

I was so hurt that I decided to go for a drive for an hour or so and ended up driving for six whole weeks. True story.

Today I'm going to talk about grief, loss sadness and sharing a personal story, but then applying it to how in Chinese medicine we can help our patients who suffer from a grief, a loss or sadness.

because right now we are in the fall season, which according to Chinese medicine, relates to the lung and large intestine, specifically to the emotion of sadness, and grief So I'm going to share that story and then I'm going to talk about all the different common patterns that affects patients that have longstanding sadness, grief, and feel like they can't move on or move forward. They feel stuck.

We're going to look at the best acupuncture points to help our patients when it comes to this and all the tools we have in our toolbox, including ear acupuncture to really support our patients going through a difficult time like grief, sadness, and a loss.

Are you ready for it? Let's go.

Stories really, truly illustrate our point. So I wanted to share a personal story that I have never, ever shared online before.

Before I met my husband of 21 years, I first moved to Canada, didn't know many people. And within the first year, I met this man that I fell in love with. And for two and a half years, I thought we were very happy and in love. And one day I came home from work and he said, I have something to tell you.

And I said, okay, what? He said, I feel really guilty, but I have to tell you a six months ago, I met someone and I slept with her. And at that moment, my heart fell into my stomach. I felt like I was going to throw up. I couldn't breathe. Started having palpitation in my chest, couldn't breathe, and felt so upset.

I thought I was going to throw up. So I looked at him, and I said, you know what, I just need to go for a drive to clear my head. And so I got into my car. Started driving. It was dark. It was January. It was raining and I was crying and I kept driving and I got to the border of Canada to the United States at the time. This was way before we needed a passport to cross the border.

We used to be able to cross the border from Canada to the United States with just our driving license. I crossed the border and I kept driving and I drove all the way to Seattle. That took me about three hours altogether. I arrived in Seattle. I found a motel somewhere because I was exhausted. I rented a room and I went to bed.

This was before cell phones. So next morning I use a pay phone and I called my boyfriend at the time and told him that I just needed a break. I needed to get away from him and think. This through. I then called my job at the time when I first arrived in Canada.

I did a lot of jobs. I sold encyclopedia door to door without speaking English. This is for another story, but I was working at a coffee shop and I called the coffee shop and said, I'm so, so sorry, but I can't come to work today. And I don't think I'm going to come tomorrow. And I think I should quit. I felt really bad, but I just couldn't see myself going back to work yet.

I was in shock. I was hurt. I was in so much pain. My heart felt broken. This was my first long-term relationship I felt so betrayed. I didn't know how to handle it. I was in my late 20s and my heart just felt like someone stomped on it. I just thought I couldn't go home yet.

I just can't. So I kept driving. And like I said, when we first started, I ended up driving for six weeks. I went through Washington States, Idaho, Utah. I went to see the Grand Canyon. I hiked in the Grand Canyon. I went all the way down to Arizona. then I veered west and from San Diego made My way back up to Vancouver all along the west coast of the United States

How did I do this? I went to Walmart. I bought a bowl knife and a fork Fork, spoon, can opener, and I bought food every day, and I ate in my car. I stayed in a very, very cheap motel, like Motel 6, if you've been there, you know what that is. cheap to stay in those places.

When I was in Arizona, I stumbled upon a silent retreat where you could stay and pay as much or as little as you could.

The silent retreat was on the Hopi tribe native land and they Are amazing. They offered this silent retreat, they offered people to pay at a scale, whatever you could pay. And then you would eat the blue corn soup and blue corn bread. And there was a library where I could read, and then there was sweat lodge that were in tents outside where you could cleanse and do sweat lodge, and then you could walk all along the Mesa.

Like it was a big plateau where you could walk and hike and think. So I stayed there for five days, didn't speak. Yes, me. I didn't speak for five days in order to really gather my thoughts. And I did sweat lodge, I read a lot, I journaled a lot, and I tried to really try to understand what was happening in my body.

And for five days, I did not speak. This is a silent retreat, so we do not speak at all. And it was perfect timing for me to really be within my thoughts and reassess my whole being.

Because I felt like my Self-esteem had taken a toll. Why did he need somebody else? Wasn't I good enough? Wasn't I pretty enough? Wasn't I nice enough? Loving enough? All this me, it's about me. And then I realized during the silent retreat that this was not me. It was what he did. And I had to try to process that.

Right. So I did this for five days, which was so Beautiful. If you've never done a silent retreat, I would highly recommend it. My husband did one in May in Wales for 10 days. And he said it was the hardest thing he's ever done. Now his was meditation all day as well. Mine was just free-spirited. You could do whatever you wanted, go for walks, journaled, sweat lodge, et cetera.

His was very structured, so it was a little bit tougher to do for sure because it was a lot of meditation, but he absolutely benefited from it. So I made my way back up to Canada six weeks later. I had no more money in my pocket. I didn't have a lot of savings at the time, so it was time to go home.

And when I got home my boyfriend was there, there. I said to him, I am going to pack. I'm going to move, stay at a friend's house, and then I'll find my own place. But this is it. This is over. And he told me, I love you still. , it can't be over. And I said, no, no, no, no. It is over. So I'm not recommending for everybody to go on a drive for six weeks.

If so, You get hurt or if your patients are suffering from a loss, grief, or shocking news like the one that broke my heart at the time. But I think for me that worked really well. And fair enough, I didn't have children. I didn't have responsibilities that I could just keep driving.

And that's what I did. I don't know if I could do this today. I don't think I would be able to do this today. But sometimes when I said to my husband, I'm just going to go for a walk. I need to think he's looking at me and he goes, you're not going to go for a drive and leave me, are you?

And I'm like, Oh, poor guy. He knows my story.

so now let's talk about what Chinese medicine can do when someone experienced loss, grief, depression. Sadness. Now, sadness can come from long-standing depression. Sadness can come from a loss or a grieving time.

And we need to process it. We need to grieve. But when patients are stuck for 5, 6, 7, or 10 years in the grieving process and they can't move forward, this is when TCM is really good as allowing them to open up the flow, letting go, because remember the large intestine is the organ that let's go, letting go and moving forward, being able to breathe better.

I've had so many patients who lost a loved one, a child, a partner. It's very difficult and we need to allow the body and the mind to grieve. However. we need to also eventually be able to move forward. So, let's look at the Chinese medicine perspective.

Frequent sadness, In Chinese, it's called Shan Bei, B E I, and it's basically the desire to cry a lot, to grieve for a long period of time, and have uncontrollable sadness. It's very hard to get out of it. Definitely emotional trauma, shocking news, stress, and also chronic illness.

Because if we're in a lot of pain all the time, we feel sad, hopeless, , and feeling like we're never gonna get better. Now, before we start looking at the three most common patterns that are

affecting people, the half frequent sadness and grieving and loss, let's think of what we can do using ear acupuncture.

I love ear acupuncture because it's so powerful. We can start with basic point heart. Lung and liver. Why those three? Because if there is a long standing emotion, whatever it is, it affects the heart mind. So we have to do the heart. The lung, of course, because this is sadness and grieving, which is connected to the lung.

And the liver, because when we are in this state, we feel stuck. This means our qi is stuck, it's stagnated. So we need a better movement. So liver would be the one that we want to address. Does that make sense? , those are your three basic ear acupuncture points.

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Let's look at the three most common patterns when it comes to sadness and grief and loss. The first one is heart and lung qi deficiency. Now, the qi deficiency signs are going to be fatigue, weak pulse, and pale tongue. The lung qi deficiency are going to be crying a lot, shortness of breath, maybe some sinusitis, or tendency to catch cold easily and flu easily.

Thank you And the heart are going to be palpitation, maybe some anxiety with the sadness as well, and easily sweating when there's anxiety. So the person's not hot, but they sweat easily when they're anxious. The best point for this pattern would be to tonify qi So you could have stomach 36, REN 6, and DU 20 to get that energy back up.

But to affect specifically the heart and lungs, we can use the Back-Shu point. Bladder 13, bladder 15. To help with the lung we want to do lung 7. And absolutely, if it's something that broke the person's heart like my heart was broken, the best point for a broken heart is pericardium 7.

Pericardium 7 is a ghost point and is the best point when someone got their heart broken, like I did way back then.

When using pericardium 7 for a broken heart, think of a broken heart as a loss of a relationship, a loss of a loved one, maybe that passed away, a loss of a job, a loss of a friendship. It could be anything that feels like a loss. Pericardium 7, broken heart, best point. It has to be there. So when we treat patients that are depressed, that are sad, that are grieving, we want to ask them, do they feel like their heart is being broken?

And you want to do pericardium 7. Does that make sense? Now, another combo that I like to do when people are feeling at a loss, feeling stuck after grieving or sadness, is the best combo, which is the Buddha's triangle. And the Buddha's triangle is lung nine, heart seven, and pericardium six. This is a great combo that can be done to help people specifically if they are stuck and they can't process their emotion.

Now, let's look at the second pattern, which is liver insults the lung. So this results from a lot of stress, and the more the person is stressed, the more they cry. They usually cry in anger. So they get really angry, and then they'll burst into tears. They're very irritable, they sigh a lot. PMS, specifically irritability, and crying, like mood swings go back and forth between crying, and then being angry.

They'll have shortness of breath and they'll have more sinus. feeling kind of stuffy prior to menstruation. The tongue will be red and a yellow coat because there is definitely excess heat in the liver, which insults the lung, creating some lung qi deficiency. And the pulse will be wiry rapid?

So in general, we want to do points to calm the stress, calm the liver with liver two to bring the liver young down, liver three to move liver chi, large intestine four, again, to move blood, to really release that anger, that stuckness, lung seven to strengthen the lung and open the chest. You can do bladder 13 and bladder 18, which are also back shu points of the lung and liver and are located in the chest area, which will allow for better breathing for opening up.

Now you can do REN17 as well to open the chest and let go of all those emotions. You still want to look for the root cause when it comes to liver, insulting lung. So if there's a lot of anger and stress, it could be due to a loss, right? If a parent has lost a child that has been killed in a driving accident from someone that was a drunk driver, of course they're going to be angry, right?

This is normal. This is why there is an organization called MADD, M A D D, which is Mothers. against drunk drivers. , anger is a really big result of loss for a lot of people. We all deal with loss in a different way.

For me, the silence, the being in my head, the writing the journal was very useful. For some people, anger comes in. For other people, it's anxiety or fear that paralyzed them because of the loss and the grief. The third common pattern we see a lot in clinical practice is heart and lung yin deficiency.

So the patient's going to cry for no reason. They're sad all the time. This is when someone maybe has lost a child or a partner that dies and they just can't Move forward. They cry a lot. They're sad all the time. They never ever smile or laugh. They have insomnia where they toss and turn all night.

They feel hot at night. Specifically they have red cheeks. They feel short of breath, and they have five center heat. Five center heat. As a reminder is. The palms are hot, the soles are hot, and the center of the chest is hot. And that's typical yin deficiency symptoms. They're gonna have a red tongue without a coat, probably cracked, and a thin, rapid pulse.

This is something that people have experienced for quite a while. , heart and lung yin deficiency could happen maybe in older patients, but not always. And we can look at it again by starting with pericardium 7. The point that is best for grieving due to a broken heart, maybe to a loss of a partner, a child, a parent, anybody that you feel like your heart's been broken.

Then we can do back shu points of the lung and heart, which is bladder 13 and bladder 15. Lung 7, we definitely always want to do Lung 7. Heart 7, of course, for better sleep. And kidney 3, To help balance the heart and the kidney, because usually when it is in long standing, then it's really important to involve the kidney because the kidneys are going to get affected and the person's going to age faster. .

Now can you add up Spleen 6 to all those patterns protocol? Absolutely, because it's a perfect point to calm the mind. Yin Yang Ear Shen Men, you can add up all the calming points for sure. But I think what's important is to start with the three most important points. When there is sadness, grief, and loss.

For any patients that suffer from a lot of sadness and grieving and loss, there are three main points we want to do every single time.

Pericardium 7. because it's the point for broken heart. Lung 7 to really protect the lung from all this emotional stress that affects this specific system. And kidney 27. Kidney 27 is one of the best points for grieving and loss And I have done it on all my patients that have lost their loved one. It works really well in opening the chest and letting go.

The lung and the kidney have a great relationship in TCM. Remember that the lung breathes in deep, deep, deep, deep, deep, the oxygen. And kidney grasp that oxygen to be able to live a long life. Kidney really wants a lot of oxygen. This is why deep breathing exercise allow people to live a longer life, healthier.

Deep breathing exercise really connects the lung and the kidney. And Kidney 27 is a really good point to allow the grieving process to emerge and let it go.

This is why I love Chinese medicine because we can help patients specifically process grief, loss, and sadness. I wish you a fantastic day. Keep changing the world one patient at a time and especially keep rocking it using TCM.