Guide Your Recovery With These 5 Chinese Elements Transcript

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Introduction to trauma healing and the five elements

Welcome to this interview on the Biology of Trauma Summit 3.0. We're talking about the trauma disease connection. I'm your host, Dr. Aimie And this interview is the only interview on the summit that we are talking about, the Chinese elements, the five Chinese elements, and what they have to do with emotions and more specifically, your trauma recovery.

So how it can actually help guide you on your trauma healing journey. And as we talk about these elements in this interview, I want to bring back the big picture of what are the essential pillars?

What are the essential pieces to everyone's trauma healing journey so that you can make sure that you are getting those in and you know where this Chinese elements fits in.

I want to share this graph with you because these are the three essential elements, and I have them pictured here as the biology of trauma. So the biology and these are like your your lab results, biochemical imbalances, micro deficiencies, nutrients, that's biology, inflammation.

And then we have the body aspect and this is where I would put acupuncture, this is where I would put the Chinese elements that we're talking about today.

And then we have the thoughts and beliefs, which I use, the internal family systems and parts work for that, but I integrate them all together. I do believe that that integration, that holistic approach is what is best for every person and how they will experience the fastest healing journey.

So that's why I call it Trauma. Healing Accelerated. But in talking about this body element now with the body element, there are sensations, there are emotions that we experience in our body.

In fact, every emotion is actually just a sensation in our body. We've just labeled that sensation as, Oh, that's anxiety, that's depression, that is loneliness.

But it actually starts as a sensation in our body. And whether this is a twisting in your gut or that constriction in your chest or your shoulders coming up, there's a sensation that starts in your body.

And then the mind says, Oh, I know what that sensation means. That means I am anxious. And as we work with the body, we actually need to drop into those sensations more rather than going up into our mind, which is where the labels are.

The stories are it's the meaning making machine. And when we drop into the body, that is when we will start to feel overwhelmed. If we haven't learned how to feel our emotions before.

This is why we've lived our life in our heads is because we we find those body sensations uncomfortable, overwhelming. And what do we do about that? In this interview, we're talking about the necessity of not suppressing, not repressing emotions, but how do we actually do that in a way that doesn't overwhelm us?

And that is where this is why I designed the 21 day journey. This is a 21 day journey. So it is 21 days all in a row. And I actually teach you, guide you through the process of connecting with the body sensations in a way that allows you to become the expert, the expert in how and why your body is actually making this sensation and what we can do about it, not by going into our mind and trying to think it away, but by actually coming in and knowing how to support or how to provide safety or what is it that the body needs and your body is unique and you need to become the expert in your own body.

So as we talk about the emotions in this interview, I want you to keep in mind that I'm not asking you to tap into emotions that feel overwhelming. In fact, anything overwhelming, even if it's trying to feel our feelings, will actually still put us back into a trauma response.

And you'll have the exhaustion. You may have the brain fog, the decision fatigue, the just the low motivation. And we don't want that. So we need to keep things manageable.

And so the 21 day journey is the way to keep things manageable. And when you come here to the website Trauma Healing Accelerator dot com, you'll see the 21 day journey here.

And when we make things manageable, things change. When we actually learn how to bring in safety for our body, that is when things change.

How emotions map to Chinese elements

And so it's the process of the essential sequence, safety support, safe expansion and it actually starts to change our biology so that as we go into these three elements and the three essential pieces for what we need to heal for our healing journey, we see that they all play off of each other when we learn how to actually connect with these body sensations.

Like what we do in the 21 day journey, it actually starts to support and change our biology. And as we change our biology, guess what? It actually opens up and increases our capacity to feel those body sensations and not be overwhelmed by them.

There is so much hope with this and, and there are tools there are very practical tools that I want you to know are, are possible and are available to you for this conversation on the elements and emotions, I have invited my good friend, Dr. Anis Khalaf, He is a medically trained acupuncture physician who helps top performers get their health back through an ancient technique called element typing.

He is the founder and CEO of Acupuncture Fit and virtual tcm dot com. and Dr. Anis, creates custom traditional Chinese medicine and health plans for people who suffer from pain, infertility, addiction, gut and hormone imbalance, skin conditions.

All of these diseases and symptoms that we've talked about are related to trauma. And so he uses his plans and online through his virtual TCM practice and provides a lot of hope around and tools around being able to address emotions and these conditions through the traditional Chinese methods.

I'm so excited to dove into this interview and let's get started, Dr. Anis, I have used acupuncture for years, but I have to admit that I actually don't know why it necessarily helps me feel better, but I do know that it's been an important tool for my own trauma healing journey.

So what do the Chinese elements have to do with trauma recovery? Why should someone actually know their element if they're wanting to kind of, I would say, personalize their trauma recovery and know kind of what what they should be doing that best help themselves.

Hey, I love that question. And it's one that I get often. And you know what? With everything in life is a risk and there's a reward. So when you're dealing with toxic emotions, there's a risk of having toxic emotions from traumas both macro and micro.

And a lack of forgiveness or holding a grudge is really one of the most damaging and sort of carcinogenic experiences that you can have with toxic emotions.

And this toxic combination of resentment and rumination over past hurts or insults affects the two systems that are responsible for fighting many diseases.

When we're looking at emotions in traditional Chinese medicine, so, so, so resentment like anger, it affects the detoxification system. And this is the liver and gallbladder.

And living in the past affects the immune system, the lungs and the colon. So emotions are really incorporated into traditional Chinese medicine. Five Element theory as well in identifying your dominant elements, you know, this is something that we do in our assessment can really help you understand which negative emotions you're most likely to be overwhelmed by, along with the emotions that can counteract the ill effects.

So I just love this aspect of traditional Chinese medicine. Once you can identify emotions that are toxic, you can then counteract them with something else.

I have so many questions, so the first place that I will start is wait. Like we can actually know what emotions are more overwhelming to us based on our element?

Absolutely. Have you ever had a friend or a family member? And gosh, you just know when they get ticked off or when they get like. I know it's bad and they can push.

Which is. Predictable how. They're going to react. Yeah, exactly. Well, you know, and the other question that I went over in detailing what the elements are.

Right, and this really has to do with just that that emotional aspect. And then like I said earlier, you know, the emotions are sort of a metaphor. Will you kind of like the Enneagram or a Myers-Briggs test and a personality aspect?

And we know that emotions have such an impact on our physical. This is why I absolutely love this summit, is because you're helping others get clarity on this.

To Dove Deeper, to turn inwards and traditional Chinese medicine lens of looking at through the elements of wood, earth, fire, water and metal are ways to understand.

Well, okay. This person, let's say, is a wood element. For instance, Woods are very vulnerable to anger, guilt, frustration and rage. And if you're friends with the wood element or you yourself are a wood element, you're going to want to counteract it with activities such as activities that provide hope, faith, optimism, creativity.

So if your friend is like so frustrated with something that's going on, you know, with work, let's say on more than maybe a micro trauma, you know, a great way to counteract that is with with them is number one to say, I see how frustrated you are.

Now I'm going to tell you why I said see is because sight the eyes are associated with the wood element, which are the liver and gallbladder. And it's very interesting. What is the eye look like?

It looks like a liver. And so you're going to an approach you would eliminate and say, gosh, I see your frustration because that's where their energy manifests the most, because they're visionaries, but they're frustrated at work and then lead into something like, well, you know what, I you know, I'm sure at the end of the day, this is going to be great.

Wood and Earth element patterns

You're going to do great or, you know, something like that. Like I see you're going to do great. And so there's so many little intricacies about this, but once you understand that element, you understand what they're vulnerable to and then you'll know how to counteract that with just invert.

This is fascinating, and I'm wondering if someone can be a wood element and yet not be aware of the anger, the guilt, the rage that they have. Can these emotions be repressed or suppressed to such a degree that, yes, this is their element, but they're they're not aware of these emotions, and yet it probably is still having an effect on their

body and their health.

Absolutely. And this is, again, why I love this summit, because it's bringing that awareness, that external awareness. And here's the thing that just as physical pain is a sign that there's something wrong with your body and you need to uncover the root cause to heal it, emotional pain is your cue to slow down, to identify the underlying problem, and to really do what you need to do to cope with it.

Yes, it can be very, very difficult to face your issues. And a lot of times that's why people just ignore it. Right. They don't want to face it. It's hard.

It's just as hard as a physical trauma. And that's why so many people numb their fear, their anxiety, their sadness. They numb it with drugs, alcohol, technology, shopping or work.

As a matter of fact, I'm on the board for one of the largest task forces nationally to fight this this opioid crisis. And in my community, in your community, people are are dying by the droves because it's being laced with better known.

They're covering their emotions up. And it's such a grim stat right now as of today, a 22 people in my state in Florida, 22 people a day are dying from overdose.

And it truly is. It's we're in crisis right now. But here's the thing. Here's the key, is that none none of these emotions can't be overcome. Right. That's the good news once you understand the root cause.

Right. In fact, I consider emotions as traumatic as they are, are are are very easy to conquer. And these substances that people are using to cover up.

Right, to kind of ignore and to not face, they're kind of like flimsy, emotional Band-Aids which allow the underlying emotional problems to fester and then usually create new challenges on their own.

So if you're not paying attention to your emotions, it's compounding. It's going to put one thing over another, over another. It's going to take even more time to peel away to you get to the root.

So really the key to rooting out emotional problems is to deal with them head on. There's there's no one single approach that works for everyone, but there are processes that you're going to learn.

If you haven't already started to learn in this summit, they're going to help you really that are incredibly effective, such as traditional Chinese medicine and all of these other wonderful modalities on here to really get to that deeper cause of what's happening to the root.

I love this. So I'm I'm so like on my on the side of kind of waiting for what element am I like and what am I going to then hear like, you know, how is doctor and knees going to be telling me or what phrases is he going to be using for me in the future once he knows my element?

So tell me about the Earth element and what are the emotions associated or I guess the the most vulnerable emotions for that earth element? Well, the organs of the Earth element are the stomach and the spleen.

And you want to think nurturing like Mother Earth, right. Thinking, nurturing, taking care of so, so earth elements are vulnerable to worry, low self-worth and discouragement.

And it's actually one of the more common elements in the world. And I see this oftentimes there are two other elements that are probably the most common, but I do see a lot of Earth elements and earth element is that the person that everybody wants, like at their house instead of they want to go out to like have a party.

Like they're the one that always wants to house party at their house and do counteract the earth with their worry, their low self-esteem. And usually, like they feel this like discouragement in the pit of their stomach, right?

Butterflies in their stomach over thinking. And I know everybody's felt that. And by the way, you could be a word, but have your earth element out of balance, getting a little bit deeper here.

So you could be any element, have another element out of balance. But if you're an element particularly, you're more vulnerable to some emotions and others.

So for Earth to counteract it, it's, it's happiness, it's harmony, it's security. And it's just being as supportive as possible. I don't know. That sounds like it could be me.

The fire element. Yes, the fire energy. You want to think of the fire energy is like very just like upward, right. And just very as far as like reaching the top of the body, as far as like the mind is is concerned, we look to the heart in the small intestine.

When we're looking at manaea, we're looking at the depression. They're vulnerable to anxiety, loneliness. And through that, loneliness is is is jealousy is jealousy.

The fire element is probably the least dominant element type in the world. But but people who tendency do have a tendency to be more dominant in their fire element do become lonely because they can burn people energetically easy.

And people don't want to, you know, they want to come there just enough to get the warmth that they need. But out of control, they're burnt. Right. And then and then under control.

It's very cold and very lonely. And to counteract a fire element, if you see that element type is down.

Fire and Water element patterns

And this is why I just really have a dream, doc, that everybody in the world like on their profiles, on social media or on their resumes, they have their element type there because it's just so good to understand, you know, who you're working with and you know, maybe who you're dating.

But the fire element, the best way to counteract it is with joy, with love, with gratitude, and with passion. You want to you want it. You want to exude passion.

If you're a fire element, you feel like that that fire is just turned down. Find something that gives your heart joy, that gives your heart passion to reignite that flame.

Christine But that flame can go out. It can go up, it can go down. And the whole key is balance. So we're looking for a balance in each of these elements, though we, it sounds like, likely have a dominant element.

We're still looking for balance in all of them. Yes, everybody has all of the elements in them and they're ranked in an order of most dominant to least dominant.

So tell me about the water element. What would be the vulnerable emotions for that element? You know what water elements are one of the most abundant elements in the world, the most abundant element types segment among humans and water elements have to do with the kidneys and the bladder.

And when you think about the kidneys and, you know, functional medicine and medicine in general, we talk about the adrenal glands that sit on top of the kidneys.

Right. That when we're are afraid they can be used, they can we could kicked into like fight or flight mode. So when we're talking about water, waters are vulnerable to fear.

Waters are also vulnerable because we're dealing with adrenals to exhaustion and also they're vulnerable to feeling inadequate. So if you yourself find that your dominant water element or your water element is out of balance, or

you have a friend who's a water element you want to bring to the table words like peace, self-confidence, and then also wisdom.

Water elements thrive on self-help books, helping themselves give them just like, greater compassion, right? So when somebody pretty much has a lack of willpower, they're like, I don't even want to do anything right.

That's most likely a dominant water element or their water illness just out of just a lack of willpower. And so those are the ways that you can counteract the water element.

And this is why the self-help industry is so successful. Absolutely. Water being one of the most abundant elements. And here are all these people in the self-help.

Yes. Yes. It's true. And and it can also be a very confusing route to go down, because there is so much information out there these days, Doc. And what I love about this summit is that you're combining all of these wonderful information in something very concise.

So truly, I firmly believe if somebody wants to start to look at the biology of their trauma, this summit is the place to do just that. Well, I know for me, when I was when I was kind of struggling with my biology of trauma, that I didn't even know that it was that at the time it did.

Like you say, it was very confusing. I had no idea which way to go. So many different options. None of them seemed to be really working well and it was like, Well, I've got to figure out which pieces of the puzzle fit where.

And it it was, it was confusing. So thank you for being on the summit and providing this aspect of, of elements. We've got one more element to go through the metal one and where, where are we at with that one. With the motions.

Yeah. That's, that's, that's a great, great question. And metals are the most inflexible elements. And what's interesting when you see a metal, they're the ones that like love to actually stretch because they're trying to balance out that element.

They're trying to constantly move and stretch and they can stretch very well. The organs that are associated with the metal are the lung and the large intestine.

And this is the element that you never, ever, ever want to bottle up. Cover up. It's like the worst, too, to suppress, because this has to do with the emotion of grief.

If you think about it energetically, the human body will act in different ways when it's out of balance. So one quick side note. When somebody is very cold, what do they do?

They warm themselves up. They do this right. Well, all of the exit points are not all of them, but a lot of them major exit points for heat are right here.

So okay. So that's more of a physical example. So let's go with more of an emotional example now. So if you hear news or you tell somebody, you know, somebody just passed away or somebody just moved or somebody just lost their job, the general human emotion is, oh, my gosh, what are they grasping?

They're grasping their lungs and so mad all that has to do with the lung, large intestine, which has to do with grief, which has to do with hurt, regret, judgment, shame, like, oh, my gosh, I cannot believe somebody just told me that.

Like, like, how can you how dare them just talk to me in this way? Like, oh, you know, so losing a loved one or grief can come in so many forms.

Metal element, grief, and forgiveness

And the best way to counteract grief and to make sure that that that you don't, you know, bottle it up and suppress it because it will manifest in other ways in the body.

Specifically, we see in Chinese medicine patterns, in the lung meridians and also large intestine meridians. Right. The entry points of the body and the exit points of the body, they just get backed up.

Is that the best way to counteract it is to really go through the process of the emotions of the five steps or seven steps, whatever you subscribe to, and make sure you're walking through those.

If you feel like laughing laugh, you're like crying cry. The key, though, is to not get stuck in that grief. It's okay to be a C. S. Lewis calls in the hallway for a little bit sitting there, but you want to walk through the doors of those emotions.

How can you best do that? Through the traditional Chinese medicine techniques of cheerfulness, of humility. And then most importantly, the key is forgiveness.

I do find that when working with grief and I actually have a whole module just on grief and gut health. Oh, my gosh. I know. And and being able to move into forgiveness is actually quite key for grief.

You would you would maybe not think of that naturally as no grief. I need to move into maybe letting go. Yeah, it's a letting go, but there's, there's a big forgiveness element in that letting go.

Oh, I love that, doc. And if you're hearing forgiveness, it doesn't just mean I'm sorry. Forgiveness comes in all shapes and sizes. It could be acceptance, reconciliation, reconciling with somebody.

There's differences in these. And gosh, I'd love to to dove in and jam on that section because it's so key when it comes to this. I would love that. So as you've been describing these different emotions associate with the elements.

I can see different emotions that are that are part of the trauma response. I mean, we've talked about shame. We've talked about the rage that we can suppress.

If that feels like we shouldn't express anger, each of these emotions, the even the discouragement. Right. Like all of these or the fire going out, these are all, I think, ways to even describe that going into the trauma response of I just feel like life is overwhelming and these emotions can become overwhelming.

And so for for each of these elements, it would sounds like none of them are spared from trauma. They all just maybe have a different experience of even maybe their entry point into that.

For one person. It may be the discouragement. For another person, it may be the grief for another person, it may be the fear. So they may have different entry points, but they can all land in that place of just feeling overwhelmed by life and overwhelmed by their own emotions.

Is that is that true? Yes. Yes, that is very true. That is very real. And this is why I believe step one is to discover the source of the trauma, toxic thought, the source of the memory.

And, you know, keeping a journal and writing about your thoughts and emotions can help whatever element type you are, meditation and prayer. But really tracing the source of your pain is the first step towards acknowledging it and then easing its grip on your life.

I don't see a baby born with emotions. Besides, I'm crying. I'm hungry, right? However, in Chinese me eat me. I just want to sleep. It's a good life, right?

However, Chinese medicine does believe in the ancient text that we can get emotions from conception all the way to right womb to tune, we say. And we should see where that started.

And if that emotion, you know, was brought on, you know, to you and and it's not your fault or, you know, you know, you you have kind of just had this on you for whatever the external circumstances are.

That emotion is technically learned. So if it's learned, we say unlearn it. And if something is unlearned, learn it. That's essentially the root of the yin yang that about the balance principle.

And as you're describing these emotions and they're kind of they're centers in the body for me, this also gives another perspective on when we talk about the memories or emotions being stored in the body and the body having memories.

And it's not just the brain, but the body has this and being able to work with the body. And I think that acupuncture is a great way to do that. There's also other modalities, right?

We have somatic work. We have body work. But being able to actually work with the emotions, because what I'm seeing is that if a person could identify perhaps which dominant element they are, they would be able to have that understanding of.

These are the emotions that I will be most triggered by. These are the emotions that I generally will feel most overwhelmed by. And just with that deeper understanding of themselves, it will probably lessen the impact of the next time that that emotion comes, because they're going to be like, Oh, I recognize this.

This doesn't feel out of the blue now. This doesn't feel like it's without a pattern, without a reason, without an order. This is something predictable that happens to me that I can then almost step out and be a third person observer rather than being caught up in the middle of this and think that this is happening and this is me.

It it puts us puts a little space between know I'm this element.

Applying element awareness to trauma recovery

And so, of course, I'm going to be struggling with discouragement right now like this is this is what happens with the element that I am. So I'm wondering if that's like how you would see that people could take this information on the elements and be able to really apply it to their deeper understanding of themselves as they work through their their trauma healing journey.

Oh, my gosh. This is truly at the root of, of of the the the ability to crush this negativity. If you're listening to this right now, this is so key because we were just talking about discover, right?

Once you discover just because you know your element type doesn't mean you have to connect with the traditional Chinese medicine practitioner. But this gives you the ability of knowing oneself.

And when somebody deeply knows themselves and they they love themselves, then that is the key to to to taking it to connect with somebody. Okay. The enemy loves darkness, loves isolation.

So I want to encourage you right now, if you're listening to this, this is resonating to you. Once you discover, you know, maybe it's using the element or these other wonderful tools that are on here as well, whatever the tool is, connect with a pastor, a mentor, a trained emotional coach, a psychologist, mental health professional who then can serve as wise guidance, as a sounding board, as you face your past, hurts the toxic emotions, and then work through them.

Because once you do that, once you can get somebody or need, you know, listening just to this summit, that's truly when that acceptance can happen. And then after the acceptance happens, you get to have this option.

You do need to choose because that space that you were talking about, doc, is so key because you can step out and then look to choose your challenge is for either good or bad, and if you're choosing to just do nothing, I'm going to rope that in the category of lukewarm, which is not good, which then would be bad.

So for instance, if you were bullied, maybe you can volunteer for an organization that fights bullying or speaks out against bullying on social media.

If you were told you weren't smart, maybe you could take a volunteering tutoring children with learning issues or write articles about your experiences that might help others.

You know, by using your trauma for good, you not only transform your own suffering, but you also become a world changer, which is part of the mastermind that we and we want to become world changers, right?

Who can then encourage, who can inspire and aid others who struggle with the same issues. And then from there is to create these daily habits that build these counteracting emotions, such as I was talking about earlier, faith and joy and gratitude or whatever works best for you, whatever the technique is to then move to positive affirmations, prayer, meditation, you know, reading spiritual growth books in order to really counteract them when they come at you again and that is the key.

It's those consistent daily habits through that brilliancy that you just mentioned of that space to look back and say, whoa, whoa, whoa, you know, I need to take a pause here and then using that for good.

And so it's a way to rather than have our emotions drive us by using this understanding of ourselves and the elements, being able to get to a place where we can work through them, we can actually feel them work through them, and not have them drive our lives and especially unconsciously drive our lives anymore.

It's absolutely right. It's it's do you control them or do they control you? That's the question. And if they're controlling you, I want to urge you to start on the process of discovery, seek help and and utilize these wonderful life saving techniques that that that you're promoting on here.

Oh, my goodness. What a powerful interview. And I hope that you learned a lot. I know that I learned a lot. And it's fascinating for me to see how it all comes together.

Right. Like the body is one system. It's not all these separate systems. And so learning about the Chinese elements and I can make connections to all these other elements that I know about the body and trauma healing.

And it to me it is fascinating and brings me so much hope for a holistic healing approach. And so, again, I invite you to take that 21 day journey with me to start your process, be guided, doctor.

And he's talked about having a guide, be guided through that process of tapping into our body sensations, those emotions, so that we're not stuffing them, but we're actually learning how to work with them in a manageable way and not fall apart in the process.

With that, thank you for joining me. Please remember that you can purchase all of these recordings, you can have all this information. And thank you for joining me.

I'm your host, Dr. Aimie, for this Biology of Trauma Summit 3.0.