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DARKNESS AND LIGHT

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IJHC Editor

Introduction

In the middle of winter, with the darkness of night longer than the light of day, our inner selves mirror the world outside and we are given to brooding over dark and sometimes negative thoughts.

While most of us are not happy when dark clouds of negative thoughts and moods cross – or even cover completely – the skies of our awareness, and some become downright cross or even seriously depressed, with a shift in focus the darkness can often be experienced as the good teacher it is, because darkness is necessary in order for us to appreciate light.

Figure 1



This discussion will explore some of the balances in our lives that exemplify the contrasts of light and darkness, suggesting lessons we may learn from these apparent polarities.

The yin and yang touch upon surface awareness and reach into deeper levels of shadow (those parts of ourselves which we hide from the light of our conscious awareness) and into our collective consciousness.

The pairing and contrasting of the polarities of darkness and light has been a major theme in Chinese awareness, as illustrated by the classical symbol of yin and yang – which will be a focus for this discussion.

Yin – yang contrasts can be identified in every aspect of our lives. Within the cosmology of Chinese medicine and acupuncture, *Yin* and *yang* are polar opposites that must be balanced in order for life to proceed in harmony. The term *yin* denotes the shady side of the slope and may be associated with qualities of femininity, openness, passivity, receptivity, introversion, diminution, repose, weakness and coolness. *Yang* is the sunny side of the slope and may be associated with the sun, masculinity, strength, brightness, assertiveness, movement, extroversion, growth and excitation.

In the body, the front is yin relative to the back; the upper portions of the body are yang relative to the lower parts; the inner organs are more yin than the outer aspects such as hair and skin. In matters of health, yang disorders are characterized by fever, hyperactivity, heat and strong movements; yin illnesses include weakness, slowing down, feeling cold and lethargy.

Yin and yang complement each other. If yin is excessive, then yang will be too weak, and conversely.

In Chinese cosmology, causality is unimportant. It is the *pattern* of relationships which defines reality and any part of reality is relative to the context which is under consideration.

I came to this discussion through the invitation of a friend and colleague to discuss at a conference the masculine within the feminine. In preparing for this presentation, I searched for a yin-yang symbol to illustrate my lecture, and was led to a world of discovery about darkness and light through the

variations on the theme of the circle of yin and yang. I share parts of that ever-growing awareness here.

The balance of polar opposites in our awareness

Without darkness, we would not understand or appreciate light.

I lived in Los Angeles during the years of my high school, university and medical school education. I truly enjoyed the balmy weather, being able to bicycle and play tennis most days of the year (when smog was not at levels that were dangerous to my health). Four days after I moved to Kansas City for my internship, we had a sudden thunderstorm in the late afternoon. The skies were rapidly covered with clouds, which became dark to the point of forcing me to turn on the lights to see enough to read a patient's chart, even standing by the window of her room where I was doing the admission history and physical examination. Then came the rumble of distant thunder, soon followed by flashes of lighting and then deafening claps of thunder. The skies opened up and the heavens poured water on the pavement and buildings outside our windows.

I found the thunderstorm exhilarating. I was born in New York City, and had known this sort of weather years earlier – but had totally forgotten its majestic reminder of the mighty forces of nature on our planet, and the challenges that modern science and engineering have overcome so successfully.

The storm passed in less than an hour, the clouds parted and started to dissipate, just in time to catch the rays of the setting sun, which turned them into magnificent Rorschach shapes tinged with oranges and yellows, then reds and purples, and finally shading into the darkness of evening and night.

While I sometimes still miss the opportunity to pursue my outdoors hobbies that Southern California weather permitted more regularly, I find I prefer the changing seasons. They help to remind me of being alive, to appreciate the contrasts that are the human condition.

I realized that without darkness, I would not understand or appreciate light. In being limited at times by the weather from riding my bicycle, I appreciate much more those times when I can pedal to the market rather than driving my car.

The yin and yang are as essential in our inner, metaphoric world to appreciation of our being alive as they are in the world outside. Without disappointments, we wouldn't appreciate the blessings in our lives; without failures we wouldn't celebrate our successes nearly as joyously; without sadness and depression, our happiness would be flat and without the thankfulness for its blessings; without illness and pain, we would not appreciate health and the freedom from pain.

A lot of our happiness is tied to linear expectations:

- If I behave well, my parents will accept and love me.
- If I live a clean life, I'll avoid illness.
- If I work hard (at school; tending my home and children; in my employment) I will reap my just rewards.
- If I bring home the pay check, I've done my duty to my family and have earned the right to sit in front of the TV when I return from work.
- If I remain in my work position, I'll be able to retire with a secure pension assured.
- If I drive carefully, I'll never have an accident.

Accepting that a negative experience is a helpful, perhaps even an occasionally necessary part of our human condition can lessen our frustration with the negative.

A poor farmer in China had only one horse, which was the mainstay of his farm – essential in hauling loads, providing transportation and plowing. When the horse ran away, his neighbors commiserated with him over his bad luck. He replied enigmatically, “Maybe so, maybe not.”

A few days later, the horse returned, at the head of a band of wild horses. His neighbors congratulated the farmer on his unusual good luck. “Maybe so, maybe not.” was his reply.

His eldest son took it upon himself to tame one of the wild horses, but was thrown and badly fractured his leg. His neighbors again commiserated with him over his bad luck. He replied, as before, “Maybe so, maybe not.”

The local warlord, threatened with attack, sent his soldiers around to conscript every able-bodied young man. The farmer’s son was spared, due to his broken leg. His neighbors again marveled at his good luck. As always, the farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not...”

This is not to say that we should be passive and not do our best to actualize our lives, to maintain and build our interpersonal relationships; to secure our current and future livelihood; and to persevere in peeling the never-ending onion of psychological and spiritual awareness which is one of the greatest challenges of our existence. It is to suggest that our attitude towards all that we do can make our lives, and those of others with whom we interact, much more pleasant, rewarding and growth-promoting.

Right and wrong

Those who devise and administer systems of justice tend also to view the world in black and white, either/ or terms. A person is right or wrong, innocent or guilty.

I’ve testified a number of times in courts regarding the psychiatric condition of people who had been charged with various breaches of the law. I was asked, “Is this person able to tell right from wrong?” and “Was this person able to know right from wrong at the time s/he broke the law?” The first is always easier to answer than the second. The courts were not happy when, on occasions, I indicated the answer was in the gray zone of maybes rather than in either black or white, guilty or innocent zones of knowingly or unknowingly having committing the crime.

In interpersonal relationships, particularly when we disagree with someone, we often feel we are right and they are wrong. If we feel strongly about it, we may extend this to feeling we are *all* right and they are *all* wrong. In racial stereotyping, people tend to do the same.

In our national policies there are many who judge people as being on our side or against us; friend or foe; good or bad – international variations on the theme of black and white. In times of war, or when pursuing imperialist goals, it is handy to vilify the enemy or those we seek to exploit

We tend to vilify others as bad (painting them all black) and paint ourselves as good (coloring ourselves, perhaps *whitewashing* is a better term, pure white). In this way, the yin and yang could be misleading, promoting separation and divisiveness. In the west, we suggest that the world is, by far, more a place of shades of gray, rather being divided into blacks and whites.

The yin-yang symbol is often drawn with a dot of the opposite color in each of its polarities. This serves to remind us that we hold contrasts of opposites within each polarity – as with joy within sorrow and sorrow within joy; the light of day being brighter for its contrast with the darkness of night that precedes and follows it. Nothing is all black or all white. Even evil, which I believe exists as an actual force in the world, carries within it at least contrasting point of good – in addition to its contrasting with good outside of itself. For evil is often born out of deep hurts – out of disappointment in not having experienced good.

Figure 2



Most discussions about yin and yang stop here – with just the mention of elements of yin within yang and yang within yin. In exploring these images, however, I realized that darkness and light have more complex relationships.

Figure 3



Within our conventions of writing in black ink on white paper, it is in fact impossible to depict the wholeness of an entity that is made of black and white without using black to define its contour. Without the contrasting black border, the white loses its boundary.

It is the same within each of us in metaphoric terms. Our light will not have a shape without darkness to define it – not just to contrast with it. It is not just that the masculine is known in its dissimilarity with the feminine, nor with the reminder of the black dot representing masculinity in the white yin. Masculinity needs to interact with femininity in order to have its essence defined and expressed.

The same is equally true if we reverse the colors. The darkness loses its shape when not bounded by light.

I see this often in my practice of psychiatric psychotherapy, particularly with children and families. If not given the light of their parents' living examples to follow – in developing their relationships with the other people and with the community at large – children's darkness tends to be without boundaries. They misbehave and push the limits of behavior until other, outside authorities help them find the boundaries to their shadow selves. As adults, it is also helpful to have reminders from the light, to help us contain our shadow impulses

The mirror problem can occur with the light. When people do not acknowledge the darkness within themselves, they can also get in trouble. I have seen people who feel that their lives must be pure light, and that any darkness must be denied its expression. Yes, we ought not to act out of darkness – from places of anger, fear, hurt, hatred or their kindred negativities. But we all have some of these feelings within us, from the inevitable disappointments and injuries we sustain in our interactions with others. If we simply deny them and cover them up, they fester and seek expression outside of our conscious awareness – through the shadow sides of our personality.

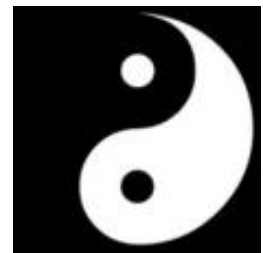
I see this in children bullying weaker peers in schools and on the streets. The hurts within the bullies have not found their expression in words, nor their release in acceptable feelings. So they vent their hurts on others. If people do not learn to express their feelings in appropriate ways, particularly their hurts and angers, they grow up with habits of blaming others for their hurts. This blaming justifies (in their minds) attacking "others" whom they identify as unworthy of their compassion and understanding. This is the way we behave when we do not acknowledge the darkness within ourselves.

In families, societies and nations, such behaviors become institutionalized. The collective angers are then vented on "others" who are different in cultural or religious beliefs and practices.

Rocks have been thrown by Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem on the Sabbath, in protest of non-observant Jews driving through Orthodox neighborhoods. In one case a driver was killed – in the name of defending the light of God's words, as interpreted by the Orthodox. Blacks and Native Americans have been murdered by whites, Hindus by Muslims, Palestinians by Jews and Jews by Palestinians.

Much of this negativity comes from responding to others from our heads rather than from our hearts. Examining our shadow only from the perspective of logic and reason leads to intellectual understandings, but may leave us still driven by the darkness of buried feelings we have not

Figure 4



cleared. The heart is a much better channel for appreciating contrasts of light and dark – both within and around ourselves.

Western society has invested so heavily in developing the head (to the exclusion of the heart) that we may not be moved to recognize the darkness within us, much less to deal with it. Our schools develop and hone our thinking, our personal goals are often focused on material gains and power. We set our sights on targets (note the military terms) on achieving successes in school and work, often pushing ourselves and sacrificing our emotional life to attain these.

In the process, we lose touch with our feelings – to the point that these denied aspects of ourselves get buried deep in the shadow within ourselves. We then live lives of form without feelings. In this context, great darkness can result in our lives and in the greater world around us.

Yin and yang, light and darkness in modern incarnations

An appreciation of polarities is as relevant today as it was in the dawn of history when the yin and yang were codified in Chinese traditions. I find it both refreshing and instructive to examine today's transformations of this ancient symbol. I find that the healing and CAM community in particular has been resonating with the yin and yang, as the wave of spiritual awareness swells.

The wider world that is now so easy to reach through the internet and media is also opening to these awarenesses. Google has brought me worlds of information and images to illustrate many of these and other items of interest in my writings and public presentations.

Figure 5



The yin and yang symbol has been used often to promote martial arts practices, as in the example at the left. This illustrates the yin of attack and the yang of defense and acknowledges the eastern origins of martial arts.

It ignores the inner contrasts of yin and yang. The white dot within the darkness is depicted as a fist. This would indicate that either the light in this darkness image is a negative light (a contradiction in terms) or that the darkness has transformed the light into negativity. However, within the martial arts community, a good, strong fist is a positive – so in that sense the symbol is congruent with light. The dark spot within the light is an open hand in black, which is not a characterization of darkness.

Globalization of imagery brings about fascinating variations on this theme.

The image at the right was developed by Harry Reid for the Libertarian Party at its National Convention in Chicago in 1991. It “symbolizes a positive attitude towards peace and money instead of a negative attitude toward government.”

The peace sign highlights that Libertarians advocate for acceptance of social diversity and oppose wars and that their methods are nonviolent.

The dollar sign (following the imagery of Ayn Rand) symbolizes a free market, advocating for “having money, making money, caring about money.”

I quote from Reid’s website:

“The yin-yang symbolizes a duality where two concepts or aspects each support and enable the other to exist as in night & day, black & white, male & female, etc. Libertarian duality has been expressed in many ways: left & right, peace & prosperity, harmony & abundance, liberal & conservative, free minds & free markets, toleration & responsibility, personal freedom & economic freedom, freedom of expression & freedom of enterprise, etc.

Figure 6



Both are necessary for either to exist. Harmony and scarcity are exclusive, so are abundance and conflict. Where there is no peace, there is no prosperity; where there is no prosperity, there is no peace. The symbol joining the peace sign and the dollar sign shows this duality.

... The peace sign, the dollar sign, the yin-yang, all represent general ideas, not specific groups. The libertarian duality symbol stands for an idea, not a group.”

While this emblem brings out the harmony of the yin and yang, it ignores the polarities inherent in its symbolism. The pairs cited by Reid (starting with left and right and continuing to the end of his list, are not mirror opposites.

In contrast with the last two, the next modernization of the yin and yang symbol preserves its fuller meanings.

If we do the inner work of exploring our shadow, at the same time honing our being so that the light can come through more easily and clearly, we are addressing the shadow and light in ways that are growth-promoting.

The images at the right speak of these practices.

In the light - Qigong and T'ai Chi Ch'uan exercises tone the body and at the same time are meditations that open into spiritual awareness. (These practices are peaceful transformations of martial arts.)

In the darkness: Meditation on the light that is within the darkness; examining the shadow within ourselves.

Another modern application of yin and yang: This and related images are available on T-shirts.

Relationships

It is through our close relationships that we come into awareness of our contrasts with another being of light and darkness.

Each of us has an automatic pilot for screening and interpreting our perceptions and for smoothing and integrating our behaviors. When we come into a close relationship with another person – who has his or her own set of programs for perceptions and behaviors – we have the challenging work of blending the two sets of programs so that the relationship can work harmoniously.

A relationship forces us to re-assess many of our basic assumptions, as these come into focus through the negotiations for setting up the combined rules for navigating through life. When the two parties are from similar backgrounds and have similar personalities, the negotiations are easier. The sparks can really fly, however,

A good relationship will bring out both the light and the darkness in both parties, so that they can be perceived more readily and cleared. There is great comfort in having another person who explores these dimensions with us.

Figure 9

Close relationships also bring out the worst in us and help us to acknowledge this darkness and deal with it. The challenge is to hold onto the awareness of the positive within the negative, when the darkness of our shadow is expressing itself. Where a couple can do this, then the inevitable arguments that come within most relationships end up being *good* arguments. That is, even though the disagreements may be marked by frustrations, angers and arguments, the process of expressing our strong feelings in the relationship – which continues despite the outbursts that punctuate its growth and evolution

Figure 7



Figure 8





– brings about an acceptance that the negative can be processed and transformed.

Moving beyond the sorting out of individual relationships, we have the challenges of bridging much greater differences between cultures.

Figure 10



The yin-yang symbols transformed into dark and light colored hands speak of bridging cultural differences – which often polarize and can lead to conflicts, but which can equally stimulate awarenesses of cultural shadow and lead to great inner healings – just a marriages of individuals do.

With just minor modifications, Figures 9 and 10 could represent birds' wings as well, and the eyes could round out the polarities within the opposites.

Figure 11



Perspectives and interpretations of yin and yang are as varied as human imagination.

Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Thinking outside the box

Figure 15



Most yin-yang images are two-dimensional and follow the initial yin-yang circle pattern. These yin-yang images challenge us to begin to think outside the box – or, more accurately, outside the plane of two dimensions, beyond the creations of man – outside the circle of our limitations, whether they be limitations of beliefs, habits or conventional practices.

The image at the right is a computer fractal image created on a computer by a mathematical formula.

Figure 16



While this fanciful snake has no obvious symbolism as depicted, the snake has been used as an image of kundalini energies rising up the spine, which is associated in many cases with spiritual awakenings. The caduceus symbol from the mythological staff of the god Mercury has two entwined snakes. This has been adopted in modern times as a symbol for the medical profession.

Paired fish, one light and the other dark colored, are sometimes used instead of the classical yin-yang symbol. Figure 17 is the most elaborate

Figure 17

example of this variation that I've found.

I like this symbolism, as it takes the yin and yang from the abstract and purely symbolic into the real world of the seas, where light and dark forces are currently embattled over preservation of endangered species vs exploitation of the few remaining members of fish and cetaceans.

The surrounding design also resonates with Celtic knots and Hawaiian quilt patterns, and speaks to me of the collective consciousness as it expresses a cross-cultural awareness the transcendent.



Multiple levels of relationships

Figure 18



As rich as the traditions of the conventional yin-yang symbols are, the world of human experiences and interactions is more complex than dark and light contrasts, as suggested by this extension of the basic yin-yang to a tri-color version.

The equal sharing of the space by the major hues, within a circle that could represent the globe that is our planet, might suggest a coming together in harmony of peoples of different color. The red and brown spilling over into the other colors might hint at the disseminations of cultural elements across the boundaries that initially divide.

The focus on yin and yang in the west has been largely on the inner psychological light and darkness, as has this discussion,

Figure 19



The Chinese view everything in the world as having yin and yang relationships with everything else. Some of these creative images remind us of this cosmic interrelationships.

Sky and sea; waters and earth have yin-yang relationships. The circle of the yin and yang reflects the globe that is our planet. The circle is also symbolizes the repeating cycles of the seasons, of fortune and misfortune, of birth, death and the beyond.

Figure 20



It is fascinating to learn from Allen Tsai that this symbol was originally derived from charts that detailed the shifts of the stars in the skies with the seasons.

Collective consciousness

In a world where the relationships of elements to each other is a major focus, collective consciousness readily becomes a part of awareness. Everything is related to everything else. There don't have to be causal connections for elements to be related. They just are.

In this totally interrelated world of yin and yang, each of us is connected to everything else in the cosmos. Within this awareness it may be easier to sense that one has a spiritual aspect to life.

Western thinking focuses on linear constructs and *either-or* reasoning. We are taught that we are separate and individuality is emphasized. Our interactions with the world are through physical actions, reactions and interactions, rather than merely through our *beingness* and the contrasting *beingness* of other people and inanimate elements in the world. Within this way of conceptualizing the cosmos, it may be harder to sense our relationship with the All.

Within collective consciousness there is a shared awareness in all of nature. Western science, in its linear way, has nibbled at the edges of collective consciousness through psi research (Edge et al; Nash; Radin). There is excellent evidence, from numerous, replicated studies of telepathy – confirming mind to mind communication; of pre- and retro-cognition – confirming awareness that transcends linear time; and of clairsentience – confirming mind-matter awareness. With research in psychokinesis (PK) and spiritual healing (Benor 2001a; b) there is evidence confirming that mind can influence matter.

These are not simply of academic interest. They confirm Chinese world views that each of us is intimately interconnected with the cosmos.

There are many ways in which collective consciousness can manifest in our lives. I will discuss only a few here – which are directly relevant to the theme of the yin and yang symbol.

Figure 21



A fascinating aspect of historical Chinese cosmology is the *I Ching*. This is based around eight sets of three full and broken lines called *trigrams*, as in the diagram at the left. In this picture, the trigrams are positioned around the yin-yang symbol.

Each trigram is keyed to ancient Chinese texts (available in a variety of translations, e.g. Wilhelm/ Baynes). By tossing coins or yarrow stalks, pairs of trigrams (hexagrams) are selected while you hold a question in your mind. The text related to the hexagram may be used to suggest answers or directions for action related to your question.

I have occasionally used the *I Ching* to suggest new perspectives on a difficult or unclear situation. The most striking experience I had was when I was applying for work and three openings were available. Two were at clinics within the same mental health system. I got the identical hexagram for these two and a completely different one when I threw the coins for the other. Since there are 64 possible combinations of lines in the hexagrams, it is highly unlikely to get the identical results twice. Another fascinating manifestation from somewhere in the collective consciousness is the appearance of crop circles in many countries, but particularly in England.

The figure at the right is about 200 feet across. It appeared on 21/6/2003 in Walden Hill, Wiltshire. It is the only one through all the years, as far as I know, that contains a yin-yang symbol.

No clear hypothesis has been proposed, much less confirmed, to explain these enormous patterns, which appear overnight and have been growing in complexity over the decades. I highly recommend a visit to a site that catalogues these images:

<http://temporarytemples.co.uk>. Karen Douglas (2003) is speculating that these are cosmic mandalas, somehow manifesting as archetypal messages for our troubled times.

It is widely suspected that these have been nothing more than hoaxes. However, their numbers, size (often 600-800 feet in diameter) and complexity, very rapid construction, and physical changes in the crops (e.g. bending crop stalks without breaking them, in highly complex, woven patterns) make it so highly unlikely that these could be the creations of people as to make the hoaxer hypothesis untenable. This particular configuration could lend itself to hoaxing, consisting as it does of straight lines and circles. Other crop circle patterns are of so far greater a complexity and intricacy that it is inconceivable they could be produced as hoaxes. Rather than suggest that believers in a cosmic origin for the crop circles disprove the hoaxer hypothesis, it seem incumbent on those who hold to the hoaxer hypothesis to suggest how these would be created, where the manpower required for

Figure 22



such creations could be mustered, and what motivation could possibly lie behind such a proposed hoax.

Nothing is as simple as it seems

Figure 23

Our inner worlds contain contrasts of dark and light, as do our relationships with significant others; as do our family's relationships with other families; and our community's with other communities'; our nation's with other nations'; our generation with generations past and future; and so on in many nested series.

Contrasts and interrelationships are nested within other contrasts and interrelationships

We are one with the All.



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Image credits

I am grateful to the many artists and website owners who have given their generous permissions to reproduce the images in this article.

Figures 1-4; 21. Variations on the original Chinese yin-yang and I Ching symbols

- Figure 5. <http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/karate/ajinstructors.html>
- Figure 6. www.atlantic.net/~dwatney/reid/reid06.htm
- Figure 7. www.bodymindharmony.com/TSHIRTS.HTM
logo of the Taijiquan Club, designed by David Chen
- Figure 8. www.s2kitty.com/kittens/9-8-01_yinyang.jpg:
Photo credit: Shereen E. Deemer s2kitty@yahoo.com
- Figure 9. http://internets-future.com/images/yinyang_sb.jpg
created by Rev. Neil Colton
- Figure 10. <http://taijiquanclub.com/images/Yinyang.jpg>
Logo of the Taijiquan Club designed by David Chen
- Figure 11. <http://lycto.gomen.org/about.htm>
- Figure 12. <http://upscale.utoronto.ca/mo>
- Figure 13. <http://graphics.elysiumgates.com/tao.html>
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- Figure 14. www.padillataekwondo.com
- Figure 15. http://jimchamberlain.com/yin_yang_snake_web.jpg
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IN THIS ISSUE OF THE *IJHC*

I've met some extraordinary people through my networking recently, and they have graciously written articles for the January issue of *IJHC*.

Deena Zalkind Spear, whose book cover drawing of the violin with chakras is the cover image for the Journal, has evolved through making and repairing violins conventionally, to tuning them physically with the help of spirit guides who are channeled by mediums. Having become proficient in these skills, she then discovered she could tune them through mental intent. In parallel with her work on stringed instruments, she studied to develop her healing gifts, discovering that she could also "tune" people from a distance. She now teaches both skills in workshops, finding that the feedback of successful distant influence with an instrument gives people the confidence to trust in their distant healing abilities.

I was fortunate to have met Deena when I did, because I developed severe pain that she was able to help me heal. I share my experience of this healing at the end of her article. I highly recommend Deena's book and am looking forward to attending one of her workshops.

Janis Amatuzio, MD is a pathologist working as a coroner. She has a big, warm heart and extends herself to answer questions that relatives often have about the deceased she investigates - who usually died of various traumas. In the course of her caring ministry to the bereaved, she has heard remarkable stories of bereavement apparitions and spirit communications from the deceased. Her book and her article in the *IJHC* share some of these heartwarming stories.

Annemarie Colbin, PhD, our frequent columnist on nutrition, is pioneering the study of nutrition within frameworks of systems theory. She finds that complexity theory helps to conceptualize the multi-layered interactions of food with the body. Her article concisely describes the challenges to understanding these issues, with a generous reference list for follow-up readings.

I share an update of an article I published in 1984, examining fascinating evidence for the existence of biological energy fields and exploring several explanations for the sensations reported by healers and healees during healing – which suggest a transfer of energies that appears to occur during healings.

Sheelagh Donnelly, a British doctor, has developed her own healing gifts. She is one of the few courageous healers who has been willing to share her self-examination following errors in healing treatments and some of the wonderful lessons that these can bring.

William Fenster, a recent medical graduate, writes of the struggles to maintain one's humanity in the grueling process of medical training. It is lovely to have this open sharing about ways to deal with a problem that most doctors experience but few have been willing to write about.

Carol Look, CSW, DCH, uses Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) to help people lose weight. Her article is an excellent introduction to ways in which EFT (and other Meridian Based Therapies) can reduce anxieties, counteract negative beliefs, install positive beliefs, and overcome addictions. Her excellent manuals, which offer many more suggestions for these sorts of healings, are also reviewed.

Gerri Shapiro, MS Ed. describes her experiences in receiving Bowen healing for severe, chronic back pain and then learning to be a Bowen Technique therapist. I am impressed that this is an excellent healing method - from the numerous clinical anecdotes I have heard over the years and from a Bowen workshop I took in England several years ago.

Larry Lachman, PsyD, a regular IJHC columnist, reviews a spectrum of reports on the benefits of a variety of CAM therapies.

We are fortunate to have some poetic sharings in this issue – one from Dr. John Rossiter-Thornton, a Canadian psychiatrist, and another from Elizabeth Hawkins, a third year medical student.

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