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Dear Friends,

I hope you are all enjoying this summer and that you keep exercise as part of your daily life. My children are home for the summer; it is good to have a noisy house again.

Here is a little insight in the Chinese philosophy of Yin and Yang whose symbol we have become quite familiar with. If you have any questions, give me a call.

Be well...

Isabelle

Yin and Yang

The Yin-Yang theory is based on the philosophical concept of **two polar complements**, called Yin and Yang. These complementary opposites are neither forces nor material entities. Rather, they are labels used to describe how things function in relation to each other and to the universe. They are used to explain the continuous process of natural change. In this system all things are seen as part of a whole. No entity can ever be isolated from its relationship to other entities; nothing can exist in and of itself. Yin and Yang must contain within themselves the possibility of opposition and change.

The character of Yin means the shady side of a slope. It is associated with qualities of cold, rest, responsiveness, passivity, darkness, interiority, downwardness, inwardness, and decrease.

Yang is the sunny side of a slope. It implies brightness, and is associated with heat, stimulation, movement, activity, excitement, vigor, light, interiority, upwardness, outwardness, and increase.

With these ideas, Chinese medical tradition has developed five principles of Yin and Yang:

All things have 2 aspects: a Yin aspect and a Yang aspect:

Time can be divided into night and day, place into earth and heaven, season into inactive periods (fall and winter) and active periods (spring and summer), species into female and male, temperature into cold and hot... Inside and outside, down and up,... These qualities are opposites, yet they describe relative aspect of the same phenomena. Yin and Yang qualities exist in relation to each other.



Yin Yang symbol

The circle represent the whole, and is divided into Yin (black) and Yang (white). The small circles illustrate that within Yin there is Yang and vice-versa. The curve indicates the Yin and Yang are continuously merging.

Any Yin or Yang aspect can be further divided into Yin and Yang:

This means that within each Yin and Yang category, another Yin Yang category can be seen: for example, temperature can be divided into cold (Yin) and hot (warm), but cold can be further divided into icy cold (Yin) and moderately cold (Yang).

Yin and Yang mutually create each other:

They depend on each other for definition. One could not speak of heights unless there were both tallness and shortness.

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Yin and Yang control each other:

If Yin is excessive, then Yang will be too weak, and vice-versa. If it is too cold, then there is not enough heat. Yin and Yang balance each other.

Yin and Yang transform into each other:

This constant subtle transformation is the source of all change. It is a give and take activity that is life itself.

HARMONY AND HEALTH ARE THE BALANCED INTERPLAY OF YIN AND YANG. In each person, there are signs that, when balanced, define health or beauty. If the signs are **out of balance, the person is ill.** The Chinese doctor will recognize disharmony, and use his skills to restore balance.

In the same way, when our bodies alert us by becoming ill, we can look at our life-style, and change the unbalanced patterns we have created for ourselves.

Some of the benefits of massage therapy

Nurturing is an incredible component to the foundation of the healing process, allowing yourself to surrender completely to the care of another person. That only happens during a massage.

- **The physical touch.** Everyone needs to be touched especially in our touch-deprived culture. It is effectual at the most basic hormonal, physiological and immune system level.

- **The specificity of the touch.** Releasing tension in the muscles, causing relaxation, doing trigger-point work etc. All this works well via massage therapy. A great release of tension in the muscle will heal deeper injuries.

- **The energetic side of touch.** When there is respectful intention to heal, some energy flow from the therapist to the one who receives the massage. There is change at the energetic level.

- **Another very important and overlooked aspect of massage therapy is that it creates self-awareness in the person receiving it:** many people do not like their bodies. Many people are not aware of their bodies, of what goes on inside their bodies. They cannot tell when they are tense, or when they are relaxed.

When touch is nurtured, it can be emotionally corrective in one's self-image and one learns to be aware of one's body and to pay attention to it. This is I think, the biggest gift that comes with touch.