

Did you know almost all living organisms have circadian rhythms? Not just us humans. These internal clocks are crucial for our daily, seasonal, and life behavior.

Why is this important to understand the season changes, the 24-hour health clock, or even in Chinese medicine, the seven-year life cycle? Well, because it's extremely useful in clinical practice. These rhythms or cycles follow nature and the environment, which help give us clues about imbalances. It also helps us educate our patients when we are discussing preventative health and for healing. It's amazing. So today 24 hour cycles. The men versus women cycles. Yes, we have different cycles. The seasonal cycle, and we're going to look at life cycles as well. The 24-hour health clock follows the 12 meridian pathways, of course, and the cyclical flow of Qi. But that connects to the Earth rotated on itself.

The monthly lunar cycle is all about the rotation of the moon around the Earth. And the seasonal changes that happen are the Earth rotating around the Sun.

So today's show is a great reminder of how we can align with circadian rhythms through our day, our month, seasons, and throughout our whole life in order to better connect with nature, the environment, and each other, and use these cycles to support a healthy mind, body, and spirit.

And understanding circadian rhythms will also allow us to serve our patients better. Because we are educators first, we need to educate patients so they can understand how we can help them to the best of our ability. Are you ready? Let's dive into it.

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!

We're gonna start with the 24-hour health clock, or truly the cyclical flow of Qi and TCM. So the 24-hour cycle is our internal clock. Just like nature, our bodies follow a rhythm, a daily cycle that if we listen and harmonize with it, we can significantly enhance our health, energy, and yes, even our mood and happiness.

We know that every two hours, a TCM organ system or meridian is at its peak and can give us clues of imbalances, but help us also be more in harmony with our circadian rhythm.

Let's start with the sunrise. Imagine the break of dawn, the world is waking up, and so is our body. Now, this is going to be really interesting, but from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., it's the Long Meridian time. This is when your body is purging out the old of yesterday and making way for the new.

It's the best time to start doing deep breathing, exercise, meditating, and setting intentions for the day. If you wake up feeling stuffy, or with a cough, or post nasal drip. Now that's your body telling you, hey, uh, we need to work on the Lung Qi.

Now I know what you're thinking, Do we have to wake up between 3 and 5 a.m.? Probably not. But if you know people that have a really good rhythm, Between 3 and 5 a.m. is when they wake up. Probably around 4 for monks in Nepal, probably around 4.

5:30 for the rooster next door who's always getting ready to get up and wakes me up. I'm so used to it, I don't hear him anymore. But. In general, 5 a.m. is a good way to start waking up. Now you can go at 5 a.m. in the summer because it's much easier because it's lighter outside. In winter, it's probably harder and it depends where you are in your life and what's going on.

So take this with a grain of salt. Waking up between 5 and 7 a.m. in winter is probably better and waking up between 4 and 5 a.m. in summer, is probably best, right? We have to adapt to also the season. It's not just one thing. Now, I don't know if you've ever heard about the 5 a.m. club, but this is something that's been going around and there are lots of books about it.

And it's basically saying that people that wake up at 5 a.m. can really go about their day without feeling overwhelmed, because from 5 to 7 a.m. when everybody else is sleeping, they are accomplishing what they need to do. And for a lot of us, meditating can never happen during the day. There are kids to get to school, there are kids to get to soccer practice, there's work, and there are so many things to do that nobody has time for meditation.

Well, if we wake up a little bit earlier or before everybody else. This is your quiet time. Maybe you can journal, or maybe you can have guided meditation. I always recommend to patients that obviously it's really important to go to bed early so you can get up early. If you go to bed at 1 a.m., don't wake up at 4.

30 or 5 or even 5. 30. That is way too short of a sleep cycle. So see how we have to adapt to the season, the time, and what's going on with each person. Now we're moving on to 5 to 7 a. m. which is large intestine time and it's all about letting go both emotionally and physically. So when we wake up we want to let go physically by having a bowel movement.

Of course, if you have a bowel movement at noon instead of you know 7 a. m That's okay because we want to have a bowel movement at least once a day, every day. But the best time would be when we wake up, we let go of yesterday's food and we start with the new. Does that make sense? But we also let go emotionally.

So if you had something that happened yesterday and you went to sleep, usually when you wake up, You feel much better about it. You know you can deal with it. You have a solution.

You have something that is going to help you.

I also wanted to add that depending on where you are in your life, teenagers, for example, have a natural shift in circadian rhythm that is different than ours. They're biologically predisposed to

go to sleep later and wake up later. Which often conflicts with early school start times, right? I remember when I was younger, I never wanted to go to bed until like 10:30, 11, 11 30 when I was a teenager, but then I would sleep on the weekend till noon.

And my mom would go, Oh my God, you're wasting your day. And you have to get up at 6:30 to get ready to go to school was so hard for me. However, now that I'm in my later years or in the the fall season of my life. I like to go to bed at 9 9 30 and wake up around 5 5 30. So, you know, things change. We have to adapt to also our life cycle, which we're going to talk about a little bit later in the show.

Now we said with the large intestine, we let go and then we start something new. 7 to 9 AM is breakfast time, which is the stomach meridian. So this is when we want to awaken our digestive system, and we're going to give it what it needs, which is starting the day with a warm glass of water. You don't want to start with a cold glass of water because it's a shock to the stomach because it's all warm from the night.

So you want to go very gentle with a glass of water and maybe a squeeze of lemon juice or something that's going to slowly awaken the stomach acid. Does that make sense? Then you can have your breakfast. The next one is the Spleen meridian from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., and the Spleen in Chinese medicine is in charge of nourishment, so it's also in charge of raising qi to the mind, and it's connected to muscle.

So 9 to 11 AM is the perfect time to either exercise, use your muscle, which relates to Spleen, or use your brain and focus on whatever you have to do that is mental. Work because this is where your mental activity will be the strongest. Now, if you're Spleen Qi deficient and you are always tired in the morning, that might not be your best time until you balance that Spleen Qi.

by the way, I have a Spleen Qi deficiency episode that I will link in the show note that talks about treatment for Spleen She in order for people who have a lot of fatigue to feel better, right?

Check it out below in the show notes. Now the next one is the heart meridian, the King of all organs from 11 AM to 1 PM. This is the best time to bring joy to your heart. So first of all, we want to nourish the heart with a light, vibrant lunch, meaning a colorful lunch.

That is light, not super heavy, but. Perhaps we want to spend time with friends, and laughter, and go for a walk or do something that's going to give us joy, not eat our lunch fast at our desk while working. That is a big no-no. And I tell that to patients, go outside, go for a walk, eat your lunch, and take your time.

It's very common in European countries like France or Spain or Italy that people get together at lunch and they say, sit down at a cafe and they have a great social time and they laugh a lot, they enjoy a light lunch and then they go back to work. So let the heart radiate joy. And it's very important to avoid caffeine or stimulants at lunchtime the next two are the small intestine meridian and the bladder. The small intestine is 1 to 3 p. m. and the bladder is 3 to 5 p. m. Both those systems in TCM deal with fluid and processing fluid, right? So it's all about hydration.

As we look at the small intestine from 1 to 3 p.m., according to TCM, we want to organize our space and our thoughts of the day, as well as hydrate ourselves. Hydration is key.

So sipping on herbal tea or water is really important at that time. This is when people get that slump. They start getting fatigued around 3 p. m. and they go, oh my god, I just can't work another two hours. That's because they're dehydrated.

Are you grabbing your water right now? Oh boy, isn't that mind-blowing how we all do this? I just grabbed my water.

Isn't that funny? Anyway, the bladder meridian is from 3 to 5 p. m. so still in the afternoon. Most people are working at that time and when the bladder meridian is active, it's all about the fluid like I said earlier. It's an excellent time for a break or a gentle stretch to support our body's structure and fluid balance because often people work in cubicles or in air conditioning areas that depletes our fluid even more.

So stretching and allowing a better movement for fluid to move throughout the body. So we don't get that water retention at the end of the day is a perfect time to do this. So maybe a little walk outside, some stretching and some fresh air, plus some hydration.

I tell my patients that all the time, make sure you're drinking enough fluid in the afternoon. Otherwise, you're going to have that slump, that tiredness mid-afternoon.

The next one is the kidney meridian, which is 5 to 7 p.m. or dinner time for most families and most people. Now, when the kidney meridian is in high peaks from 5 to 7 p.

m., it is all about reproduction, conception, and growth. So, It's all the best time first to either connect with family because family is reproduction. We all together reproduce each other and are connected in that perspective. Our genes are connected. So reconnecting with family, having dinner together, sitting down, talking about the day.

I grew up. That's what we did with my mom. My mom came home at 6 p. m. and we would start having dinner and talk about our day and laugh a lot. There was no distraction. There was no social media. There were no devices and I didn't grow up with a TV. So we didn't have that issue of being distracted. I know my husband for example They are used to eating their dinner in front of the TV. Well, that's not really connecting and I know a lot of my patients will come home Grab their kids, take them to soccer practice, and on the way there, maybe grab something so they can all eat really quickly before or after the soccer game.

This is not connecting with family, unfortunately, so if we can do this every day, we at least want to do it as many days in a week, like four days in a week, together and connect with family. It's also, according to TCM, the best time for sexual activity. So take it or leave it, but that's what TCM says. The next two hours is a pericardium from 7 p.

m. to 9 p. m. and so the pericardium is the protector of the heart. This is our cue to unwind and calm the mind. Get ready for bed. This is not the time to start being on devices to watch TV

shows that are going to be gory with a lot of blood or killing. No. No bad news. No watching the news. It's the time to meditate or do yoga, stretching, and calming exercise.

Have half an hour before you go to bed to do something that really elevates you, like journaling, or taking a bath.

Do some self-care, maybe you just give yourself a foot massage. But watching Netflix for three hours is probably not the best bet.

Since I started Acupro Academy, many people have asked me to offer a cosmetic acupuncture online course. However, I do not practice it. But I found the perfect person for that. My friend and colleague, Dr. Rebecca Stevens, has created a course that is easy to digest, very practical, and provides a wealth of knowledge.

You can diversify your practice and increase your earnings while delighting your patients by adding cosmetic acupuncture, or sometimes called facial rejuvenation, to your repertoire. This course contains everything you need to start practicing facial acupuncture. Immediately upon completion. Listen to what people who invested in this course had to say.

I was excited to take this course in order to add facial acupuncture to my services and was blown away by Dr. Rebecca's knowledge. She is calm and explained everything so well. She obviously has a lot of experience in the area and I can't wait to start utilizing this new skill on my patients. I would highly recommend this course

Here's another one. This is a great course. Everything was well explained, but without being repetitive. The video demonstration was so well paced, clear, and complete. It definitely made me feel more confident to practice cosmetic acupuncture. Thank you, Dr. Stephens. If you ever wanted to offer cosmetic acupuncture to your patient, And as an alternative to Botox and other chemicals, this is the course for you.

Go to acuproacademy.com and click the TCM course on the menu tab or check out the link in the show notes.

from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., it's Sanjiao time or the triple burner, triple warmer, triple energizer, triple heater. Oh my God, so many names. So I'm going to call it the Sanjiao. Sanjiao is in charge of all the organs, right?

We have the upper Jiao, middle, and lower Jiao, and each Jiao has a bunch of organs that is within. So this is the time to put all the organs. to bed, which means it's time to go to sleep between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. So in winter, we go with the season. It's darker earlier.

We would go to bed around 9 p. m 930 in summer. You can go 10 10 30 right towards 11 because it gets so bright We have to follow the season as well as the 24-hour clock and actually, there are studies that show that disrupting the circadian rhythm can lead to weight gain.

So going to bed really late or for people that have shift work like nurses in the hospital that work all night or have irregular sleep schedules that often also can lead to obesity or excess weight gain. So, the circadian rhythm is also meant for us to stay healthy within our body, not just our mind.

Now, there's also something that I read recently, which I think is kind of cool. It's approximately 40 percent of people are morning people. That's me. 30 percent are evening people. That is not me. Are you a morning person? Or are you an evening person? But the rest falls in between.

These preferences are known as Chronotypes and are influenced by our circadian rhythms. Our genes play a role as well. So it's really important to adapt to this and see how we can make our day the best for who we are and what kind of chronotypes we are.

The last two are the gallbladder and the liver.

The gallbladder is 11 p. m. to 1 a. m. So many people go to bed at that time. And it's really interesting because this is gallbladder time, which is in charge of decision-making, self-esteem. And a lot of times, when people go to bed at gallbladder time, they have a hard or difficult time making decisions.

They feel stuck. Right? Their chi is just not moving properly. So it's really important to Sleep at that time to rejuvenate and make the little decision that supports our body's healing and renewal. The next one is 1 a.m. To 3 a. m And we all know it's liver time And of course, we know when patients tell us oh I wake up at 2 30 every night and it takes me A while to fall back asleep.

We know that's the liver meridian and that means they're really stressed So we need to address the stress because the liver also oversees detoxification and renewal, right? The next one is the lung, which starts a new day, which is a new renewal of the next day.

So the liver at night is busy. At work, it's cleansing, it's rejuvenating, it's storing blood, it's ensuring that you wake up refreshed and ready for a new day.

There you have it. It was a full cycle through the 24-hour health clock in Chinese medicine, and it's really a guide to living in harmony with our body's natural rhythms. It's very useful in clinical practice to give us clues of imbalances.

The next cycle we're gonna look at is men versus women's circadian cycles, in general.

Men have a completely different cycle than women. So in TCM, men are yang and women are yin. So women will have a cycle connecting to the moon. The moon is more yin. The man will have a cycle connecting to the sun. The sun is more yang. Well, the sun is more related to the 24-hour cycle.

While the moon is in the lunar cycle, which means the moon going, rotating around the Earth. So let's look at the interplay between the lunar cycle that resonates much more for women and the 24-hour circadian rhythm that aligns more closely with men.

So let's start with the ladies. The moon cycle has a profound connection with women's health, specifically menstruation cycles and emotional well-being.

Because the moon is yin, and women or feminine energy is more yin. Receiving is more yin. So women's menstruation cycle often sync with the lunar cycle. Phase because the lunar phase is between 27 to 28 days and that's what a perfect cycle is when our menstruation is aligned and in harmony not only with the moon but with our health.

Does that make sense? This synchronization can influence fertility, mood, and even intuition, which the feminine intuition is really heightened at a certain time of the month.

Embracing this connection allows women to harness the moon's energy for healing, and refraction. Reflection and growth. And before you think, oh, this is all woo woo, if you're a woman, have you ever lived with other women, or in college, or roommates, or sisters, and synced your cycle?

Yes, because you were syncing with the moon as well. It's so cool, and I think it's so fascinating because that's been proven. Obviously, it's not just some woo-woo thing. Practical advice for women is to consider journaling as really important to see how we are with our feelings in tune with the lunar phase.

We want to try to look at the shedding or the menstruation week as calm activities and rest. It's not time to start running a marathon that day. The post-period or the pre-ovulation week is great for growth expansion. The post-ovulation is great for creativity and growth.

See, because usually when a woman gets pregnant, let's say the post ovulation is when there's implantation and the fetus or the embryo starts to grow. So this is the best time for growth. And pre-menstruation week is a time for self-reflection and for female connection. So when you are working, let's say, or studying TCM know that there are different weeks where you have different strengths.

And that's why sometimes we're like, Oh, I'm not creative today. Well, that's probably because it's not your post-ovulation week.

That is listening to the body and to the lunar connection to the feminine energy. Don't you love that? This is awesome. Now let's turn to the gentleman. Men are generally more influenced by the sense of energy, which really correlates with the 24-hour circadian rhythm.

or cyclical flow of chi. The solar connection aligns with young energy, which is active, which is bright, which is dynamic. So men's daily energy peaks are more pronounced at certain times, influencing their productivity, physical strength, and alertness.

So we have to understand that rhythm that can enhance a man's focus. Vitality and decision making.

When we look at advice for men, they can optimize their day by recognizing their peak energy time for intense activity and locating periods of rest when energy is not that great. So some men that are very fire very yang, their energy will be probably very strong at the fire time, which is midday.

But if the men have more kidney energy, more rooted, more grounded, more calm, and more water then the peak energy might be higher in the evening. Does that make sense?

But no matter what, everybody needs to go to bed. Between nine and 11 at St. Joe time.

The next rhythm is the seasonal circadian rhythm in TCM. And that is the earth rotating around the sun, which take a whole year. Right?

That is what we're going to talk about right now, each season. And what's key is we have to go with the season. It's really important to have a good rhythm connecting with nature and our environment.

So let's start with spring. Spring is the season of renewal and growth. It resonates with the wood element in TCM. So it's time for new beginnings, and expansion, but also flexibility, and adaptability, right? The liver, which is associated with the wood element, governs the flow of Qi. So it's really important to be able to be flexible, to be relaxed, but at the same time, it really aligns with spring energy.

We're focusing on activities that promote growth and new beginnings. This is why a lot of the food in the springtime is like sprouts, baby carrots, or baby spinach because it all is brand new or baby food. Tips for the spring are to start a new project, and embrace change, but be flexible because spring is the perfect time to declutter your space and your mind.

By the way, if you haven't listened to my Feng Shui Podcast episode, I'll have the link below this one because talks about decluttering your space, which in turn affects your mind. So it's not just for springtime, but springtime is definitely when people say spring cleaning, right? We want to start something new.

For nutrition tips, we want to have more fresh greens, sprouts, and sour food like lemon, granny smith apple, and apple cider vinegar, super good for stimulating the liver Qi.

Now we get into the summer, love the summer, which is the fire element.

It's associated with joy, warmth, and connection. It's very social. So the heart is the key organ during this time, and we want to emphasize social interaction and emotional well-being to feed the heart's mind, right? To be really happy and joyful. So for tips, we want to engage in activities that are going to make us happy.

So maybe you want to join a group of people that go hiking on the weekend, or you want to be social with your friends and go for picnics, right? For nutrition tips, we can introduce more colorful salads or fruits that are in season, but if you're someone who's really, really cold all the time, we don't want to overdo it with cold raw food.

But if you're not, this is the right season to enjoy the peaches and the blueberries and all the summer beautiful colored fruit and vegetables. Now we want to also stay hydrated with plenty of water or herbal tea. When I lived in Morocco, they had the best mint tea.

Moroccan mint tea is the best. And I remember when I moved there and they serve mint tea and it's like 35 degrees outside. I'm like, I don't want tea. I'm so hot. But they were like, no, this is cooling. And it is so cooling because mint is cooling. Although the drink is warm. It doesn't shock your body because, inside our body, it's not cold, right?

It's 36 degrees or so while on the outside, we may feel hot as well. We want to cool it from the inside so we, it can reflect on the outside. Does that make sense?

, the next season is the fall. I love the fall. It's my favorite season. What's your favorite season? Let me know. 'cause I love the fall. It's associated with the metal element in TCM and, it invites us to organize and prepare for the winter ahead. So the long and large intestine are connected to the fall, right? They emphasize on breathing and letting go of summer, and implement clear boundaries.

Because the lungs and the metal are our immune system, so we want to learn to really set boundaries at that time. This is the time to really learn to do this and let go of the summer.

I know it was fun, but now it's time to prepare for winter by doing activities that are going to help us deep breathing, deep breathing exercise. Writing is also really good, like journaling. It's also really important to add food that is more spicy, like cinnamon and ginger.

Those are really fall food, right? Like chai and having fermented food and canning. People used to do canning for the winter. So you have all your canning for the winter of vegetables that you picked in the summer, you harvest them and then you have them for the winter and fermented food like sauerkraut, for example, so good for the large intestine because it brings probiotics.

Does that make sense? We want to also focus on warmer, cooked food to conserve our energy because if we have a lot of cold food, it takes too much energy to digest, and that makes us tired very fast.

then winter is here, and it is linked to the water element in Chinese medicine.

It's a time for conservation, reflection, and deep insights. So you want to go inward, right? Because it's a very yin element water. So it's a period to conserve energy, to rest more, and to look within. The kidneys, which obviously are associated with the water element, is really in charge of Our genes. So we want to preserve that.

We don't want to age faster by partying all winter, by being outside a lot, by overdoing exercise, or overdoing things. It's time to really, really self-care as well. So we want to prioritize rest and sleep. We want to do meditation, and gentle yoga, and take time to journal.

It is very much more a feminine time because it's more yin, right? So it's looking into our feminine side. We want to eat warm food like soup and stews and we want to put black beans, kidney beans, or seeds in order to support the TCM kidney in winter.

In Chinese medicine, we have five seasons because we have five elements.

The earth element is called the late summer, but it's also the seasonal changes. So it's not just from summer. To fall. It's from each season change. There's about two to three weeks where you say, Oh, I feel like spring is in the air. Oh, I feel like summer is in the air. That's that earth element time. that earth element type focuses on nourishment and stability. So it's time to nurture and self-care, it's time to emphasize on good digestion, but also in allowing the food to be very bland this is also a time of transforming because we're transforming one season to the next.

So gratitude should be really enhanced during the season change. Obviously, it should be all the time, but at that time, it's really good for emotional well-being to be grateful for what has come and what will come.

It's a time to strengthen relationships and foster community and self-care. For nutrition, like I said, we want something that's more blended, like a squash soup

having food that is cooked and more blended. I call it baby food. We want to avoid extremely cold raw food. TCM offers amazing insights to harmonize our internal bodies with the world around us, right? By aligning our lifestyle and nutrition with seasonal energy, we can enhance our health, our vitality, and our connection to nature.

Now let's finish off with life stages through the TCM perspective. According to TCM and the eight extraordinary vessels, our life stages are divided.

Every seven years, what's important to also notice is that seven years connects more to women and eight years connects more to men. But to look at the eight extra vessels,

we look at it as a seven-year cycle. Because each vessel connects to different cycles. How about that? And if you want to know more about the 8 Extra Vessels, I'll put the link to my video and my blog post all on the eight vessels below in the shuttles

so when we are born and we're a child, baby child, we are in liver time.

Childhood is always associated with the wood element and its growth development new, We are spring chickens. We're just growing as children. So this is time for growth and specifically of tendons, and ligament joints. We want to really support that and make sure it's not overused,

we want to encourage creative play, and outdoor activities to nurture the wood elements. This is when we want to avoid junk food because it prevents liver chi from moving. And that's a parent's job and it's not easy to make sure that your kids have the least amount of sugar and the least amount of junk food.

So the liver would be happy as they grow. Now, the second one is the teenage years. The next one is from 7 to 14 and 14 to 21. Those 14 years are when we are going to transition or transform from a child to an adult and the transforming or transitional year.

always connects with the earth elements. It symbolizes stability and change, right? Transformation, transportation. It focuses on family, community, and on having good digestion that supplies great energy specifically for exercise. Now, a thing that I see a lot is Women overexercise during their teenage years and that affects the Spleen's ability to produce blood for menstruation because the Spleen has to feed the muscular system with the energy of the food they're replenishing with.

So the problem is that often girls who are overexercising during their teenage years will have menstruation issues and maybe later on in life amenorrhea. or scanty menstruation or some issue with anemia. So I see that a lot. So we want to make sure that we don't overdo it specifically with exercise for young teenage girls.

For teenage boys, this is a time when they can exercise as long as they replenish really with good nutritious food and not again junk food.

Now the next stage of our lives is from 21 to 35. This is our peak. This is the summer of our lives. This is when we are at our peak, right? We are like the fire. We are at the top.

We are on. fire. We have so much energy. This is the best time to reproduce, to conceive. This is the best time to grow, to expand, to find who we are at the core, to look at how we can grow and become the best person we can be. So the fire energy really influences, emotional development and joy.

So we want to foster healthy social interaction and self-expression. We want to engage in activity that boosts self-esteem and emotional intelligence. We want to focus on a diet that supports colors and flavors. We want to try new food. This is a time to try different things, but we want to avoid them.

excessive stimulants like caffeine or those energy drinks that a lot of young people take. This is a big no-no for the heart.

The next one is another one that is going to be kind of like the teenage years. It is going to be a transition time. 35 to 49 years old, that's the next transition time from fertile years to. No more fertile or able to conceive, right, specifically for women, men a little bit less, but still the sperm is going to be obviously depleting and be not as strong as when they were young.

We are again in the earth element. just like with teenagers, but in reverse, right? So we still want stability. We still want to understand that we want to connect to family, to the community, and nourish ourselves. This is the time when we need to self-care. This is the time that most people are running around busy taking care of kids and not taking care of themselves.

So it's really key To breathe, take a breath, and take self-care time. We want to establish routines we want to try to manage our stress in order for our Spleen to not be depleted at that time.

The next cycle is the fall time of our lives, which is the middle element, which is kind of often called the middle age. And it's about 49, 50 years old till about 63, 65 years old. And it's a period of refinement. and introspection. The long and large intestine are highlighted emphasizing letting go of what's unnecessary and valuing what's essential.

Oh my gosh. When I reached 50, I said, you know what? I don't care what people think of me. I can let go of this. I am a good person. I know who I am inside. And if people don't like what I do, it's okay. So being able to let go of what people think of you comes with it. That large intestine time, that fall season, we're finally able to let go and we have that better breathing and we want to cultivate letting go and breathing.

So journaling, meditation, maybe attending silent retreats. Just something that really feeds your mind and helps your mind be at ease and calm.

Now the last one is the winter of our lives. And this is usually six 63, 65 years and up.

This is the golden years apparently, I don't know what they're called the golden years by the way, but this is the water element, which obviously is our senior years and it reflects our wisdom because as we grow, we've become more wisdom. And this is the time that the kidney's energy is going to be declining.

So it's important to. Really do mental exercises to keep our memory sharp. To continue to walk and have weight bearing exercise to keep our bones strong. , we want to emphasize activities that nourish the kidney. Yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, cultivating wisdom, sharing experience with younger.

Generation. I had a patient years ago who was 92 years old, and she was the cutest, cutest little lady, all dressed very nicely. You know, she had all the pearls. She was from England, she

had a beautiful suit on, and she had lipstick and eyeshadow. Like, she was always very well put together.

And she came to see me because she was a bit fatigued. I'm like she's 92 years old and for the first time in her life. She's fatigued. I love it. She loved acupuncture and after a few weeks of feeling better and better, I asked her, you know, at 92 years old, you're so vibrant.

You're so amazing. If you had something that you could share a piece of wisdom with the younger generation on how to age gracefully and look and feel the way you do at 92, what would it be? Her answer was one word, adaptability. And I was like, okay, I thought she was going to say, you know, eat well, exercise or whatever, but adaptability.

What does that mean? And she said, Clara, things are going to come at you, unpredictable, things you can't control, and you're going to try to fight them, and you're going to get stressed about it. Adapt to change. Change is constant. It's inevitable. So instead of fighting the wave when the wave comes at you, and some waves are going to be really big.

Ride the wave, adapt, and you will age with way less stress. And I was like, pssh! Mind blown. But this is what the winter of our lives brings. It brings really wisdom that we can share with the younger generation.

By aligning our lifestyle and nutrition with each life season, we can foster health, well-being and fulfillment at every age.

Use the cycle, the 24 hours, the lunar cycle, the seasonal changes, the life cycles to diagnose patients and in my own personal life as well, to be in harmony with nature, and my environment, and to align with the healthiest way possible.

And by the way, yes, sometimes I go off course, but I can realign it because I know those are so important.

All these nuggets are so useful personally and professionally because after all, TCM rocks!

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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