



Acupuncture & Psychotherapy

Topic of the Month

In Chinese medicine, people are treated as a whole. The mind, body, spirit, emotions, behavior and the natural world are all related to each other. The Spirit or *Shen* refer to the mind or the psyche. Mental diseases and disorders of the body are therefore treated the same way. Acupuncture can thus be helpful in managing psycho-emotional disorders.

Acupuncture and psychotherapy take into account the complex relationship between the body and the mind. They recognize and explore the connection of somatic and psychological events. Events that occur within the body may result in mental and emotional symptoms; psychological events may have an effect on the body's physiology.

Treatment for depression varies widely. Psychotherapy is one treatment option promoted by Western psychology. It addresses primarily the mental activity and the psyche of the individual. Acupuncture, pursued in the Chinese medicine tradition, addresses the relationship of bodily events, which includes the mind, the body and the spirit of the individual.

The combination of psychotherapy and acupuncture as a mind-body therapy has proven to be an effective option for the treatment of depression. They both focus on the root source of the symptoms and are concerned with the inner state of suffering of the individual. Psychotherapy targets the emotional and behavioral

patterns beneath the symptoms and Chinese medicine targets the imbalance of the mind, body and spirit.

Research shows that the combination of acupuncture and the therapy work is more effective. The treatment balances and opens the person up. It also reduces stress, anxiety and insomnia. The ability to access feelings (such as anger, sadness, fear etc.) associated with the issue presented in therapy and the ability to resolve the issue presented in therapy is perceived to be quicker.

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