at home, it will also show clients the extent and range of your knowledge and skills. They may have come to see you for one problem and not realise how many other areas you are trained in. Newsletters can help clients take responsibility for their health, and understand why the post treatment instructions are so important to their full recovery.

The length of a newsletter should only be 1 or 2 pages - this is more than enough for you to write regularly and for clients to read. They can be emailed or posted. The advantage of posting is that they are more likely to be read, but it does cost more. One option is to email the newsletters to clients, but print a few copies to have available to read in your waiting room. If emailed, ensure the body of the email has some teasers that make clients want to open and read the attachment. Also make sure you use the blind copy option - don't send an email with all recipients shown. (Remember privacy law.) Also ask permission before you send it - can be part of your initial CCR form. There are lots of newsletter ideas and templates available on the internet, or you could get together with a few other practitioners and write a joint newsletter that each of you could send to your own clients.

Important Note : When writing any information about your clinic for marketing - whether it be on your brochures, newsletters, on your website or in your clinic, always be aware of copyright. Don't use material from other websites or other people's brochures without stating where you have copied the material from, or without changing the wording substantially. It is amazing in how many places we find Fascial Kinetics material quoted word for word without acknowledgement! Part of your development as a practitioner should incorporate making all the material your own, and putting your own personal touches to your self-advertising. Equally important - don't use another person's website on your advertising material without also making it clear that you are referring to another website, not your own.

BTFA Conference Reminder for 26 to 28 August 2011

Don't forget the 2011 BTFA conference being held at the Twin Towns Outrigger Resort, Tweed Heads, with easy access for everyone from the Coolangatta airport. Plan to be there to meet up with like-minded therapists and share your Bowen Therapy passion.