

I'm so happy you are here today for this show because this episode is gonna blow you away.

If you are a TCM practitioner or a student in the making as an acupuncturist coming up, you are gonna love this. We are celebrating Chinese New Year, the year of the dragon, the Yang wood dragon at that. And today with my guest, Dr. Sonia Tan, we talked about everything that we could talk about when it comes to the dragon year.

We talked about the month, the day, the hour, all the five elements, and how Chinese astrology is so intricate and so deep. We went into it to understand it better, and I learned so much today. I was so excited about this.

I can't wait for you to listen. Without further ado, let's do this. Let's go. Happy New Year, everybody.

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!

Clara

Happy Chinese New Year and welcome to Dr. Sonia Tan, who is here to talk to us about Chinese astrology and the year of the wood dragon.

I'm so excited about this 'cause I don't know a lot about Chinese astrology, but you have done so before. I'm gonna just introduce you to everyone 'cause a lot of people may not know who you are and to get a little bit of a knowledge of who you are. So first of all, you are practicing in Vancouver, Canada.

We've been friends for a long time, so I know since you started in 2006 and it's always good to have a friend because you feel more comfortable because this is something that, you know, I'm just starting to do all those interviews and podcasts, so, I'm really happy it's with friends 'cause I feel more at ease, or more at home.

Sonia

Yeah, definitely.

Clara

So you have been practicing since 2006. You are a registered TCM practitioner. You also have a doctorate, which I remember when you did this. That was amazing in acupuncture and oriental medicine. But you're also a consultant for Feng shui and Chinese astrology and face reading,

which is amazing. I would have so many questions for you, but we're gonna stick to one subject and we'll have you come back.

Oh my God. You also teach, and this is something that we did together at the same place, at and so you teach. Chinese astrology as well. You have a program, but you also teach Dr. Tan's balance method or Richard Tan balance method, which is very popular.

Actually. You created a great course for Acupro Academy recently, which is [The Scalp Acupuncture](#), which all the people that invested in this course absolutely loved it. The feedback was amazing. I knew that because I've seen you teach it was such a great, great way to introduce you to the Acupro Academy community.

So I'm so glad you did this. You are also an author because you know you don't do enough. So gonna make you do more. You have written the [Foundation of Balance Acupuncture](#), which is about Balance methods that you teach so well. Something that I, this is that you also translated the book in French, which. Impressed with, because French is my second language and I have three books, and they're not translated in any language. So I'm like, "Oh my God, that was just amazing." So in a nutshell, this is who you are. There could be more, did I forget?

Sonia

No. I mean, I don't know, but it's just very flattering that you did that and definitely very appreciative and grateful for you to have met you and it's great to meet like-minded people and having me as part of your community.

Clara

And it's likewise because you know when you meet friends or you meet people in the TCM community, everybody has strength. And your strength is you're not afraid of a challenge. You're not afraid to. Push yourself to work hard and to show up. And that's something that not everybody can do. And this is why I think you're so successful overall with everything you do.

So I'm happy to have met you because sometimes I think of you and I'm like, oh, what would Sonia do? Oh, I better push harder because I know she would push on it.

Sonia

Oh, thanks for that compliment though.

Clara

Well, it's true. It's true. You know, when we talk and we're friends, we never compliment each other 'cause we're just having a conversation on other things, right?

But because we're here today, I'm like, wait a minute, I gotta tell you this. So. One other thing I wanted to start, before we go into the Chinese astrology of the year of the wood dragon, I don't know that story at all, so I wanna learn how you went from a career in banking Yes.

As a banker to TCM and astrology and all that you do nowadays, which is so far from the banking industry. So tell me that story and so everybody would be fascinated to hear.

Sonia

All right. Well, the medium-length story is that I grew up with allergies and asthma as a child, and from the age of five or eight, they were severe. If I touched something, my hands would swell. I would have swollen lips. I remember at one point I had a swollen face and swollen eyes, I couldn't see. It was really bad.

I went on weekly injections, daily medication, and an inhaler. I also had asthma. And during that time growing up, I was also an elite rhythmic gymnast.

As I got older and later in my career, it became harder and harder for me to finish a three-minute routine. And my medication and my inhalers were not working.

Around the age of 21, I was having upper back soreness and tightness, and I thought it was just from gymnastics. I went to see a massage therapist hoping to get, say, just regular Swedish, and there was no one available and there was a Shiatzu therapist available and said, "*Would you like to try it?*" I didn't know much about it.

They said, "You just use pressure points on these acupuncture points and channels." I said, "*Sure, I'm willing to try it.*"

And then at the end of the session, she said to me, "*Do you have lung problems?*" I mean, you could imagine my shock, right?

I said, "*Yes, I do. How did you know that?*" And she said, "*Because, at every point on your lung channel, you complained about being very sore.*" It wasn't my back, it was my lung channel. I'm like, wow. So she said, "***You should see my acupuncturist.***"

So at that point, it just really opened that door. Because that door was sort of, kind of half open. I grew up with my grandfather growing herbs in the backyard explaining what to do. My other grandfather had practiced astrology face reading Feng Shui, and both of them had practiced Feng Shui. But you know, as a kid you don't always really pay attention. But that opened the door going, "*Whoa, okay, wait a minute. What do, what have I had under my nose?*"

So I went to that recommendation, and within six months she got me off my inhaler. I was able to compete at a major competition in Helsinki. I came back and I said, "*What can you do for the*

rest of my allergies? Can you get me, get me off of these medications?" I committed to a year and I mean, I committed. I made sure I went at least once or twice a month for acupuncture.

I continually did the herbs. I was cooking them on the stoves like the original way.

And a year later I got off all of my medication and it was, at that point I realized this is what it feels like. To be 100% natural.

I didn't realize how my body had this underlying vibration being on medication and to be free of that medication was so astounding and it felt so good.

So you would think that would've been enough for me to say, *"Oh, I'm gonna leave banking and I'm gonna become a Chinese medicine practitioner."* But no. I was so into elite sports. I thought, *"You know what? I don't wanna be in the banking world. It's too profit-driven. I wanna help people."*

And I was an elite athlete, so I thought, let me be a sports physiotherapist. I went and did a kinesiology degree. I was working at a physio clinic, as a kinesiologist. Then my light bulb moment went off.

The most passionate thing that I was talking about with my clients, was seeing them after they received acupuncture.

And I said, how is that working for you? And I finally had the light bulb moment saying, look at how much excitement I get over acupuncture because I knew how much it helped me.

So then I said, *"Okay. I need to change."* And so I went and I did Chinese medicine school and I haven't looked back, obviously, I haven't looked back. And then embracing the classical Chinese medicine of the things that aren't taught in school, like the classical balance acupuncture, the holography, all channel theory, all that stuff.

And adding in astrology and feng shui, which is a classical Chinese physician. Would've known them all, and you can advise all that way. And that was what I had been exposed to with my grandfather. So I've really been enjoying the journey of trying to really bring that back of those things that were forsaken and that I grew up with and trying to keep passing that on.

Clara

That's awesome. So one of the things I wanted to ask when you were describing is that you took all Chinese herbs in Decoction, which as you know, compliancy with patients with a decoction is very difficult. So what's interesting is when someone is motivated enough, but they see a little bit of the results, then the motivation goes a hundred percent more.

And they're much more compliant once they see the results. Right. So that's really good that you went and followed all the directions because you were motivated.

Because you felt good. And you know, it's funny when you said that, one of my patients years ago, after I treated her for a few weeks, she walks in, she sits down and she goes, I have a question for you. And I said, oh sure. She goes. *"Is it normal to feel normal?"* Right, because she's like, *"I haven't felt like this in so long that I didn't know that is this normal to feel like this?"*

Because so many patients, or so many people in general, every day. I used to have headaches to feel a certain way. It's their new normal. So for her, suddenly it was like, what? What? It was the same thing. It was just like, oh my gosh, I don't need a puffer anymore. Are you?

Sonia

Definitely, because I had no memory of normal because at the age of five when I had allergies and I was already taking medication. I don't have a memory of how my body was normal until I finally got off of it. I'm like, "I am not vibrating anymore. I feel so good. I feel so connected to my body."

I had allergies and asthma for 15 years, so a year and a half of acupuncture and herbs was nothing.

Clara

Yeah, exactly. Because you, you have the motivation because you've seen what it feels like and not having to rely on medication to get scared every time you can't breathe. 'cause it is scary when you can't take a breath, right?

Sonia

Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

Clara

Love the story. Interestingly, you went first to, kinesiology before you jumped in.

And is that because you felt that it would be more accepted within your family? Because I know some people, you know, like within your family there's an expectation of you having a certain job and that may be. You know, TCM doctor was not the same as a Western kinesiology degree, so can you share that with us?

Sonia

Have a funny story. Well, the reason why I was a banker, first, because my parents gave me the option to be a lawyer. A doctor, a western doctor, or a businessman. So I said, I don't like to

argue, so I'm not gonna be a lawyer. I don't like the biomedical sciences, so I'm not gonna do that. So how about I choose business?

So that's why I went to business school first, and then I became a banker. But I was doing that as an obligation to my parents. It wasn't for me. So then when I left banking, it was for me. Finally, right. And then at that point, because I was in elite sports for so long, I just, I was just like, I love sports, I like helping and rehab injury, blah, blah, blah.

I was so immersed with that. Growing up in Canada, you're so immersed with western medicine, western medicine, you know, so western allopathic, biomedicine. So it wasn't so much to please. At that point, because I knew I was already turning away and going back.

For me, however, what's really funny is that, my other grandfather, not the grandfather that practiced astrology, my, maternal grandfather, the one that was growing herbs in the backyard when I was born, had consulted an astrologer in Hong Kong, and that astrologer said, oh, this person's going to be one of three professions.

And one of the three professions, actually she, my mom didn't tell me this till later, was a doctor. She thought it was an allopathic biomedicine doctor. But now look at what happened.

Clara

You are a doctor.

Sonia

Right? I'm a doctor of acupuncture, neuromedicine, practice Chinese medicine. I'm basically a Chinese medicine physician.

So I ended up walking that road. And so that was really funny.

Clara

So I'm glad you share that. I can see, you know, you're going into banking. That's why it's such a different road that once you go into TCM and you can see how passionate you are about it, that's because you followed your heart, not your head.

Sonia

Right? obviously because you love your parents. I understand that. That has nothing to do with that. But yeah, eventually when we follow our heart it always falls into place. So thank you for sharing that,

Clara

Yeah. Yeah.

So today, I wanted you to be on the podcast because it is the Chinese New Year and I'm a Monkey.

I don't need you to tell me what that means. I'm not asking for that, but I'm a monkey and I always relate to it really well because I know monkeys like to have fun and I like to have fun and this is how I teach by having fun. So I always think it's funny, but this year is the Year of the Dragon, so I think this is interesting and you can tell us what that entails in a nutshell. '

Because we can't go into a whole, course on astrology, but just the basics for us to understand. Because for me, out of the 12 sign from Chinese astrology, the Dragon seems like that's the only one that's not a real animal. So it feels like a bit different from, an ox or a rooster or like a monkey, like I said.

Can you share what you want to share? Explain a little bit in a nutshell how we look at Chinese astrology.

Sonia

Oh my gosh. In a nutshell, for those of those who know, the deep layers of astrology, you know. It's so hard to talk about it short and in a nutshell, but, I understand. I can see the value of, speaking about it in little like small bites.

This dragon is so mystical. And then when we talk about the dragon, we have to think about astrology more as a pillar. Everyone talks or focuses on the animal. I think that's one thing that I really want to, why I keep talking about this is I really want to kind of reeducate the world, that it isn't only about the animal.

In Chinese astrology, we have something called the eight characters or the four pillars of destiny. The four pillars come from the year. Month, day and time you're born. In each pillar, there's a character on the top that's called From the heavens or the heavenly stem. That is the cycle of energy coming from the heavens or the universe and in we have a five element language or five phase language to define that cycle. Then the bottom part of that pillar is called the earthly branches.

The earthly branches is the cycle of energy here on planet Earth, which also has a five phase language of defining it.

The original Chinese astrology characters are not animal signs.

Thousands of years later, they assigned an animal to that bottom earthly branch sign to give astrologers and everyone a quick, easy way to understand the energetics of that. So in

essence, you always have to think of it. There's a heavenly portion and an earthly portion. There's some energy cycling from the heavens, and then we have energy here on earth as we go through the seasons and here's humankind standing in the middle, and we are affected by what's above us and below us.

For us to be imbalanced, we need to understand how to be imbalanced with heaven and earth.

So the pillar represents both. And at the time you're born at that moment in time, the Chinese belief, you inhale the Qi of the universe.

And the Qi of the earth at that moment in time, and that comprises your constitutional energy, those eight characters or the four pillars now. Become or define who you are, your characteristics and your personality. And there are calculations that define your destiny and that you go through 10 year cycles that interact on your pillar. So let's go back to the pillar and how everyone goes on to the animal signs.

So we're talking about the year someone's born. That's the one pillar. And if you knew the year you were born, you should know what the heavenly portion is.

So say you're like a water monkey. It would be better to say a water monkey than just a monkey.

It gives more definition or understanding of your constitutional, energetic workings, how your mind works.

In fact, the year we're born tends to be the way we think the month and the day are more weight, the more of the weighting of our constitutional personality.

So I like people to just remember the year is not your personality.

It's not a big part, but it's like one-quarter, and if you just talk about the animal, it's one-eighth. So it's good to know it because it's still part of you. It's just not the full picture. But we can still talk about it. It's not their core constitutional self, but it's part of it.

We can say monkeys have a lot of metal in them, they have a little bit of water and they have a little bit of earth. So that means you as a monkey have metal in you, a yang metal is hardworking. It cuts through. It gets through, it blazes a trail, it's water. Intuitive goes with the flow. It's an earthiness, it's earthy, hardiness, tolerant, stable, reliable.

So let's go to the dragon now. So if we look at the dragon year, what is the year bringing us? Well, it's bringing us the wood dragon, so wood from the heavens. Wood from the heavens is like a big oak tree.

Yang Wood in someone's chart means they're about vision. They're about growth. They're constantly about learning and growing.

The symbol of Yang wood is a tree, so trees have to grow, plants have to grow or they will die. So Yang wood personalities, they have to keep growing, moving, and doing. They need to have vision and purpose and they need to be moving forward to that. So that can tell you or speak to you about the kind of year we might have.

It's about pushing and going and moving forward in that year with the vision and the plan you have now for us Chinese medicine practitioners, do we also know if wood is not balanced? What can happen with that if it's in excess? We can have, tension, frustration, anger, liver, gallbladder, Yang rising, too much heat, all of that. So that also could be a play for the world. 'cause we're looking at the world when we look at the wood dragon, right?

Then we have to look at the dragon part because there's an interplay between the top and the bottom. So the bottom part we have the dragon Dragon. This mystical animal is, it's got a lot of Yang earth in it, like a mountain, but it's got a little bit of yin water, which is like the raindrops from the sky. And it has a little bit of, yin wood, which is like a vine. Growing.

So the dragon, it's so hardy, yet it has an intuitive sense to go with the flow and know how to adjust.

And it has this yin wood that's still about growing and moving like Yangwood, but it does so at a little bit more of a softer pace.

But it's still about motivation to go, to move, to learn, and to do it in a sensitive, hearty way. that's a big part of the dragon But now. With the five phases, you know, five phases, we have Yangwood in the top, we have Earth on the bottom.

That in an inherent nature is a wood-earth conflict. We know that wood controls the earth. So therefore, this year also speaks about, hmm, there might be some conflict with these two energetics because they're both, immovable or is strong in their own right.

Wood is very narrowly focused, when they're very focused and motivated, they just go in that direction. They can't see sideways 'cause they're looking forward only. It's almost linear thinking.

But then Earth essences like in a dragon, it's like, "Nope, I don't wanna change. I'm not gonna change. If I'm gonna change, I'm gonna do it slow. I'm gonna do it as in my own pace.

So there an inherent is some energy that wants to move fast wood and it is something that wants to move slowly on Earth. It's a battle of wills, and we can always smooth out that conflict with whatever the bridge is in between.

The bridge in between is fire. Fire will smooth out that it'll divert wood. Not go to Earth, it'll go to fire. And Fire is about passion, benevolence, kindness, joy, happiness, compassion, so we need to take the year with, some compassion and kindness to everyone as we're trying to all figure

out our way and figure it at our own pace, and figuring out what is our passion moving forward and, and be mindful of others and how we treat people along the way.

Clara

I absolutely resonate with this so much. First of all, being kind to others and compassionate. This is why we're TCM practitioners and this is why we do what we do. So it doesn't just mean in practice, but, we're family, we're friends, we're strangers.

I love that you talk about the wood or the birth because wood is like the growth, the birth, it's trying to grow and learn, and there is nothing better than self-growth and learning and challenging ourselves. Like I wanted to start a podcast for three years, but I know, right?

And I started this year in 2024. It took me a while just because first I was thinking, "Okay, the French accent, nobody's gonna understand me. Second. I'm like, it takes a lot of my time. Do I have the time to do this?"

Then the third one was, well. "Are people gonna wanna listen? Are they interested in me being just, in a podcast and not video?" So I thought about all this, but this year, which is interesting, I was like, no, I'm gonna jump in 'cause I'm excited about it. 'cause I wanna share, I wanna bring guests in like you that can really open.

You know, everyone in our community is into something new to learn something.

And you're telling us that this year is the year of learning, and self-growth.

And I'm like, oh my God, we're right in it right now. So this is fantastic. Thank you for sharing that.

We know that it's the Yang wood dragon, so it's a little bit more energetic like you said. The new year is in February this year, depending on, obviously, it's the lunar calendar. I understand that. And is there a different time of the year when the dragon, let's say in wood time, like springtime would be different than in the fire, summertime, or in the fall metal time, or doesn't matter?

Sonia

Oh, yes, it matters. It matters. It matters because this is where people look at interactions. They look at harmonies and they look at clashes. Where you'll see maybe some of that, some of astrologers say, if you are a monkey, you are the friend of the dragon, so you'll have a great year. That's because there's a harmony that happens.

The dragon has a trio of buddies that they like to help and therefore, if it likes to help you, it wants to help your blessings. Then the dragon has a best friend, so if you have an animal sign that's the best friend, it wants to help you. But then the dragon also has an opposition enemy.

So if you have an animal that is the opposition enemy, you gotta stand outta the way because the dragon is the chief this year. The dragon has the power. So if you are an enemy of the dragon, well then just like hide and look out, right? There are all sorts of interactions.

So that also translates to the month, every single month of the year, the 12 months.

There is an animal associated with that. And that's the thing. Think something that a lot of people don't realize. We have the year, but every month there's the same animal sign. So for example,

February is always the tiger month. March is always the rabbit month. April is always the dragon month.

So there will be some heightened interaction because it's the dragon year that happens with the month based on is it a clash with the month or is it harmony with the month or is it nothing, nil, a nothing. So let's give an example. It's a dragon year. And the dragon is, buddies with the monkey and the rat, and together they like to create more water.

So if you're born in August or December, that's a monkey month and a rat month. That means that you may have extra help this year because your month is in harmony with the dragon year.

The chief. That wants to create more water and especially if you need water in your chart, you will get extra help at, especially at that month and this year. So it'd be a heightened effect that month besides the fact that this year might be helpful, however. If water is not helpful to your chart, and this is where I like to always say, don't really read those, those articles, like read into it too much.

Because if you have to know what's your helpful element in your chart, you can't just know your chart. If water isn't helpful for you, well then the heightened water might not be good and you're gonna feel that at an amplified effect as well. So that's how they can play out through the months. The months can definitely be felt more or felt less depending on your own chart.

Clara

I can see how you could do a whole course on Chinese astrology. 'cause I can see the depth of it. So many layers. Oh my gosh. Passion. But I also can see that have an advantage when you learn Chinese astrology because we already know about the five elements. We already know about the yin and yang, the whole play of all those elements. It's so much easier for us to take a course in Chinese astrology than for someone that doesn't know any of this.

Sonia

Yeah, absolutely. 100%. Yep.

Clara

That's really cool.

So. One other question I had is, do you use Chinese astrology while doing a consultation with someone, or do you, ask patients, Hey, if you're ever interested, I can do this on the side, or as an extra, like, how do you go about it when it comes to someone coming in and they say, oh, I have low back pain.

Sonia

That's a very good question because, I get asked that a lot. I think the physician in ancient China, they would've known it. They would do it right away, right at the beginning. 'cause that's just part of the norm.

What I do in the beginning, if someone came in for low back pain, because balanced system is so effective, I don't usually look at the chart because I know my methods are pretty effective, so I don't really need to go there.

If for some reason they came back or they had something new or they had something that plateaued in treatment or something new. That was very difficult and whatever I was treating it made some progress, but there was a huge plateau or there was a recurrence then I think I might, I might look at the chart.

I wanna look at their constitutional energy and see what can I do more specifically for their constitutional energy.

Because when you look at a birth chart, you're gonna see all these five phases and you're gonna understand at least, or years and years of practice to help you understand what is it that they actually need. Then I can apply that to the acupuncture channels and what elements they may need.

So I don't necessarily draw their Chinese astrology chart right at the beginning unless the situation warrants it. For example, sometimes you know how you get those patients, sometimes they come in and their chief complaints like a laundry list.

But then as you get into the consultation, the laundry list becomes like a plethora right? And you're like, okay, this is a big, big case. So I might look at it right away because I can be really effective right away and not waste time.

Sometimes people will come in, and they specifically actually want to integrate that. Great. Then we do it right away.

When I do chart it, if they haven't specifically asked for it, it stays confidential with me. I'm not sharing that because they may not wanna know. That's for my own information.

As, a physician, if they plateau and I talk about other techniques that I think I want to apply, so say for example, I want to apply acupuncture into astrology, then I start to educate them on this method. Why, how I can use it? Do I have their permission to use it?

Because when you look at an astrology chart and when you start talking about it, there are a lot of karmic effects you have.

My personal philosophy and my family's philosophy is, that you must have permission. You must treat that energy with the greatest care and the greatest confidentiality.

So I'll get their permission.

And usually, at that point they say, well, actually I would like a full reading, then I'd like to know more. Some people don't wanna know, but most people do. And so I usually do that at a separate point.

The last thing I'll say about that is sometimes when I do the chart, whether I've done it in the beginning or I've done it just for my information, they don't know it's useful for me just to know how to communicate with them.

It's such a great communication tool.

So for example, and you know that their core constitutional self, something we call the day master that's underneath the day pillar, say they're a Yangwood self. There's lots of other five phases around it, but their core self is Yangwood.

Yangwood people or even wood people in general, have to do. They have to keep moving or they will get tensed up. So it will be the, least effective for me to say, you need to just sit and meditate to resolve your stress. Asking a wood person to sit still, ha, good luck. No way. Right?

Whereas if it's a water person, especially if they're deficient in water and they need more nourishment with water, meditation is a water activity. So that actually would benefit them. So for me, it's a great communication tool. Also, water people tend to be feelers, wood people, they like to be direct and they just don't need you to beat around the bush. So I use that as a communication tool.

Clara

That is so fantastic because you're right, communicating with the patients in order for them to understand and trust our ability to help them is so key to a successful practice. So you looking at the patient go, okay, this is wood, so I'm gonna talk to them in a way that they understand where I'm coming from, versus this is a water and I'm gonna talk to them in a completely different way.

Two more questions and one of them is very specific. When you have the person chart and you have their year, of course, they were born the month, the day.

Do you need the hour every single time? Is it very important? What about if someone doesn't know they were born at two?

Sonia

Right. Yeah. In some cases, We don't need the time. There's enough information for me to make a decision on if they're a strong self or a weak self or a special chart. And then I would say that's probably, 50, maybe 40%, I would say a little over half, more than half the time.

The time is incredibly important because it gives the whole picture, especially on the cusp of going either strong or weak or special. We need that last piece of information. To really give us, the full picture because based on that, you're, basically deciding does that core self strong. Is it core self-weak?

So in Chinese medicine terms, is it excess or deficient or is it a special chart that we have to do something different? That's guiding your decision-making, your therapy, your advice, everything. It guides everything.

Clara

That makes sense. And my last question is let's say we have the, year, month, day and time, and we know what their chart looks like, and that was when they were born and they got the Qi from the universe and the earth, all this. Does this changes with event post birth, meaning you've had trauma, you've had lots to deal with?

Do you stay in that chart or is your chart going to be a little different because of outside event?

Sonia

Oh my gosh. Such great questions.

In Chinese metaphysics, that whole three essences that I talked about earlier, where between heaven and Earth, there is humankind that also speaks about how the Chinese view quote, fate or destiny. They used to divide it in thirds where a third is your Chinese astrology chart.

A third is the environment you choose to live in, and the last third is the people you choose to associate with that affect your decision-making.

In my experience, the Chinese astrology chart is 40%.

It's much higher, so it's like a blueprint. Of your destiny. It's the roadmap and then the feng shui affects, you know, you were absorbing environment that it can affect our health, that can affect our decision making. The people we choose to those will also affect it.

So what happens with a Chinese astrology chart? It still says the timing of what things may happen, and what areas of your life. The question is how amplified is it? How minimized is it? And that will depend on your human choices and your environment. I say to my clients, it doesn't mean you can avoid the bad, it means we can minimize it what we wanna do is we wanna amplify the good and we wanna minimize the bad. Or if we know ahead of time what's coming ahead, we can prepare.

We can either prepare to receive the blessings or we can prepare to hide from the hazards.

If someone has gone through trauma, most likely it was already there in the blueprint. They were all kind of already meant to go through that as a learning experience.

There's everything is always a learning experience to take you to a certain level, to take you to a certain place. Every single. 10 year cycle, five-year mini, it's all meant for you to be in an evolution of yourself. You know, my philosophy is for astrology is your purpose is to discover who your best self is and to bring it to light. And everything that happens to you is for that reason, for that self-discovery.

I always believe that even though once you are in a tough, rough patch in your life where it's very difficult when those very, very hard times. At that time, you don't see the lesson. You can't because you're in it, but eventually, you see why this happened.

Clara

The lesson to learn. There's no loss. It's either a win or it's a lesson, and I absolutely believe that it just takes a while to see the lesson, right? Like it just, sometimes it takes you a few repeating the same until you finally register the lesson. Sometimes you get it first, right? It all depends, but, so I totally resonate with that.

What we have now is, for me, is a little bit of a better understanding of the basics, first of all. So I really appreciate that. And I love everything we went into and I can see how much more there is to learn. So my question is, can you go quickly into how long is the course on Chinese astrology?

What are the main PowerPoints you teach? Can you tell us a little bit more about that course?

Sonia

I have decided to do the Chinese astrology "practitioner course" at my school as a mentorship program. I've been taught by three teachers. And so what I've learned is that because this is so multi-layered, it actually takes time to build it in to truly understand it. And halfway through, you feel like you're more confused than ever. So I decided to do it over two years. With some testing homework along the way.

Maybe by the end, you're done over three years, and honestly, I felt really comfortable as a quote consultant after about seven to 10 years.

Okay, so two to three years is still short in my view, but it's more to set people up for the foundations of success. I have two prerequisite courses before the mentorship program, which people would have to apply to the mentorship program.

Prerequisite courses are great. Anyone can take, in general, if they want to dive into more five-phase knowledge. One is just called like the intro to Chinese astrology. It's just going through each of the stems, the five phases and the personalities associated with that. And then there's another course that I did that's with a colleague of mine, Dr. Howard Chen, and we did a little diving deeper into the Five ACEs because. It really is a lifetime of work for you to really know it and know it well. Right. Especially when you start to try to apply it in personalities and stems.

So it's just another adjunct add-on to say, okay, you want more? Here's more.

So that's it in a nutshell. Yeah.

Clara

Well, it makes sense because. When we learn acupuncture, a basic acupuncture program is three years. And even as we finish the three years, we feel like we don't know enough and we're gonna learn more like as we go.

And I think it's the same with anything, right? If you want Chinese astrology, you can get a little taste of it. You see if that's really your jam, and then go deeper. And as you said, it's gonna take a few years, but that's the whole point of The Wood Year.

Self-growth and growing and starting new things, and it's growing like a tree. You're growing different branches literally of your knowledge that is TCM based. So that's really cool. Before I let you go, we will have all the links in the show notes, but is there a place where people can find you either on your website or social media?

Where can they look for you?

Sonia

Best first place is tanbalance.com. It's my school that we've set up for the three essences. So Channel theory, acupuncture teaching. then there's astrology mentorship. Eventually I'll have a

Feng Shui mentorship, but the schedules there, some program information. The registrar contact for more information.

That's probably a good place to go.

Clara

We'll put the link in the show note. Sonia. Thank you.

Sonia

Thank you.

Clara

Thank you for spending the Chinese New Year of the Dragon with me. I really appreciate all your knowledge. I feel like I want to literally open your brain and go look some more in there so I can find some more information. 'cause you have such a wealth of knowledge of everything when it comes to TCM, including fun shui, which we haven't even, talked about.

So thank you. Thank you so much for taking the time and coming today.

Sonia

Aw, thank you. Thank you for being the leader in this too, and, trying to help educate the world, right?

Disclaimer

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 studies, free courses, and so much more.

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