

The Clinical Encounter with Children and Parents

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20.01.2023



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Ethics

Every relationship is an exchange of qi

The quality of the doctor's qi influences all aspects of the therapeutic encounter

integrity (respect, discretion, honesty and reliability)

listening, accepting, abstaining

empathy

Extraordinary individuals - *sheng* 圣 ('holy, saintly')

Doctors are expected to be *junzi* 君子

Qualities: *zhen* 真 ('true'), *jing* 精 ('essential') and *cheng* 誠 ('authentic, sincere')

“He who is not essentially sincere is unable to touch others. He who forces himself to cry, even if sad, does not evoke pity; he who forces himself to display anger, even if severe, does not produce fear; he who forces himself to be affectionate, even if he smiles, does not create harmony. True sadness awakens pity without even a lament, true anger, even without signs of it, produces fear, true affection creates harmony even without smiles.” *Zhuangzi*, ch. 31

“The thread that ties everything together is given by *shu* 恕 and *zhong* 忠”
Confucian Dialogues (*Lunyu*, IV, 15)

shu 恕 ('benevolence, humanity, feeling similar, closeness')
zhong 忠 ('respect, integrity, rectitude')

Both terms have *xin* 心 ('heart') as their radical

shu 恕 contains *ru* 如 ('similar')
zhong 忠 contains *zhong* 中 ('centre')

Take care of our patients with heart, humanity and rectitude.

“One who is *zhong* and *shu* will never stray from the Way.” Zhongyong 中庸

Therapeutic alliance

Treatment of the child also passes through the parents.

Exchange between their *qi* and the *qi* that surrounds them.

The child's *qi* is still closely connected to the parent's *qi*, especially the mother's.

We co-work with our patient; intention is needed from both sides for their healing.

“It is useless to talk of the power of medicine to those who believe in ghosts and demons. It is useless to speak of needles with words of praise to those who detest them. It is useless to impose a treatment on one who does not wish to be cured, he will not heal despite all the efforts of the doctor.” *Suwen*, ch.11

Communication

Verbal and non-verbal elements

Symmetrical or complementary

Start from listening

Keep quiet, receptive, accepting, soft, yin

Patients find their own way of telling their story

+ feel listened

+ helps their words to find a space within us.

On the use of Chinese medicine language

THE TREATMENT FRAME

An acupuncture session has a different quality and density to normal life.
It is a separate space.

“When he needles, the doctor has to be in a state of deep calm, has to come and go only together with *shen*, act as though he had doors and windows shut, *hun* and *po* are not dispersed, *yi* and *shen* are concentrated, *jing* and *qi* are not divided, the voices of the people around him are not heard, so that *jing* is collected, *shen* is united, and *zhi* is concentrated on the needle.” *Lingshu*, chapter 9.

The space-time frame includes both the mental attitude of the practitioner and its material expressions.

Time

Space

Compensation and cancellations

THE CLINICAL ENCOUNTER

The “qi space”

“Bubble”

Separation

Empathy

‘the ability to understand, feel and share thoughts and emotions of another in a given situation’.

“Always, from my youth to old age, when I see sick people I calm the qi, contain the heart, share the breath and start to transform my body into that of the patient.” Yu Chang, *Yi Men Fa Lu*

We care for the patient. ‘To care’ from Latin *cura* (‘concern, interest’).
patience, resilience, kindness, concern, acceptance

What about ‘feeling similar to’ arrogant, aggressive, selfish patients?

We have limits

The art of being close to those who suffer may have to be learned, and can be learned.

Emptiness and *wuwei* 无为

Non- judging position, receptive-listening yin attitude

‘Thirty spokes converge in a hub, thanks to its emptiness we have the usefulness of the wagon. We model the clay to make a vase, thanks to its emptiness we have the usefulness of the vase. We cut doors and windows to make a house, thanks to its emptiness we have the usefulness of a house.’ Daodejing

“The heart is calm on the inside, the eyes are limpid, the ears clear, the four limbs are stable and strong, then *jing* has a residence. [...] *Shen* in man comes and goes, no one can imagine it; if one loses it there is disorder, if one grasps it there is order. Caring for the residence with attention causes the *jing* to arrive. [. . .] Worry or sadness, euphoria or anger, the *dao* has nowhere to reside, one must tranquillise love and desire, rectify recklessness and disorder. Do not pull or push, good luck comes by itself, the *dao* comes by itself, to favour and direct. In stillness, one can grasp it, in agitation, one loses it, the *shen* of the heart comes and goes, so small that it has nothing smaller inside, so big that there is nothing bigger outside of it. Stricken by nervousness we lose it; if the heart is calm, there is *dao*”. *Guanzi*, Chapter 2

“What we intend when we say that yang is movement while *yin* is stillness is that if form and *shen* are exhausted then there is agitation and lack of stillness, whereas with stillness there is pureness and tranquillity. Therefore the superior good is like water, while the inferior stupidity is like fire.” Liu Wansu, 1182

Yin attitude in the relationship with parents

“Intolerable” parent: stop, take a slow breath, stay there, in that ugly place.

Enter into contact with what there is, and it may well be that we don’t like what there is.

take reality into consideration, and the resources available.

Feeling insulted by their scant regard.

It may be not so much an attack on me but rather an expression of their uneasiness.

Uncertainty/aggressiveness as anxiety, fear and disillusionment.

Children and needles

Acupuncture with children is easier than with adults (easier diagnosis + spring/pure-qi)
No pain: Acupuncture point *xue* 穴, a passage through which qi arrives.

Flexibility

- .number of needles,
- .location,
- .degree of stimulation,
- .length of time,
- .child's position

Child touching the needles.

Create a separate space, with its own intensity, the uniqueness of the event.

Respect - ask for permission.

Fear and terror.

Child's attitude: possible sign for diagnosis

Recognize when qi arrives, how it arrives and where it goes.

Ask the parents' permission. If unsure, we do not insist.

We can start with tuina and generally later a space for acupuncture opens up.