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Greetings,

Happy Holidays! This special newsletter includes a free download of the full article "Transforming Fear," a new article called "Transforming Seasonal Stress," a couple of simple seasonal recipes for the winter and our Center updates. Just scroll down to find all of that!

Center Updates

We will be closed for the Winter Holiday from Christmas to New Year's Day. We'll be back in the office on January 2nd.

We have had quite a few programs recently with our regular classes as well as our special program with Elisabeth Rochat. You can always keep track of our programs at our [blog/update page](#). We have also added an archive of the past 6 newsletters on the same page if you have missed any of them.

Our membership program is going well - through member support we are able to provide Chinese medicine services and herbs to those who would not otherwise be able to afford it. This has provided us with the ability to begin care for several additional people in the last month alone! And, of course, we are continuing care for all of those who are already participating in this low income program. So thank you for your support, it makes a great difference in many people's lives!

The more people that we have join the membership program, the more care we are able to provide. For more information on membership to support this program please visit our [membership page](#).

Transforming Seasonal Stress by Sean Fannin

Direct link to the full article for members [here](#).

In the traditional Chinese calendar, the mid-point of winter occurs on the winter solstice. The winter is associated with internalization and storage, a time of treasuring the inner resources of the body. The preservation of the qi and essences becomes the primary physiological concern, as this is the time when we are most dependent and vulnerable to a lack of external resources. In a recent class a student asked the very good question, "wasn't this more relevant a hundred years or more ago?" The answer is that physiologically it is equally relevant. Even though we can now more or less control our immediate environment, the processes that occur in the body in response to the season are still the same.

This means that in order to act efficiently and in a way that is consistent with our nature (and thus our health) in the wintertime we need to adjust our activity. This is rooted in the basic understanding that it takes more energy to do the same amount of activity. This doesn't mean that you just sit around not doing anything (although that is not a bad idea sometimes), it simply means that we need to stay aware of how our energy feels and responds to the activities that we do. In terms of exercise and other physical activity this means that you can accomplish more in less time, as the relative intensity increases seasonally. This is great, but it also means that it is easy to get burned out by trying to do the same level of activity that we kept up in the summer. The more that we try to do this, the more stressed and overwhelmed we will feel. In fact, our stress response in general will be higher this time of year meaning that we will tend to feel more stressed and reactive.

So what should we do when we are feeling stressed? A simple answer is to do a little less. That

doesn't always work though and sometimes even when we do less we still feel a heightened stress response. A more efficient approach is to instead change how we are doing what we are doing.

Perhaps the most challenging (and potentially rewarding) method for transforming stress is to actively change your relationship to it. When you start to feel the stress increasing don't fight it or tell yourself how bad it feels or try to ignore it. Instead view the stress response for what it is: a shot of energy. Embrace that burst of energy and let it energize you, just as drinking a cup of coffee would. Coffee actually doesn't add energy to the body, it activates your own energy, which may leave you feeling depleted and tense. However, the process of activating our energy through the stress response is already built into us as a fantastic resource that will energize rather than deplete us, if we choose to use it. The more we struggle with stress the worse it feels and the more overwhelmed we get. If we can instead welcome the feeling, even if it is uncomfortable at first, we can begin to tap into a rich resource that is there for us whenever we need it. My article "Transforming Fear" (I have included the full article in a link below) discusses this process in more detail.

As I mentioned, this is not so easy to do though and it requires laying the groundwork in a comprehensive way. From this perspective, that groundwork comes back to pretty much the same method that we discuss all the time: we work with the body, breath and mind, the "Three Regulations" of qigong...

To read the full article please join our [membership program](#).

Transforming Fear Download

This article "Transforming Fear: Fear, Power and the Nature of the Kidneys" is one that I continue to get a lot of feedback on. I sent out an abbreviated version in the newsletter last November and have had the full version on the member's section of our website. As a seasonal gift to all of you I have a download of the full article here:

[Transforming Fear - the Full Article.](#)

Let me know what you think!

Baking Winter Squash

Winter Squashes are an excellent nourishing food for this time of year. People often are at a loss as to how they should prepare them. Of course, there are many options but the easiest way is to simply bake them. Start with a small or medium sized squash and place it on a baking sheet (you don't have to peel or otherwise prepare it). Warm the oven to 350 degrees, put the squash in and let it bake for 45 minutes or so. Carefully remove it, slice it open, and you are ready to eat a moist and delicious squash!

Bone Stock

This is the time of year for bone stock! Bone stock provides concentrated nourishment and is highly prized within traditional Chinese cuisine.

To make bone stock, start with 4 pounds of bones. Bake the bones in the oven at 350 for 20-30 minutes. Then put the bones in your stock pot, add 1 gallon of water and 4 tablespoons of rice vinegar and bring to a boil. Cover and turn down to a simmer for around 8 hours. Strain the bones and let the stock cool. Refrigerate what you will use within a week and freeze the rest. As it cools it is normal for it to solidify into gelatin. You can cook the bones (except if you are using pigs feet) at least twice. Each cooking will extract a different quality of nourishment from the bones.

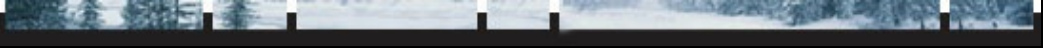
Try adding a little (a tablespoon or so) to whatever you are cooking to provide a concentrated tonic for the season.

For Members: Here is a full article on bone stock ["Nourishing Bones"](#)

As always, please feel free to contact me with any thoughts or questions.

Happy Holidays!

All my best,
Sean



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