On August 5, American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) professor Hong Chen was a guest speaker on the "Women Speak" program on radio station KFAI Radio. With program host Rhiana Yazzie, Dr. Chen presented a wide-ranging discussion on traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, and complementary medicine. Dr. Chen focused her discussion in particular on Chinese medicine applications to skin disorders and infertility. With a Master's degree in TCM Gynecology and a Ph.D. in TCM Dermatology, Dr. Chen has tremendous expertise in treating women's health problems and especially such complex skin conditions as psoriasis, acne, and eczema. Over the last two years, Dr. Chen has helped hundreds of patients with dermatological conditions at AAAOM's faculty clinic. She is not only a knowledgeable speaker on the radio, she is a resource for the entire community.

New Specialty Clinic Web Sites
With the increasing popularity of acupuncture and Chinese medicine in Minnesota, the American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, with its affiliated TCM Health Center clinics, has developed specialty expertise in Chinese medicine gynecology, dermatology, neurology, gastroenterology, and immunology. The immense body of knowledge and skills is the capital of the Academy and a huge resource for our students. Now this is more generally shared with patients and health consumers. AAAOM / TCM Health Center has developed Web sites for the following specialty clinics: AcupunctureForSkin.com for dermatology, ChineseMedicineForInfertility.com for infertility, AcupunctureForAllergy.com for allergies/sinusitis, AcupunctureForMS.com for multiple sclerosis, ChineseMedicineForPain.com for pain management, and StudentAcupunctureClinic.com the Academy's student clinic.

Earthquake Relief
On May 12, 2008, a catastrophic earthquake hit one of China's most populous regions, Sichuan Province. AAAOM faculty and staff shared in the grief of the earthquake victims, especially because AAAOM has six faculty members and employees who were either born in Sichuan or worked in Sichuan for many years. As quickly as possible, AAAOM's administration addressed a response to the relief effort. All TCM doctors and practitioners who work at AAAOM organized a special clinic day for treating patients. All the money received from patients that day was donated directly to the Sichuan Red Cross. In addition, AAAOM accepted donations from faculty members, staff, and clinic patients and included those donations in its relief contribution.
Dr. Changzhen Gong was invited by US-China Business Connections to present a talk entitled "Chinese Medicine: Business Opportunities." US-China Business Connections (UCBC) is a non-profit organization and a member of the Minnesota-China Partnership Alliance. UCBC provides an educational and networking forum for companies and individuals interested in developing business relationships between the US and China. UCBC consists of individual entrepreneurs, small and mid-sized businesses, and Fortune 500 companies who are currently doing business or seeking business opportunities in China. Dr. Gong's presentation included an overview of the present state of Chinese medicine in China and the United States, essentials of Chinese medicine, and business opportunities associated with trade, finance, investment, insurance, marketing, mergers and acquisitions, and related industries and public companies.

New Publications

The faculty and staff of the American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine have made another addition to the body of knowledge and skills of traditional Chinese medicine. Thirty-one volumes of classical formulas will be published by the China Medical Science and Technology Press. As gems of Chinese medicine, these classical formulas have demonstrated enormous therapeutic power for medical conditions in internal medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, dermatology, and geriatrics. They are time-tested prescriptions utilized by millions of doctors on billions of people over the last two thousand years. Each volume is an extensive study of particular formula. These thirty-one volumes include top formulas such as Shen Ling Bai Zhu San, Xiao Chau Hu Tang, Long Dan Xie Gan Tang, Yun Nan Bai Yao, Wen Dan Tang, and Dan Zhi Xiao Yao San. This is a big step of the Academy's effort to publish one hundred volumes on the applications of classical Chinese herbal formulas.

fMRI Research Updates

Applying the technological tool of functional MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) to observe cerebral activation or deactivation caused by acupuncture point stimulation is still the frontier area in acupuncture mechanism research. This powerful neuroimaging tool has identified activation and deactivation in the major structures of the central nervous system such as the cerebral cortices, diencephalon, cerebellum, limbic system, and the brain stem. AAAOM continues to be involved in the exciting aspect of medicine known as neuroacupuncture. To identify the specificity of acupuncture points is the central objective in this new application of technology. In a recent medical forum, Dr. Changzhen Gong reviewed several new studies and demonstrated to physicians that acupuncture point specificity exists as proven from three different angles. Dr. Gong showed that (1) acupuncture points located on different meridians have activated or deactivated different brain structures; (2) acupuncture points located on the same meridian have activated or deactivated different brain structures; and (3) acupuncture points located on the same dermatome have activated or deactivated different brain structures. This powerful demonstration of acupuncture’s ability to affect brain function has given many cardiologists, neurologists, gastroenterologists, and family practitioners a fresh look at acupuncture from the perspective of science-based medicine.

Exhibit on China’s Qinghai-Tibet Railroad

An exhibition featuring photos taken by Macalester College Associate Professor Wang Ping is now on display at AAAOM. Entitled All Roads to Lhasa, the subject matter covers Wang’s recent journey to the Tibetan Plateau along the newly built Qinghai-Tibet railroad. Hailed as a wonder of modern technology, it travels 960 km at 4,000 m above sea level, with its highest point at 5,072 m. It covers the longest stretch of any railway along permafrost (550 km) with the highest railway station at Tanggula pass (5,068 m), the highest tunnel through permafrost (Fenghuoshan at 4,905 m) and longest tunnel through permafrost (Kunlun Mountain, 1,686 m). The exhibit documents the economic, cultural and ecological impacts it has over the highest plateau on earth, an extremely fragile eco-system of glaciers and land that serves as the “water tower of Asia”. All Roads to Lhasa is a sequel to Wang’s 2007 debut exhibit, Behind the Gate: After the Flood of the Three Gorges Dam, that is also on display at AAAOM.

A Tibetan Buddhist walks in traditional prayer form, traveling hundreds of kilometers between the capital city of Lhasa and the outskirt town of Naqu.
American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

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It has been twenty-one years since I started learning traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture, and I have now worked as an acupuncturist for more than sixteen years. During my sixteen years of practice I have seen at least twenty patients a day, and they have presented a wide variety of health problems: asthma, cough, acid reflux, heartburn, stomach ache, bloating, IBS, dysmenorrhea, irregular periods, infertility, stroke, migraine, stiff neck, etc.

Among these countless cases, however, I still vividly remember my very first case, a patient with lower back pain. That was in 1992 when I lived in China. I had just graduated from Shangdong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and got a job working in one of the affiliated hospitals of the university. I was very young at that time and still looked more like a student than a doctor, so for the first few months I didn't have any patients of my own. I spent my days working with a senior doctor, assisting him in the inpatient acupuncture department.

Finally my chance came. One quiet afternoon, when I was writing up patient notes, a nurse came in and said an emergency case had just come in and the senior doctor didn't have time to see him right away. She asked me if I could treat the man immediately. I rushed out of the doctor's room onto the ward and saw four or five people bringing a man in on a stretcher. He had sprained his lower back at work and couldn't walk anymore. His pain was severe, because when the nurses tried to move him onto an exam table he could hardly bear it. He told me in a very low voice that about half an hour ago he had sneezed suddenly just as he was bending over to lift a box. At that moment he experienced a severe sharp pain in his back. After that he couldn't straighten his back anymore, and was unable to walk. I examined him quickly while he was telling me his history, and I found his whole back was in spasm, with the most sensitive areas being in his lower back. He could not move his back in any direction because of the pain.

I assessed this patient as an acute lower back pain case, caused by sprained muscles. In TCM terms, he suffered from local qi stagnation and blood stasis. Because the energy was blocked so suddenly, the patient experienced severe sharp pain. In cases like this, the pain becomes fixed if not treated immediately.

I kept twirling the needle in his hand and said, "You can try to bend your back now."

"Can I?" He tried, and he did it. He could bend his back without pain.

"Oh, doctor, how could you do this? This is magic, unbelievable," he cried. "See, I can walk now. Oh, only one needle, my pain is gone, you treated me."

This is the story, and isn't it miraculous? The patient could hardly believe what just happened, and I have to admit I could hardly believe it either. Of course, I knew from my acupuncture training that SI 3 is a confluent point, communicating with the Du channel which runs down the middle of the back. That is why SI 3 can be used for back problems, especially for acute sprained muscles. Although I had learned this, I had never applied it to a patient until that moment, and it was a huge success. In fact, it was a successful treatment in several ways. Not only did the patient benefit, but I instantly became "famous" for my one-needle emergency treatment. After that my patients believed in me, and to this day I can treat almost any kind of health problem with acupuncture.
Your Guide for a Healthy Winter Season

By Daiyi Tang, Ph.D., L.Ac.

Even though many of us don't like to think about it, winter is on its way. While Western culture often tries to bend nature to its will, Eastern philosophy recognizes that we must accommodate nature. The philosophy and practice of traditional Chinese medicine provide a useful approach.

First we need to recognize that winter is Yin in nature. It is a cold season associated with long nights and short days. Plants submerge their life essence into their roots, animals hibernate, and water hardens into ice. Humans should learn from animals and plants and imitate them. This is the time of year to slow down, replenish our energy and conserve our strength. Over the centuries, Chinese medicine practitioners have formulated a number of useful suggestions for "winter-proofing" ourselves. These ideas are so rooted in Chinese culture and philosophy that many of the suggestions in this article can be traced back to the ancient classic text called Huang di Nei Jing (The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine).

Sleep: The Huang di Nei Jing suggests that people go to bed early in the winter and rise late, after the sun's rays have warmed the atmosphere a bit. This is a way of conserving the body's Yang Qi (heat energy) so it is more available for warming up your body in the face of the cold season.

Self-moxabustion: Moxa is a Chinese herb which is burned directly on acupuncture points or is compressed into charcoal-like sticks which are set alight and held over acupuncture points. The effect of burning moxa over acupuncture points and meridians is to convey this warmth from the exterior of the body to the internal organs. Since the kidney is the organ associated with winter, it is especially important to warm the yang energy of the kidneys in winter. This can be accomplished by applying a moxabustion stick to the following acupuncture points: Zu San Li (ST 36), Tian Xi (KI 3), San Yin Jiao (SP 6), Qi Hai (CV 6), and Zhong Wan (CV 12). Treatments once a week during winter will prevent common colds, as well as mitigating body aches and arthritic symptoms. With a little practice, moxabustion is one of the best self-help methods in traditional Chinese medicine.

Herbs and Food: Drink lots of warming soup. The Huang di Nei Jing advises people to eat warming soups, whole grains, and roasted nuts to help warm the body. Hot soups are not only warming in themselves, they are an excellent way to incorporate medicinal foods and herbs into your diet. Garlic and ginger are two foods which are obviously warming, and many root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips and yams have a warm nature. For your salads, parsley and radish are warming. Two herbal formulas which have a warming effect are Yu Ping Feng San and Dang Gui Bu Xue Tang.

Qi Gong and Tai Chi: It is important to tonify our kidney qi and kidney yang in the winter. The ancient practices of Qi Gong and Tai Chi can serve a multitude of purposes - building strength and agility, improving coordination, increasing confidence, inducing meditative states, and promoting healing among others. One purpose especially useful in the winter is the ability of Qi Gong and Tai Chi to directly nourish and replenish kidney energy. Some Qi Gong movements designed to promote kidney energy are Yijing Jing, Ba Duanjing, Zhou Tian Gong, Interior Nourishing Qigong, and Taijing. The beauty and purpose of these sequences is to reinforce through our body's movements the fundamental principles of winter - rest, reflection, conservation and storage.

Relaxation: According to Chinese medicine theory, we are more prone to depression, stress and frustration in the winter. This is because the active principles of qi and yang have subsided into the body and are therefore not so available to actively help us shake off these negative feelings. One result of increased depression and stress can be that our Wei Qi (the qi that protects us against invasive pathogens) is reduced or depleted. Western medicine has also come to realize that stress can adversely affect the immune system. It is therefore especially important to employ relaxation techniques in the winter to reduce feelings of stress and depression. Yoga, meditation, and Qi Gong are time-honored methods for relaxation.

Wear Warm Clothing and Wash Your Hands: Generally, keep yourself warm and dry with appropriate clothing and footwear. Several layers of clothing keep more body heat in than one heavy coat. The most effective way to reduce your chance of catching colds is to wash your hands regularly.

In summary, your best bet in winter is to follow the example of animals and plants: get plenty of sleep, eat warming foods, stay warm, relax and slow down. Then your yang qi will be sheltered through the winter to rise up with increased vigor in the spring.
The Tongue - A Snapshot of Your Health

By Yubin Lu, TCMD, Ph.D., L.Ac.

Often, first-time acupuncture patients are surprised and embarrassed when they are requested to stick out their tongue for examination. Even when they are used to letting the practitioner examine their tongue, many patients are still hesitant and embarrassed because the practitioner has not explained well enough why this is a necessary part of the diagnostic process. Most Americans think of their tongue as having three primary functions - it aids speech, enables us to taste, and moves food around in the mouth. Many people brush their tongues regularly to remove or reduce the coating, which they think looks bad. Acupuncture patients are usually amazed to find out how important the appearance of the tongue is to Chinese medicine.

In Chinese medicine, cataloging the appearance and characteristics of the tongue evolved as a very important way to analyze the health status of the body. Without looking at the tongue, an acupuncturist may not be able to make a correct diagnosis and administer the best treatment for a patient’s condition. If everyone knew how close the connection is between our tongues and our health, people would not only be willing to show their tongues to an acupuncturist, many would probably make a point of examining their tongues in detail every morning as a barometer of their own internal processes.

When an acupuncturist observes your tongue, he is in fact observing a lot of things, but the essential aspects are the body of the tongue and the tongue coating. The tongue body is closely related to the internal state of the body, including the status of the essential substances required for the activities of the body such as qi, blood, body fluids, Shen, and Essence. This is because the tongue, like all the organs of our body, depends on nourishment from the Fundamental Substances and the five Zang organs to be healthy and functional. Thus, it can be used as an external indication of the internal functioning of the five Zang (yin) organs: the liver, lungs, heart, spleen, and kidney.

The tongue coating, which is a layer of membrane covering the surface of the tongue body, reflects aspects of the body that are more external, such as pathogens and the status of the six Fu (yang) organs: the stomach, gallbladder, large intestine, small intestine, urinary bladder, and Triple Jiao. In Chinese medicine theory, pathogens which invade the body are considered external in nature, and the Fu organs are more externally-oriented than the Zang/yin organs. The mechanism which produces tongue coatings is as follows: the stomach (a yang organ) heats the fluids it contains (yin substance), and the heated fluids steam upwards, depositing their residue on the tongue surface. Pathogens in the body will affect the appearance and nature of the yin fluids in characteristic ways, and this will result in differences in tongue coatings, depending on the prevalent pathogen.

Another way to look at the tongue is as a small version of the human body. From this perspective, the edges of the tongue are comparable to the surface of the body; the tip of the tongue is comparable to the upper part of the body; the central portion of the tongue is comparable to the middle torso of the body; and the root of the tongue is comparable to the lower part of the body. This is why it is possible to assess the condition and health of the internal organs based on the appearance of the tongue. The tongue tip reflects the state of the lung and heart in the thoracic cavity. The central section of the tongue reflects the middle-jiao organs of stomach, spleen, liver and gallbladder; and the tongue root shows the status of the kidney. Changes or anomalies on the tongue enable the practitioner to diagnose internal states, as well as demonstrating whether treatments are having the desired outcomes. The following are some examples of tongue appearance and how an acupuncturist "reads" them.

Generally, if your tongue looks uniformly red, it indicates that you have too much heat in your body. A pale tongue indicates a deficiency condition. A pale and puffy tongue with tooth marks along the edges often indicates spleen deficiency with some water retention or accumulation of dampness in the body. A person with a pale, puffy tongue may also have such deficiency-related symptoms as loose stools, fatigue, overweight, etc. When you are coming down with a cold or the flu, you may see a reddened tongue tip and red tongue edges, indicating a wind-heat pattern in the exterior or in the upper part of the body. However, a red tongue tip can also be present in a person who feels very anxious, restless, and suffers from insomnia. In this case there may be some red prickles on the tongue tip, which indicates heart fire in Chinese medicine. If the sides of the tongue are red, there may be liver or gallbladder heat or fire, which can be manifested also as insomnia, bitter taste in the mouth, red eyes, etc.
The condition of "yin deficiency" results in a tongue which looks thinner and smaller than normal. Blood and other body fluids are yin in nature and provide nourishment to the body. Yin deficiency causes yin fluid insufficiency, and this will result in a thin, small, "undernourished" tongue. In aged people, this is a commonly-seen tongue because their yin fluids have decreased naturally in accordance with the aging process. A tongue which is demonstrating a severe "excess" condition is generally red, swollen and painful. Such an "excess" tongue may suggest some toxic heat or fire in the body. Patients with acute poisoning, such as toxic chemical exposure, can present with this type of tongue.

Ideally, the tongue coating should be just a thin layer covering the surface of the tongue. If it gets so thick you cannot see the tongue body through the coating, it may suggest pathogenic factors in the body. For example, a thick, yellow, greasy tongue coating may indicate damp-heat or phlegm-heat in the body. Damp-heat is seen in patients with gastrointestinal infections, while phlegm-heat often occurs with lung infections, gallbladder disorders, etc. People with mental problems, such as schizophrenia, mania, depression or bi-polar disorders may also demonstrate a yellow, greasy tongue coating, but the coating generally looks dry and has a deep yellow color. In patients with hypothyroidism or other conditions marked by yang qi (heat energy) deficiency, the tongue body is pale and the tongue coating looks white and very moist or slippery. Pale color and moistness are yin in nature. A pale moist tongue indicates that the body is not producing enough yang qi to heat and energize the body properly. Cancer patients often have a dark red tongue with little or no coating at the advanced stages of the disease. Cancer is considered in TCM theory to be caused by toxic heat in the body. Toxic heat damages both qi and yin, and this is reflected in the appearance of the tongue.

I hope I have given you some idea of what is involved in Chinese tongue diagnosis. So when an acupuncturist says, "Please show me your tongue," you will be eager to find out what your tongue is silently telling him.

Intern Tips on Attracting and Retaining Patients

Show Them You Care by Candyce Clayton

Here are ten little ways to show your patients that you have their best interests at heart. These are easy and quick things to do, but they can build trust. When your patients trust you, they are more likely to comply with your instructions and return for treatments.

• Call: Call or leave a message for your patient when they've missed their appointment and let them know it's ok, and that you hope everything is all right. Offer another opening to them that same day or in the near future.
• Remember: Keep in mind things your patients tell you, such as their appointment for an x-ray, their child's birthday party, or their decision to start drinking green tea regularly. Everyone appreciates being considered as an individual, rather than just being a patient.
• Ear Beads: Patients love ear beads because they don't hurt and they work. It is a simple way to increase the effectiveness of the treatment you've just given them, and it helps them to feel cared for. Beads are also a good advertisement for TCM. Order your own supply to carry with you. Some types are better than others, and last a week even in the shower.
• Course of Treatment: With a new patient, tell them what the course of treatment is for their condition. Ask them if they are willing to commit a number of treatments in order to see results. Be sure they understand that it isn't a one-time-and-you're-cured process. If they can't make that long-term commitment, discuss what they are comfortable doing. That way you both have a clear understanding from the start, and put it in their chart for future reference. (continued on next page)
• Red Goes to the Heart, Blue to the Kidney: Tell your patients about Five Element Theory and TCM dietary therapy. It’s easy for them to remember the colors of the organ systems, and patients enjoy coming up with healthy foods for their most deficient organs. Tell them they can apply the theory to their family’s diets, as well.
• Hope: Tell your patients that acupuncture can help them to feel better in many ways, such as less pain, improved sleep, and less anxiety. Even if it won’t completely resolve their condition, many people who come for acupuncture come as a last resort when all else has failed to improve their health. When you tell a patient you can help them, they smile and relax, and so they are already starting to heal. TCM theory tells us that a soothed Liver and a calm Heart are important to the balance of Yin and Yang. Giving hope treats the Spirit.

Got Patients? by Kristi Berry

Getting patients can be a headache or it can be painless. I have experienced both situations. When I first started clinic, I remember sitting in the intern room thinking, "How am I ever going to get 300 patients?" Now looking back, I have realized what caused the headaches and what made it painless. As professionals, I believe we need to learn and help each other with these things. Building a successful practice is a challenge that we are all going to face at one time or another. So building up a patient base as interns is our training ground for building a successful practice outside of AAAOM.

Instead of completely depending on my own experiences, I thought it would be best to ask others how they got their patients. Some said they solely depended on the front desk to place patients with them, while others seemed to have connections through work outside of AAAOM. And yet others are still not sure just how to get patients. I also asked potential new patients what would entice them into coming to see an intern. When I mentioned that we were using coupons as an incentive for a first visit, they thought a coupon was a good idea but needed more information on what acupuncture could do for them. Another suggestion was to give educational demonstrations in the community. These are all good ideas, and here are a few of my own:

1. Keep a positive attitude and be passionate about what we do.
2. Make a list of all the people you know and contact them, letting them know what you are doing and be able to explain what it is. Ask for referrals, or if they themselves want to come in.
3. Figure out what your strengths are and figure out how to target that population.
4. For a sort of business card, take the Faculty/Student clinic business card and place an Avery return address sticker on the back with your name and email address. If you feel comfortable you can also put your phone number on it.
5. Be ready to talk about TCM with anyone and everyone you meet. Know what we can successfully treat. Find out what each individual's needs are (or what his/her friends' needs are) and find a way to connect with them.
6. Be prepared if you don't have a coupon on you, take down the potential patient's number and get a coupon to him/her.

These are just a few ideas, but remember to trust yourself and the gift you've been given.

Live Your Practice by Peng Her

For myself, the most effective way of getting patients to return is by "being accessible." Acupuncture is very new to many people. Therefore, we have to play a very active role in our patients' healing process. Many of them want to know what, where, how, when, and why. Giving them a way to contact you will build good rapport and give them confidence in your skills.

As acupuncturists, we all know that most conditions require more than one session, and that acupuncture also serves as preventive care. Making sure that our patients and potential patients understand this becomes an essential part of their wellness and of our ability to show them that this modality works.

Lastly, practicing what we preach inspires patients to follow us on our paths to natural health. If you're studying acupuncture and have never had a treatment... there's a problem. It contradicts our practice, because it would portray us as selling something that we don't believe in. If we are vibrant living examples of acupuncture, our patients will have faith in our work as healers.

The Student Clinics at our Roseville and Uptown locations are an inexpensive way to invest in your health. See the back page of this newsletter for more information and coupons.
I am excited to be organizing and conducting a clinical research project which documents the effects of acupuncture on perimenopausal symptoms. The six-month study began in September and will continue through March 2009. Perimenopause is interesting to treat because it affects each woman differently. I tailor each treatment to the patient's specific needs, so there is no repeating the same treatment. For example, some patients will have vasomotor problems like hot flashes, night sweating or insomnia, while others may have psychosomatic problems like depression, anxiety or irritability. Throughout the next six months, I am hoping to treat as many women as possible. I am excited that I have already recorded improvement in many participants after only three weeks, and I am looking forward to seeing the final results once the study is complete.

If you or someone you know is bothered by any of the symptoms listed below, please consider coming to the AAAOM clinic and enrolling in my research study. Participants must be between 40–65 years old, and must also commit to having one or two acupuncture treatments per week for 12 weeks. You will be charged a reduced clinic fee of $40 per treatment. The following common symptoms of perimenopause are very responsive to acupuncture treatment:

- Hot Flashes
- Night Sweats or Sweating
- Insomnia
- Heart Palpitations or Tachycardia
- Vertigo or Dizziness
- Nervousness and Anxiety
- Melancholy or Depression
- Heavy or Prolonged Periods
- Irregular Periods or Cessation of Periods
- Vaginal Irregularities, Dryness, etc.
- Headaches
- Fatigue and Weakness
- Tingling or Prickling Sensations
- Joint Pain / Arthralgia

For those interested in why I am doing this study, it is to complete my Ph.D. degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. The research data will be the basis of my dissertation on the effectiveness of acupuncture on the symptoms that accompany the perimenopausal stage in a woman’s life. Between 2006 and 2008, I moved to China with my family to pursue a doctoral degree. When my clinical research study and assessment of data are complete, I will travel back to China in June 2009 to defend my dissertation and receive my Ph.D.
Faculty Spotlight: Brian Grosam L.Ac., Dipl. OM

By Leila Nielsen

A 2006 graduate of AAAOM, Brian Grosam spent two years with his family in China at Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine working on a Ph.D. degree in Chinese medicine. This fall, Brian returned to his alma mater to become our newest instructor and clinic practitioner.

L.N.: What brought you into Chinese medicine?

B.G.: Initially I was thinking about making a career change into teaching because I wanted to help people. Then my wife, Pam, who is a tuina practitioner, heard about AAAOM and thought it would be a great idea if I became an acupuncturist so we could set up a practice together. As soon as I entered the school and met Dr. Gong, I felt like I was being welcomed home and directed onto my best path. I began studies in the fall of 2001, and soon after that Dr. Gong suggested I continue my studies in China after graduating from AAAOM. That idea really appealed to me, so my Master’s and Ph.D. studies fell into place almost from the first day.

L.N.: So when you graduated in early 2006 and were ready to go to China, it wasn’t a big surprise to your family. They had four years to get used to the idea.

B.G.: Well, even so, it seemed as though we were on the fence until the last minute. I knew I had to go, but there were a lot of obstacles. Sometimes finances were a problem, and sometimes we couldn’t see how to accommodate our two young sons, Maxwell and Jaxon, for an extensive stay in a foreign country. The last two months before we left for China were pretty surreal. We were all in shock mode and were having trouble verbalizing our feelings about the situation. I graduated in January, 2006. Within two months I quit my job, Pam closed her practice, we sold our house and cars, gave our dogs away, and took off for China in March. Getting on that plane was the most dream-like state I’ve ever been in. The "I can’t believe I’m really here" feeling lasted for several months, but we finally settled into daily life as we came to know it.

L.N.: What sorts of routines did you and your family need to establish?

B.G.: My sons had to continue their education, of course. We were going to enroll them in a “bilingual” school, but that turned out to be a mostly-Chinese school, so Pam homeschooled them, plus they had Chinese-language lessons Monday through Friday. It took them a while to make friends with local children, because Chinese children are in school all day, study all evening, and take extra classes in everything on weekends. But they took tae kwon do lessons six days a week and made friends there.

We also made friends with a lot of families in our housing complex through the English-language classes Pam taught. Our apartment complex included eight six-story buildings. Pam distributed flyers for English lessons, and after a few months she was turning people away. She had two classes for 5-6 year-olds where she used Dr. Seuss books that were printed in both English and Chinese. The classes for junior high and high school students were mostly conversational, but they also read and reported on English novels.

For the first six months we were in China, I did intensive Chinese-language training eight hours a day, five days a week. This is what I would call “survival” Chinese, so I could converse, read, and navigate around town. In September, I began attending classes at Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and doing rotations at the affiliated Shandong First Teaching Hospital. At that point I began to pick up medical Chinese. Every day I tried to ask a new question and learn a new phrase in medical Chinese. Oddly enough, it was not TCM language that was hard to learn, because I was already familiar with TCM vocabulary from AAAOM; it was learning Western medicine terms in Chinese that was challenging. I spent the remaining 18 months of our stay pursuing my Ph.D. studies by attending classes, doing rounds in the hospital, and working in the hospital clinic. When we finally got home again, it was like culture shock in reverse.

L.N.: What is the subject of your dissertation?

B.G.: My clinical research study is on the effects of acupuncture in the treatment of peri-menopausal symptoms. I am seeing patients three days a week to gather data. The study will last for six months, and each patient needs to commit to a twelve-treatment course.

L.N.: How do you like teaching and supervising?

B.G.: I find it exhilarating to be able to share my knowledge and experience with students. Before I began going to AAAOM I had wanted to be a teacher, and now I can be a teacher as well as a Chinese medicine practitioner. Even though Pam and I still have plans to start our own clinic someday, I feel like I always want to be part of AAAOM. I really enjoy the hands-on aspect of supervising interns in the student clinic. One of the things I think is really important is to reference where our knowledge comes from. I always make a point of acknowledging where an idea or a technique came from and crediting the teachers I had.
Hot and sour soup, or Suan La Tang, is a popular item on the menu of Chinese restaurants in America. Most Americans eat it for pleasure or as part of the experience of Chinese cuisine. In Chinese medicine, however, it is considered a therapeutic food. Hot and Sour soup is used to treat wind cold, internal cold pain (such as stomach pain due to cold), cold limbs, or general body cold.

**Ingredients:**
(Note: 15 grams = approximately 1/2 ounce)
- Egg one egg
- Tofu 15 grams
- Chicken, cooked 15 grams
- Pork, cooked 15 grams
- Mushroom 15 grams
- Sea cucumber 15 grams
- Squid 15 grams
- Corn starch 25 grams
- Green onion 5 grams
- Soy sauce 10 grams
- Black pepper 1 gram
- Vinegar 6 grams
- Salt 5 grams
- Chicken/beef broth 3 cups / 750 ml

**Preparation:**
1. Cut tofu, mushrooms, sea cucumber and squid into strips and combine with diced, cooked pork and chicken meat in a pot. Add broth, salt and soy sauce and bring to a boil.
2. Add cornstarch and stir into soup until thickened.
3. Whisk the egg and add to soup.
4. Combine the black pepper, vinegar, and green onion in a separate bowl and add to soup. Let the black pepper mixture cook for 10 seconds and then remove soup from heat.
5. Serve immediately.

The ratio of black pepper to vinegar to salt is 1:6:5. It is very important that the black pepper is added to the soup at the very end of the process, after everything is cooked.

**Comments:**
The TCM function of Hot and Sour soup is to warm yang, tonify qi, dispel wind, and stop pain. The principal medicinal ingredient is black pepper. As an herb, black pepper dispels wind cold and stops stomach pain due to internal cold. The nature of black pepper is warm and pungent, so it can induce sweating and increase internal heat. If you catch a cold, have sore muscles, heaviness, or a mild fever due to wind cold invasion, you can use hot and sour soup as dietary therapy. Drinking one bowl of this soup close to bedtime will induce mild sweating throughout the night, and your cold should be gone by the next day. Hot and sour soup can also help if you experience stomach cold pain or cold limb syndrome during the summer.
AAAOM Open Houses
Open Houses for prospective students will be held on November 9th and 16th from 2-5 p.m. Read more on page 3, and call 651-631-0204 with any questions and to RSVP. We hope to see you there!

First Day of Winter Trimester
The first day of classes for 2009’s Winter Trimester will be Monday, January 5. Applications are now being accepted and prospective students are encouraged to register early.
For application information, please call 651-631-0204.

Tai Chi and Healing Qigong Classes
AAAOM offers ongoing 10-week Healing Qigong classes on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. beginning January 10 and 12-week Tai Chi classes on Wednesdays from 6 to 8:30 p.m. beginning January 7.
For class and registration information, please call 651-631-0204.

AAAOM is dedicated to integrating the best of traditional and contemporary medicine, offering a comprehensive master's degree education in the theory and clinical application of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Our curriculum includes acupuncture, herbal medicine, medical Tui Na, dietary therapy, and Tai Chi / Qi Gong, as well as instruction in fundamental scientific concepts and biomedicine. AAAOM is committed to training TCM health professionals for a career of lifelong learning and professional development to advance traditional Chinese medicine in the twenty-first century.

Student Intern Half-Price Coupon
The Student Clinics at our AAAOM Roseville and Uptown locations are an inexpensive way to invest in your health. Supervised by our faculty, you will receive high-quality treatment from 3rd- and 4th-year student interns. In return, you will assist students in gaining valuable first-hand clinical experience. Treatments may include acupuncture, herbal medicine, Tuina massage, dietary recommendations, and even Qi Gong. Faculty members carefully advise and review all patient diagnoses, prescriptions, and follow-up visits to ensure the most effective treatments.

Treatments from student interns are generally $30 per session, but coupons are available here for either the Roseville or Uptown locations to print out and bring along with you for a $15 treatment.

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Half Off – $15 – Acupuncture Treatment
Bearer is entitled to an introductory Acupuncture treatment from a Faculty-supervised student intern.
First Treatment $15 (regular fee $30)
American Academy of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine
1925 West County Road B2; Roseville, MN 55113
(1 block west of Fairview and Co. Rd. B2 intersection)
 *** Call 651-631-0204 for an Appointment ***
Online Referral

Half Off – $15 – Acupuncture Treatment
Bearer is entitled to an introductory acupuncture treatment from a faculty-supervised student intern.
First Treatment $15 (regular fee $30)
TCM Health Center - Uptown/Kenwood
2930 Emerson Avenue South, Suite B
Minneapolis, MN 55408
(3 blocks east of Hennepin between Lake & Lagoon)
*** Call 612-823-6650 for an Appointment ***
Online Referral