

What is your archetype or your personality according to Chinese medicine?

This is what we're going to talk about today, and I'm really excited because I love this subject and I think it's fascinating. We have [5 Elements in Chinese medicine](#) and we have 5 main archetypes or personalities.

How is this relevant in clinical practice?

Well, often I will ask questions to patients and it might take me a couple of sessions to figure it out, but eventually I can see which dominant archetype or personality comes out and **how to address what could come up in the physical body**, according to Chinese medicine. It also really helps to narrow down issues that can be affecting the patient as well. So **it's great for diagnosis**.

I think it's also really interesting to see those personality archetypes emerge in clinical practice.

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture easy to grasp and fun to learn.

Hi, I'm your host, Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students like you in changing the world one patient at a time. My goal is to share my passion for TCM and empower you to achieve superior patient care.

I love to showcase the amazing benefits of acupuncture because after all, acupuncture rocks!

In Chinese medicine, The 5 Elements is such a useful theory in clinical practice.

If you haven't watched my video on the [Five Element Theory](#) it's one of my most popular and it's also one of my favorite theories in TCM perspective.

Now the 5 elements are: **Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water.**

Those five elements in nature and in the body are really part of each other. **They control each other, they generate each other.** They are very much part of a wheel and each cog in the wheel. If one of them is out of whack, it may affect the others. So this is a really good theory that I love to use in clinical practice.

Now, today we're gonna talk mostly about the archetype. Each of those elements corresponds to an organ system, meridian. Wood corresponds to **Liver and Gallbladder**. Fire corresponds to the **Heart, Small Intestine**, but also **Pericardium and San Jiao** meridians, specifically. Earth corresponds to **Spleen and Stomach**. Metal, **Large Intestine and Lung**. Water, **Kidney and Bladder**. So those are what we know at the base of the five elements.

Today, let's talk about the personality

Like the Wood-Liver personality or the Heart-Fire personality, or the Spleen personality of Earth. Metal, the Lung personality or Water, the Kidney personality.

We're gonna look at the Yin Organ system mostly.

Wood or Liver Archetype

So let's start it up with the Wood. It's one of my favorite. I think I'm a bit biased because I'm Wood as well as Earth. Those are my two main personalities.

When I was younger, I was Earth with a little bit of Wood. Now in my late fifties, I am much more Wood and Earth is my second one. This is fascinating to watch because personalities can change and adapt over time. They might not stay the same. There's some traits that will stay the same, but they might really change. Does that make sense?

In general, when we look at the personalities, some of us, like I said earlier, can have two main dominant ones. Like I said, mine is Wood and Earth or Liver and Spleen are my main ones. We're going to talk about what does that mean. But for some of us, it maybe three or four.

And I've had students that really resonate with all five of them. This is a really balanced personality, which has a little bit of everything, which is fantastic.

The Wood element in the five element theory is related to the Liver and the Gallbladder.

It also corresponds to the eyes, the tendons, joints, ligaments, the season of Spring, the color green.

All those are going to **give us clues** of what's going on in the patients and their imbalance.

Today, let's talk about the personality. So the Wood or Liver personality and it's a Liver personality type or archetype, is type A. It's the person with the **vision**, the **goals**, the **planning**, the person that **plans** everything in advance, and will go and achieve them.

So if you are, let's say an accountant, you're very organized. This is a really good job for the Liver personality.

You know, when I made this video, I wrote what I wanted to do in advance, when I'm going film it, everything else. So I like to plan and it helps me being more accountable to myself.

Everything with each personality or archetype is going to have the Yin and the Yang side.

So the good side is being a **planner**. Being organized, being on time, being someone that has goals and vision and is an achiever. Its a great part of a personality as you can see, right? This is great.

However, on the other side of the coin, for this personality, there's also difficulties.

The problem is type A wants to be in control. And if it's not their way, it's the highway. In general, they like to be in control. They like to do things their own way. So it's really hard for them to work well in a team environment where everybody contributes because they want be the leader, they want to be the person in charge.

That makes it a little bit tougher for them. Also, they get really frustrated, really irritable when it doesn't go their way. Or because they're an achiever. They also are a perfectionist, an overachiever. Often this really stresses them out when they don't do well, when they're not achieving what they wanna achieve or when they put pressure to themselves.

So when I see patients that are the wood or liver archetype, I can ask questions, "Are you a perfectionist? Someone that likes to be in control?"

When I see this, I'm like, "Okay, so you're more of a Liver type."

Because they're more of a Liver type, they have **tendency to put pressure on themselves, to stress very much**. It's really good because in practice I can start using points to calm that stress, to relax them, right?

Like Liver 3 obviously would be one choice. Gallbladder 34 would be another choice to really calm that, because I'm not gonna be able to change their personality, of course. But we want to calm the stress that comes with the personality as well, if that makes sense.

Fire or Heart Archetype

The Fire in the 5 Element Theory corresponds to the Heart and the Small intestine. It corresponds to the summer season. It's the most Yang part of the whole 5 Element or time. So noon, for example. This is where it corresponds to, it's also opening into the tongue. It reflects into the face and it has tendency to be corresponding to blood vessels and the color red.

My husband is definitely the heart fire archetype. This is the personality that is very happy, very joyful. It's like the clown of the party. The person that wants to have fun, you know, loves to dance, loves to make people laugh. That's my husband. I love him for it.

They are the life of the party, they are passionate, they're excited about everything and anything.

Can you feel the excitement? This is the personality. Very much an excited personality and they get to see the shiny object, you know where they go, "This is so awesome, this is great and this is great."

When I go on holiday with my husband, I'll say, I want to go to Costa Rica. And he'll say, "I don't want to go *there*." But then I kind of push him, and I push him, and I push him to get him out of his comfort zone.

Then we get to Costa Rica and he loves everything like everywhere. Everywhere. The food, the places, the people. He's like, "This is awesome, this is awesome!" He's always excited and happy. So very passionate, very happy, excited, loves people. Loves to be around people, loves to be around crowds. Very much more an extroverted kind of personality because it's FIRE.

The Fire archetype is a great person to have around because they're very good team player.

They love to play sports that are team sports like volleyball or soccer or football so they work really well in a team environment.

However, there's always that other side. The problem with the fire or heart personality, is they have tendency to **have issues with completing a project**, with finishing something. They start because they get really excited.

They can't finish up the work or complete what they want to do because then it's boring. It's not exciting anymore.

The journey towards the goal is not fun.

The excitement of the goal is fun, but the journey is not, so it's very hard for them to complete a task.

They get very distracted very easily because there's shiny objects everywhere. The other thing too is they love to be around people. They don't do well if they're by themselves, which means that, if they are, let's say traveling for work or going somewhere else and they don't have friends, they don't know anybody, they feel really down.

They feel tired. It gets their energy to drop their energy will drop when they're by themselves.

Their energy will rise when they feed from all the other people they surround themselves with.

And on the opposite side, if they're by themselves, they start to be depressed.

So they really need other people. If you understand that,

You can ask questions to patients and say, "Oh, are you more an Extrovert or Introvert?" Doesn't mean that they're Fire right away, but ask more question and say, "Do you have difficulty in

focusing? If you're not excited about something, do you get excited really easily? And then it's hard when it's time to grind and to do the work, right?"

Ask the questions. And what we want do with those patients is we wanna try to keep that excitement and unhappiness and passion, but we want to calm them down enough so they can sleep because those people have tendency to be so excited that it's hard for them to sleep.

Heart 7 is a great point for that. And also to help them focus. Stomach 40 is one of the best point to clear the mind and focus as well. See how you can utilize this in clinical practice? I think it's fantastic.

This is why it's really important to ask the right questions so you can help the patient really hone down into their health, but also into their daily life. TCM rocks! I've said it and I'll say it again.

[Chinese Medicine Made Easy Book](#)

Diagnosis has to be the hardest part of Chinese medicine. We always say **there is no wrong treatment in TCM, only the wrong diagnosis**. This is why I created my second book, [Chinese Medicine Made Easy](#), to make it easy to grasp using a lot of colorful visuals. I have included all Chinese medicine foundations , Yin Yang Theory, Five Elements, Zang Fu Organ, all of it.

All diagnosis, of course, including tongue and pulse. Practice case studies to help you improve your skills, as well as give you access to my online fillable intake form to use with your own patients. You can download the digital version on any device, and it comes with many video links to complement it.

Or, if you're like me, you like to read a real book, the hard copy ships all over the world.

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To make sure that the format of the book is everything you were looking for because I want to make sure that you are absolutely benefiting from it. Listen to what people have to say about my green book, [Chinese Medicine Made Easy](#).

"The more I read, the more I like this book. It is simple to follow. All information is super organized with great pictures, makes memorizing a lot easier. This book will definitely make my learning a lot more productive." Yay! So happy to hear that.

"You've done it again. You are amazing. I wish we had your resources 20 years ago back in TCM school."

This also makes my day because this is why I do what I've been doing with AcuPro Academy for quite a few years now. To support everyone, check out the links in the show notes below, or go to my website, acuproacademy.com and click the shop tab on the menu bar and get your copy today.

Earth or Spleen Archetype

The Earth personality type in Chinese medicine is the nurturer. The nurturer, because it's all about related to digestion food, mother earth. So it's the nurturing personality or the caring personality.

The Earth element according to Chinese medicine, corresponds to the Spleen and Stomach and opens into the mouth. This is where digestion begins. It's also in charge of transition in life or between seasons. It is connected to the dampness, color, yellow and muscular regions in the body.

It's also the sensitive personality.

So I am Wood and Earth or Liver and Spleen kind of personality.

Growing up I was much more sensitive. I would cry very easily because I would be affected by everybody's emotion. I have learned to do this much better, but I'm still very sensitive and I still get affected, so I have to protect myself. So my second personality type is Earth.

A lot of professions in the medical field are those Earth type.

They want to take care of everybody, they want to really nurture everyone. They're very sensitive.

We love those people and they do really well in the medical profession as a nurse, as any kind of practitioner. They do very well where you have to care, maybe a vet or someone working with animals.

Earth people do really well in helping others, that's the positive part.

The negative part or the other side of the coin when it comes to earth personality is because they are so sensitive, they are going to be affected. Like I said earlier, for myself. By a lot of news, for example, it's very hard for those people if they watch the news, because they will be affected by it.

They might worry, they might get anxious. It might be a story that really affected them and made them cry. So they're very sensitive and it could take a lot of their energy. Specifically if people take advantage of their caring, loving. Because what happened is they give, they give, they give.

They take care of everybody else, but they forget to take care of themselves. And that is the problem with the Earth personality is

They do not take the time for self care, which means in the end, they get exhausted.

They are always tired because they never take the time for themselves. They always take care of every body else. .

When I see this in clinical practice, I will ask patients, "You know, how's your energy?" and they might say, "Oh, I'm exhausted." Now I need to dig a little bit deeper. "Do you take time for self-care?"

"I don't do anything. Don't exercise, I don't meditate, I don't journal. I don't go for walks, I don't see friends. I'm basically working, taking care of my family, doing everything and exhausted."

Now that's a problem. And what we want to do for those people is we **really want to raise their energy.**

So Spleen 6, REN 6, DU 20 is great to raise that energy. However, for the person that's so giving Spleen 5 is really good to calm that worry about the inability to say no, right?

People that are that personality cannot say no. They have tendency to think, *"If I say no, they'll feel guilty, they'll feel bad, right?"*

So Spleen 5 is a really good point to stop the worrying and overthinking when we feel guilt.

This is a great point to add to those patients. Isn't it amazing? I love Chinese medicine.

Metal or Lung Archetype

The Metal personality in Chinese medicine. When we talk about the Metal element in Chinese medicine, or in the 5 Element Theory, I like to think Mineral because often we think Metal is just like that piece of lead or something. But really I think it was a mistranslation, and it should say mineral because it's calcium, it's quartz, it's magnesium, it's all the minerals.

And in the 5 Element Theory, I like to call it minerals. However, for the purpose of Chinese medicine translation, that is common everywhere. We will call this the Metal Archetype or the Metal personality.

The metal element in Chinese medicine corresponds to the **Lung and Large Intestine**. It opens into the nose, it reflects into the skin when there's skin issues. It is corresponding to the fall season, the color white. Right? The metal archetype personality in Chinese medicine is going to be like the immune system.

The Lung and Large Intestines are in charge of the Immune system, which is our defense system, our shield, so we stay protected.

Metal personality in TCM is trustworthy, is loyal, is dependable and will help you anytime.

If you need to move, you ask them, they will come and help you out. They are very dependable. They're always on time. However, what's interesting about their personality is that, as I said, they have a shield.

Remember we talked about the Earth personality, which is very caring, very nurturing, and giving, giving, giving? Metal is not giving, but it will be there dependable and it will be trustworthy, however. When you look at the Earth personality, they're very sensitive, right?

The Metal personality is **very standoffish**. They're not a **hugger**. They are not going to be **sensitive**. They do not cry when they see something sad or a commercial because they are self-preserving their emotions and not to get hurt emotionally.

What's interesting about them is that it's very hard for them to get close to someone.

So even if they're in a relationship, it's very hard for them to get close to really share who they are at the core, because they are guarded and often they're very lonely because of that, because they cannot let people in.

That makes it hard because sometimes they get into depression because they cannot let people in.

The reason is they don't wanna be hurt.

I have a patient like this, she's so metal. She has asthma and eczema, so she has Skin and Lung issue, which is fascinating to me. And she's not emotional.

So I can ask those people, "Are you someone that likes to talk about feelings?" And they'll look at me like, "No, that's not my thing at all." Right?

So ask the right questions. And what we want to do for those people is we want to open their heart so they can let anybody in.

And yes, they might get hurt, but they also might get really, really good outcome. Right?

So opening the chest with REN 17, which is really good point to open your heart, your chest, but also for the lungs for breathing ability. These are really goods to point to do for the Metal personality.

Water or Kidney Archetype

In Chinese medicine, the Water element correspond to the color black. And in general it's corresponding to the kidney, the bladder, the bones, so the structure, bones, but also to the season of Winter. And it is corresponding also to the ears.

But when we look at the personality type, we talked about the Fire earlier, Fire and Water are Yin and Yang opposite, right?

So in personality-wise, there's a lot of opposition. The Water personality is much more **introverted**. They are different from the fire personality, which is extroverted, they love to be alone.

They enjoy being alone, and this is how they recharge their energy

They are actually drained if they're staying around a lot of people too long. So they're the opposite of the Fire, right?

They like to be alone and they like to recharge their energy. The Water personality is a creative, the one that **loves to create**. It could be painting, writing, drawing. It could be social media, content creation, whatever. Creation comes up, they're the creator. They love to self-reflect, so they could be painting for hours and reflect.

This is their way of meditating and lots of self-reflection, self awareness as well. They love their family as well. They're **very family orientated**. At the same time, they can't be with their family all the time. They need that downtime to recover.

Water is great for artists, for people that work by themselves that like to create.

This is a great job for the water personality type. However, they do get really tired around other people. They do get drained or really emotionally fatigued.

If they do not get to create, if they're so busy and stressed with life that they don't get their creative time, it will take their energy down.

For those people, we wanna protect their Kidneys and with Kidney 3, Kidney 6, and we want to allow them to get energy from other people, and that's Spleen 6.

Spleen 6 is a crossing of three meridians. So it is other people, right, the liver type, the earth type, and then the water type. So those two, three points are really good.

I will ask patients often, you know, depending what they do, "Do you like working from home, do you like working alone?" And they will reply, "I love it. This is my favorite thing to do."

And then I'll ask one question about creativity. If they love to be on their own, if they need that alone time really much. That's how we get to ask the right questions.

That make sense? I love the 5 Element Theory. It's one of my favorites.

Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. I truly hope you benefited from this episode and I would love for you to share it with a friend that may benefit from it as well. Follow

the show, leave a review, and if you want more, go to my website, acuproacademy.com. I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case study, free courses, and so much more.

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