

Did you know that over 30 percent of adults in North America have difficulty controlling their anger and that most people, adults specifically, report being angry at least on an average 14 times per week.

Wow. That's a lot of angry people. Today I'm going to talk about the Chinese medicine perspective on anger and all its spectrum from impatience to frustration, irritability, anger, and rage to the point where it's just really, really violent.

So there's a spectrum from frustration, impatience to rage. Anger is kind of like in the middle and it's like a volcano, it can explode and come back down. But some people are constantly angry for years. Now, repressed anger can also be damaging to the body as well. So we're going to talk about what are the physical symptoms that come up when people are constantly angry, what treatment options patients have, and of course, we're going to talk about the best acupuncture points when it comes to anger and all its spectrum, as well as looking at different pattern of TCM diagnosis and nutrition supplement and everything we can do and give our patients tools and education so anger is not part of their lives because it is not fun to feel angry all the time.

Because for patients that experience anger constantly they don't like themselves. They don't like to feel that way. A lot of people don't. I had a patient that came to see me years ago, and he said, Clara, I need some help. I come home every night after work, and I literally start yelling at my kids.

And the whole evening, all I do is yell at them. On the weekend, I yell at them. He had two kids, and he goes, I feel like all I do is yell at my kids and I'm constantly angry at them. You need to help me because I don't like who I am with my kids. And of course, often, anger comes from stress, from being so overwhelmed with life, that it comes out as anger.

Now, we're also going to talk about the root cause of anger and all the intricate part of how TCM looks at it using the five elements, because sometimes the root cause of anger is not stress or it's not anger. It can be something else.

So Acupuncture is such a great tool to put patients in a parasympathetic state in a rest and recover. And sometimes patients are so runned on stress and on the fight or flight, constant, constant stressful life that they don't breathe anymore. And often when there's anger, deep breathing exercise will help as well.

So we're going to talk about all this. Are you ready? Let's go.

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!

Do you remember recently the big event that was all over the news about Will Smith? Who lost his temper, got up on stage in the middle of the Oscar ceremony and slapped Chris Rock, who was the host of the Oscars. I mean, people talked about this for weeks, for months, for what happened then.

This whole Chris Rock Wilfsmith thing was just crazy. And the fact that he lost his temper and literally aggressed Chris Rock was so surprising and shocking to a lot of people, of course, and it's all on camera, so people are going to dissect it.

We're not in those people's lives. We don't know what happened or what's going on with them. That's what anger does. We hear about road rage, people that seemingly look okay and suddenly lose their mind. That's what they call it.

In a moment of anger, they create an event that they can never take back and that could transform their lives forever and the lives of other people that they touch, right? There are a lot of stories we hear about people getting angry and losing their temper.

Growing up, I remember that we had a neighbor that used to drink a lot of alcohol. And this is very common in France, we call people angry drunk. Because a lot of people who drink alcohol end up being violent or angry. And when he was violent, he would literally come home and throw everything against the wall.

And so his wife and his daughter would come and stay with us in our apartment. We had a tiny apartment, but they would stay with us the night until he calmed down the next day. And of course this was occurring all the time. She stayed with him. They wouldn't talk for a week after that. And then they would patch things up and then he would do it again.

This was to me, very scary. I didn't like people yelling because I was a very sensitive kid. So he scared me a lot, specifically, obviously when he drank, because when he wasn't drinking, he was a very nice man. So we could see the correlation of anger and the liver, right? The liver gets affected by alcohol.

And of course, in Chinese medicine, anger, frustration, irritability, impatience, rage, all related to the wood element and anger to the liver organ or TCM system. So before we start talking about TCM and all its perspective and how we help and support patients that go through life with a lot of anger and repressed anger, let's look at a few more stats.

65 percent of office workers have experienced office rage, 45 percent of staff regularly lose their temper at work. Isn't that crazy? 80 percent of drivers claim to have been involved in road rage incident. That is really high. 80%. That is really high. And road rage sometimes means you're just going to follow someone.

And start kind of driving erratically and hopefully everybody comes home and it's over and nobody gets hurt. But a lot of time people do get hurt.

I look at a few stats. Here's another one that's going to surprise you. 65 percent of angry outbursts occurs over the phone. 26 Percent happen through written forms like email or text. And only, and only 9 percent of anger outbursts occur face to face. So I think what we're hiding behind devices, it's easier to get mad at people because there's no repercussion and there is no confrontation.

I am someone that doesn't feel comfortable in confrontation. I don't like people when they yell. I don't like to know if someone is going to yell at me. So for me, it's really hard to go and talk to someone. Let's say it was someone that I had to tell something and I knew they wouldn't like what I would have to tell them.

Even if I choose my words properly and be really kind. When they started losing their temper, I shut down, I get scared. I get fear. I do not like confrontation. And my husband always says, that's your weakness. You are always scared of other people's reaction. And that is true. That is who I am. Let me know if that's you as well.

If you're someone that doesn't like confrontation, because I sure don't.

But then once in a while. I am stressed and a few years ago before I met my husband, I was living in Vancouver downtown Vancouver in an apartment building and I was renting a one bedroom apartment and every day I took the elevator because I was on the ninth floor to go to work. Most often when I was in this elevator at the same time, every morning, I would encounter the same person.

This guy was in the elevator before me. So above me, he went in the elevator. I got in and every morning or often in the morning, when I saw him, I would say, good morning, and he

would never answer. And then we would go all the way down, silence, go to work. And then every time I saw him, I would say good morning.

And he would never answer. Don't even look at me, ignore me. So one day I was super stressed and I was probably also PMSing. So those two combination with a woman that usually is pretty chill and doesn't like confrontation. Well, I didn't even think. My liver yang rose, I went in the elevator. I said, good morning.

And he didn't answer. And so the doors of the elevator closed. We went down and I pressed the stop button and stopped the elevator in its track. He looked at me. I looked at him and I said, what is your problem? And he just looked at me like the deer in the headlight scared and confused not sure what was going on and I said Why can't you just say hello?

I say hello, we live in the same building and you never answer me. What is your problem? And he just didn't say anything. He backed up against the wall like so scared. I released the stop button. We went down. And that was the last time we talked. We never end up talking. I never said hello again. And that was that, but that was a little liver yang rising burst that I had.

So once in a while when you're stressed or PMSing as a woman, some excuse, the claw comes out. So I got to be a little bit of the Tasmanian devil. Oh my God. When I was growing up, the Tasmanian devil cartoon. Was something I love because he had smoke coming out of his ears when he was angry. And I feel like smoke came out of my ears in that elevator.

So that was my story for the anger part.

Let's look first at the Western perspective when it comes to anger and its spectrum.

First let's look at the effect of anger and long-standing anger on the physical body Increased heart rate and blood pressure muscle tension, of course feeling hot, especially in the face and neck. That's the liver yang rising. That's the heat coming up right sweating or shaking headaches usually temporal headaches upset stomach or digestive issues and even rapid breathing and even tingling sensation in the body.

Often anger is also associated with other mental symptoms because the person that's angry, it's an outburst, right? It doesn't stay up all the time. It's like the volcano is exploding. It comes down. It explodes. It comes down.

So often anger is associated with irritability, stress, anxiety, depression, feeling overwhelmed, difficulty concentrating, inability to relax, and feeling tense or nervous. Fear

can lead to anger. We could see this in Chinese medicine. If you look at the five element theory, water generates wood.

Water is related to the fear emotion. Fear can generate anger. That's very common. If a parent loses a child and they have another child that is alive, when that second child is going to cross the road without looking both ways, the fear of losing their child is going to make them angry. And the reaction will be to yell at them and say, what were you thinking? You could have get killed. This is the anger that comes from fear. So often anger comes from something else. That happens also for people that have a lot of sadness or grieving.

Now this is more metal. Metal is associated with sadness and grieving and metal over control wood, which means leads to anger. And often it could be repressed anger specifically. So when someone is grieving, let's say again, they lost a child and they're very sad, very grieving. They may not be. Angry outwardly, but inside they're so angry.

Why does this happen? Why did my child died? Why? And then they're mad, but they might not necessarily let it out. So it's repress anger. Repressing emotion is probably even worse than actually letting the emotion out, which is a release, right? For most people, because they feel more calm after, although people that get or receive the anger.

Don't quite feel good. Right? So it's just not a great place to be, but we could see how metal can over control wood and so sadness and grieving can lead to repress anger. Does that make sense?

What are the Western treatment options for patients who suffer from anger, irritability, and rage?

First one is therapy, of course. The second one is medication. That's a big one as well, to try to calm the patient. But usually it's going to be more than one medication because they're going to have a medication for maybe depression and anxiety and the anger. It's going to be more than one, which makes it difficult for the patient to know which one is helping.

And also the side effects of medication kind of, you know, defeat the purpose as well, often. But for some patients, it will help. And then the last one is anger management program. Learning deep breathing exercises. Exercising in general calms down the stress, relieves the stress. So it helps with anger and anger outburst.

Of course, avoiding certain foods that will make anger worse, like alcohol, coffee, any kind of stimulants, like energy drinks, or spicy food for that matter, and processed food. The gut

is really connected to our brain, so it's really important to have a healthy gut or healthy digestive system to have a better understanding of our emotion in our brain.

So it's really important to have a great Healthy gut or a healthy digestive system because the gut brain connection is very powerful.

Also, improving sleep is key because a lot of people that are irritable all day long is because they don't sleep enough. They're exhausted, they're fatigued. That's another one that we need to focus on and help our patients with. Are you sleeping enough? Let's focus on that as well.

If you still struggle to come up with the right treatment protocol for your patients, you are going to love my third book. By popular demand, I have created a guide for TCM treatments for over 160 common syndromes with acupuncture points, herbal formula, ear points, diet, and so much more, including many, many of my clinical pearls.

It is the. Game changer for acupuncture students and specifically for practitioners. You can download the digital version on any device, and it comes with many video links to compliment it or. If you're like me and you'd rather have a hardcopy version, the publisher ships it all over the world. But before you invest in my Chinese Medicine Treatments Made Easy, I want to make sure it's everything you were looking for, so you can download a sample of it.

Listen to what people who invest in this book had to say. Thank you, Clara. This is exactly what I needed. I love how you organized this book. It's truly helping me in my first year in practice. Yay! So excited. Bought it immediately. It will be a great resource for studying for boards. That's awesome. Oh my god.

I immediately purchased this and it is such a bargain price that I almost feel ashamed for paying what I believe is worth of much, much more. Even as an experienced practitioner for over 10 years, I like your stuff just as much and benefit from it. Yay! All this is just so rewarding for me. So I hope you get your copy if you don't have one.

The link is in the show notes below, or you can go to my website [acuprofacademy.com](http://acuprofacademy.com) and click the shop tab on the menu bar. You won't regret it. I put so much heart and soul in it. I hope you enjoy and benefit from it, and in turn your patients do as well.

There are a few supplements that have been shown to help with stress, with irritability, and with anger. L theanine is an amino acid that promotes relaxation without causing drowsiness, so it can help reduce the stress, the anxiety that obviously contributes to

irritability. Omega 3 fatty acids, of course, are really good to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, which can manifest as irritability as well.

Magnesium, which really balance stress response and may help reduce anxiety related symptoms, including irritability and anger. And last is B complex vitamin, because particularly B12 and folate play a crucial role in mood regulation and can help maintain a positive mood.

Those supplements can be quite helpful to start helping the patient. Now, let's talk about the TCM view when it comes to anger. As I said earlier, of course, anger and it's, as I said earlier, anger has a big spectrum from impatience. I ask patients this all the time.

Are you patient? Oh no, I have no patience. So that is a lot of stress already and the person has no patience. Are you irritable? Yes. I don't ask patients. Are you angry? You start slow with frustration, irritability. Anger and rage is higher.

I remember one time I asked this patient, Do you feel stress? And she goes, No, no, I'm not stressed at all. And I said, But you're a little short and you, you feel to me like you're stressed. I'm not stressed. Everyone around me is just stupid. Everybody at work is stupid. So see the irritability coming. And so I said, So everyone is stupid?

And she looks at me and she goes, okay, fine, I'm stressed. But you could see the irritability coming out, right? So what happened? What is the mechanism? Well, the liver in Chinese medicine is in charge of good flow of qi all over the body. When the liver is stressed or stagnated, so lack of exercise, lots of overwhelming, lots of stress, everything starts to tense, and the liver, qi stagnate.

When the liver chi stagnate, it has a couple of options. It can become blood stasis because qi moves blood and blood stasis leads to pain. So we could have migraine or headaches, a lot of pain in the body, right? But we could also, if it's not going to be stagnated. It is going to rebel upward and become liver yang rising and next maybe liver fire, which makes it even worse, right?

So liver qi stagnation can lead to blood stasis which creates pain or liver yang rising and or liver fire which creates symptoms that rise up like anger, irritability, rage, temple, headache, high blood pressure, insomnia. Everything is going to rise up and that is what we want to address. So we want to bring that energy down, but we also want to move the liver chi, right?

And as I said earlier, it can come from other system, other element. As I said earlier, the root cause can come from different emotions and different system. Using the five elements, try to figure out why this person is so irritable or angry all the time.

main causes of anger, according to Chinese medicine, are alcohol, illegal drugs, medication side effects, chronic illness, kidney essence deficiency.

Those are the main one. It doesn't mean that they're exclusive. Like I said earlier, anger can come from other emotion. Remember that we need to treat all the systems affected.

Depending where you are in the world, you may never have heard of MADD, M A D D. MADD is Mothers Against Drunk Drivers and this came up as basically someone's child got killed by a drunk driver. My dad got killed by a drunk driver when he was walking home after his shift as a chef in the restaurant when I was five and that's how.

I lost my father. So I do not, do not like when people drink and want to drive. I always make sure there's a ride home that is safe. I won't even drink a glass of wine if I'm the driver taking everybody home.

So to me, I totally understand the MADD, M A D D, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers is an association that really is. Promoting not drinking and driving because the consequences that occurs when people do this and the lives that are lost. So this is what I'm talking about alcohol and anger, mad, right? This doesn't mix and so this is the correlation that we could see with the liver of course and Chinese medicine perspective.

Before we start looking at different TCM pattern diagnosis, let's talk about auricular acupuncture.

I love ear acupuncture. It's one of my favorite micro system. The best point where people are coming in and they have a lot of anger, irritability, rage, frustration, impatience. Of course, number one auricular point is Shen man. The gate of the mind located in the triangular fossa, best point.

Of course, we have to put the liver point and then the heart. The reason why we put the heart point is because remember that in Chinese medicine, all long standing emotions will eventually affect the heart. And what I love is nowadays, Western medicine is coming around saying that the heart is actually connected to the brain.

Through the vagus nerve and emotions are related to the heart. All emotions come from the heart. Well, well, well, ancient medicine is validated in modern time. Don't you love it? Before we continue below, I have the link of other emotions that I've done. I have a podcast



on worry and overthinking that was very popular. If you haven't listened to it, check it out. The link is below. I have a video on fear and phobia, and then I have another one on sadness and grief as well.

So you have all the emotion treatments done for you. Check them out. All the links will be below.

now let's look at the two main patterns when it comes to anger. The first one, of course, is liver qi stagnation turning into liver Yang rising. This is what I was explaining earlier, right? It's the volcano effect.

So the person is very irritable and then they have a short fuse. They become very angry, very fast, right? That explosion they rib with pain or hypochondriac pain, which means kind of like between the intercoastal space and it's moving. It's not always in the same space. They have tendency to burp or belch a lot.

They sigh a lot. They have temporal headaches, very chronic. They are unhappy looking. They look like they're not happy, like they're angry. Have you ever seen someone that looks kind of like morose, like they're just unhappy? That person definitely looks like this. It's not the angry person that looks so happy and suddenly becomes angry.

This is more like this person always looks unhappy. They have a thin yellow coat on the tongue. But that's not always the case. Sometimes they just have the red sides of the tongue, because the liver area is on the side of the tongue, then the side of the tongue could be red as well, the pulse is wiry, and then of course it could be rapid, but the rapid is going to come when they have that.

outbursts when the liver yang rises. Now, one of the best formula for this is, there's two formulas. One is Chai Hu Shu Gan San. So Chai Hu Shu Gan San is a great formula for soothing the liver. Another one is Xiao Yao San, but if there is a lot of heat, we could add up the modified version, which is Jia Wei Xiao Yao San.

Xiao Yao San San is often Translated as the rambling powder, or the easy and wanderer, right? Supposed to be smooth. And we use Xiao Yao san if there's also a spleen qi deficiency with the liver qi stagnation. If not, then Chai Hu Shu Gan San is a really good formula. Now if you don't use formula, that's okay.

Let's talk about acupuncture points. So first of all, we need to move the liver chi. Soothe that liver chi. Allow for better flow. Of course, we open the gates, we have the four points, large

intestine, four, and liver, three. People always ask me, you said four points, but you only said two. Well, that's two bilaterally, right?

Two large intestine, four on both hands, and two liver, three on both feet. That is four points. Make sense? The next one is, of course, liver 2.

Liver 2 is the best point to bring liver yang down. Calm that anger, that volcano effect. Large intestine 11 will clear the heat. Plus, large intestine 11 is a ghost point that is really useful when people have bursts of anger, when they lose control or they feel like they're out of control and they're losing control.

So large intestine 11 has to be there. Now heart seven to calm the mind, because obviously we have a lot of issue with that. REN 17 is a good point to put there because first of all, it's the influential point of Chi. So it opened the chest, relaxed the chest because there's a lot of tension there, right?

The person is really tense for quite a while. So this is a good point to add. Pericardium six, Liver Qi stagnation is turned to liver yang rising. Often, that's a wood overacting, over controlling on earth and creating some stomach Qi rebelling. That's why the person is often burping or has sour regurgitation or has bad breath.

That is often the case with anger and it can also lead to ulcers. So pericardium 6 will bring it down. Now, if there's no stomach chi rebelling, you don't have to put pericardium 6, right? That makes sense. Now you can use Yin Tang, Ear Shen Men, and other points to calm the mind as well. This is just a guide to kind of start you up.

The second most common pattern is still an excess pattern, which is liver and gallbladder fire. Now this person is going to be very agitated all the time, very irritable with a lot of angry times. They're going to have hot temporal headaches, where if we put a cold compress, it's going to feel much better.

They're going to have vertigo or tendency to dizziness. Bitter taste in the mouth, that's the fire. Red face and or red eyes. This is like the Tasmanian devil, right? bloodshot eyes. That is a liver fire. Rib pain again, dark urine, constipation because the fire is drying everything and slowing everything down.

The tongue is going to be red with a yellow coat and probably some crack because again, fire dries body fluids. And then the pulse is going to be wiry, rapid. Now, one of the best formula for this is Long Dan Xie Gan Tan. And if I don't pronounce this properly, I'm very, very

sorry. the main herb in this formula is Lang Dan Xie, which is in French, gentiane, gentiane, it's a flower.

Anyway, that is a beautiful formula to bring the liver fire down and we can use it for many, many reasons. However, it should not be used long term because it's really drying and really cold. So if there's a lot of spleen qi deficiency or there's already some issue with weakness. We don't want to use that formula for a long time.

So I'm going to share a story with you. My previous dog. So my dog right now is Boomer. If you've been around you've seen him. He's a golden retriever. He's like so happy, go lucky, kind of crazy, but so much fun. My previous dog, Plato was a Labrador and I love my Plato. When we first got him the first six months, when he was a teenager, he was very aggressive with us.

If he didn't want to do something, he would show his teeth and get really growly. And it scared me because he would growl really, really bad. Like I would say, no. And the more I would say no and point my fingers, the more he would growl. And that really scared me. I didn't want to be scared for my own dog.

I love animals. And he was such a sweet puppy. And then he became a teenager. And like a lot of teenager, even, you know, even human teenager, he got his claw out and he was really aggressive with us. Nobody else, but with us. Craig would tell him no, and you know, hold them down and say, no bad dog.

We hired a trainer and it just wasn't helping. So I decided, huh, maybe I should give him Long Dan Xie Gan Tan. So without telling my husband, I gave my dog a little bit of Long Dan Xie Gan Tan for his size.

Cause he wasn't super big. He was 90 pounds for three weeks. And then three weeks later, my husband was like, did you know Plato was all nice again? He stopped that growly phase. And I'm like, Might have to do with me giving him a herbal formula. He's like you gave him a formula I said, well, I just wanted to calm him down.

I was starting to get really scared of him and Three weeks later he was fine, and I only give it to him for three weeks I really monitored his bowel movement because it's very drying and I didn't want him to have constipation So if you don't use herb I would not recommend to use herbs because they have side effects that are very powerful But that's what I did for my dog and his aggressive teenage years, went away and he was such a sweet, adorable dog for the 15 years he was with us.

Let's go back to looking at the acupuncture points for liver and gallbladder fire. Of course, we need to bring the fire down. The best point to bring the fire down is stomach 44. We're going to put liver 2 to bring that energy up, that volcano up, bring the yawn down, the energy down.

Large intestine 11 course has to be there because it is for out of control anger and it clears heat. We're going to put gallbladder 41 and gallbladder 43. Gallbladder 43 is great to bring gallbladder fire down. And then again we want to relax the body. So heart 7 to calm the mind. Maybe pericardium six, if there is a lot of digestive issue, if there isn't, then we don't have to put it.

REN17 again to open the chest, relax the body and anything else you want to add to calm the mind, like yin tang and anything that you deemed really useful for your patient.

These two are common pattern when it comes to TCM diagnosis for anger, but they're not exclusive, right? There could be other ones. Often they are excess. They're not really deficient.

However, someone can have excess and deficiency as we see in clinical practice all the time. One thing that surprised me is often people don't want to hear about nutrition. Every time I do a podcast or videos about nutrition, it doesn't perform as well as other videos. And I found that fascinating because The gut has to receive really good food for the mind and the brain to feel better.

And when we feel overwhelmed or stressed or unhappy or joyless, putting Unhealthy food into the gut into the digestive system does not nourish the body, the brain, the mind and the spirit. I feel like nutrition is really at the center of who we are, spleen and stomach, earth is at the center of our whole health, so it's really important to emphasize and educate our patients that their diet need to nourish their brain.

So taking supplement is great, but eating real food is going to go a long way. So I just wanted to remind us of this because sometimes we forget.

hope that was useful. Wherever you are in the world, I appreciate you. Please subscribe. If you haven't yet to the Acupro show, wherever you listen to your podcast, being on Spotify or being on Apple podcasts, and if you could leave a review on Apple Podcasts, I would be so grateful. Thank you so much for being here. I'll see you next week. Same time, same place, same beautiful TCM rock stars.

I hope that was useful and in turn really beneficial to your patients. Watch this next. You're going to love this video if you haven't seen it yet. And no matter what, keep rocking it using TCM because after all, Acupuncture 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](http://acuproacademy.com). I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case studies, free courses, and so much more.

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