

**Autism, anxiety and hyperactivity.**  
**Yuumi Ridsdale**

Client is a 13 year-old boy who has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder from a young age. His mother also had observed anxiety and hyperactivity in him. His mother brought him to me initially because of his anxiety issue and related stress. She was hoping he would experience complete body stress relief.

He was quite tall for his age, almost 6 feet, and had a healthy physique. He played football regularly. From the intense practice, according to his mother, he sometime complained of fatigue; he also complained of headaches several times in the past.

**Family Background**

He is the oldest child of three with his father working out of the home and his mother as a stay-home mother.

Their main diet favoured "white" products such as white bread, white rice, and white sugar. His mother informed me that Client liked sweet snacks, he habitually consumed at school and between meals. It was safe to say their diet was a "typical" North American diet.

**First Session 16:30 (Time of Bladder)**

LU =	ST =	HE =	BL -	PC -	GB =
LI =	SP =	SI =	KD -	TW -	LV =

Client was escorted by his mother and his two siblings. I suggested that they stay in the practice room unless Client objects to the idea. I wanted to make sure he feels comfortable with me in the clinical environment. I could not gather much information from him; however, his mother answered some of questions on behalf of him. Client kept insisting that he was fine and had no issues. At this moment, I was not aware that he has hyperactivity as well because the initial reason of his visit was treating his anxiety issue.

Although he seemed to be distracted with his siblings in the practice room, he managed to get comfortable on the massage table. After the initial touch, I took his pulse. His pulse was strong except Bladder and Kidney as well as Pericardium and Triple Warmer. His Water Meridians (BL and KD) being weaker than the rest was anticipated as he presented anxiety symptoms; however, I was not sure about the Pericardium and Triple Warmer being weak as well. In retrospect, I believe they were weak as well because Bladder and Kidney were weak. The qi exit from Kidney Meridian and entering the Pericardium Meridian was blocked.

**Action Taken**

In order to cope with his anxiety, I started with balancing his Kidney Meridian. Since he is very young, I worked in a tonifying manner (light touch with fast pace).

BL 52 w/ BL 58, BL 62, KD 6  
KD 6 w/ BL 67, KD 2, KD 3, KD 4  
KD 27 w/ KD 22, KD 23, KD 24, KD 25, KD 26

**Response from the Client**

Each point responded very well. During the session, he almost dozed off. I would think if his brother and sister were not present, he could have fallen asleep. His mother was quite surprised to witness how relaxed he was on the massage table. Also she mentioned that she was concerned whether he would have been capable of staying on the massage table for 30 minutes. She then told me that he has hyperactivity. Client said he liked the session and he wanted longer session next time. He also talked to his mother that he did not want to his brother and sister being there for the next session.

His pulse was a lot more balanced in the end especially Bladder and Kidney Meridians. I could not observe his Pericardium and Triple Warmer being as strong as I wanted to see. I asked his mother to monitor him closely in next 48 hours. Also we discussed that we should also treat his hyperactivity symptoms as well.

**Second Session 4:30 (Time of Bladder)**

LU =	ST =	HE =	BL -	PC =	GB =
LI =	SP =	SI =	KD -	TW -	LV =

Client came back to see me for a session two weeks later. His mother said she did not notice much change after the previous session. This time, he was willing to be left alone with me.

As his mother and I discussed previously, the main focus for this session was anxiety as well as hyperactivity symptoms. She also informed me that he had a stressful week, and she observed some anxiety in his behaviours. He also was upset with his family members the night before. Moreover, he had complained about headache.

His pulse again showed that his Bladder and Kidney were weak. Pericardium was normal this time, yet Triple Warmer was still weak. His pulses were otherwise very strong.

**Action Taken**

I started the session with 4 Gates to relax him.

LI 4 = LV 3 (Both sides)

Then, I held anti-hyperactivity points. According to *"Acupuncture for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): study protocol for a randomised controlled trial"* written by Soon-Sang Hong and Seung-Hun Cho from Department of Neuropsychiatry, College of Korean medicine at Kyung Hee University in Hoegi-dong Dongdaemun-gu in Seoul, Korea, they have found some evidence for the effectiveness of acupuncture as an add-on treatment in treating children with ADHD (<http://www.trialsjournal.com/content/pdf/1745-6215-12-173.pdf>).

The points they used for the study is following:

**GV 20:** Deadman explains that GV20 benefits the brain and calm the spirit.

**M-HN-1:** These four points located 1cun from GV20 in its North-South-West-East also calm the spirit, according to Deadman.

**LI 4:** One of the 4 Gate points. *Classic of the Jade Dragon* states "Hegu LI4 treats all diseases of the head, face, ears, eyes, nose, cheeks, mouth and teeth."

**LI 11:** Deadman explains that LI 11 can be used for imbalance in Heart and spirit, which is indicated as agitation and oppression for the chest as well as Mania Disorder.

**SP 6:** It harmonizes the Liver and tonifies Kidney, and calms the spirit.

**LV 3:** The other point for 4 Gates. According to *Spiritual Pivot*, "the Liver stores blood, the blood is the residence of the ethereal soul (*Hun*); when Liver qi is deficient there is fear." LV 3 is extremely important to calm the spirit along with LI 4.

Combining with the 4 Gates points, the pattern to start the session was:

GV 20 w/ M-HN-1

LI 4 w/ LI 11, LV 3 w/ SP 6 (Both sides)

I continued the session with Great Central Vessel release. All the yin qi meridians are linked with the Conception Vessel or *Ren Mai*. The Conception Vessel influences metabolism, and the balanced Yin energy let the body and mind be stable and well nourished. If yin energy is not working properly or the individual does not have enough of it, then he would be unstable, unable to rest properly and tends to tire easily. In particular, the Conception vessel, being the "sea of yin", has the capacity to absorb excess yin energy.

On the other hand, all the yang qi meridians are linked with the Governing Vessel or *Du Mai*. Deadman explains that "[it] is the channel that mediates between the brain and the heart. Clinically, these points may be used to treat a variety of psycho-emotional disorders." He continues and says that release of The Governing Vessel is especially effective when the symptom the psycho-emotional disorders are accompanied by fullness and discomfort of the head.

Since he presented headache issue, physical and mental fatigue, as well as having psychology-emotional disorders of autism and hyperactivity, I decided to release the Great Central Vessel.

GV 20 w/ GV 11, GV 12

GV 14 w/ KD 6 (Both side), BL 62 (Both sides)

GV 5 w/ CV 2

CV 17 w/ CV 6 w/ GV 4

GV 8 w/ GV1

CV 6 "sea of qi" is especially effective for bringing more energy to the body.

### **Response from the Client**

By the end of GV 20 w/ M-HN-1 combination, Client fell asleep. As the session went on, he slept deeper and deeper. I was very surprised to see that. All the points were responding very strongly. He was snoring at the end of the session when his mother came to pick him up. When she witnessed that, she was very surprised.

**His pulses were a lot more balanced in the end.** I believed that he was experiencing "complete body relaxing" as his mother initially wanted to see. He liked the session, and told me that he is willing to come back for further sessions.

### Third Session 4:30 (Time of Bladder)

LU =	ST =	HE =	BL -	PC =	GB =
LI =	SP =	SI =	KD -	TW -	LV =

He came back to see me a week later. When his mother dropped him off and told him that he might have a nap again, he denied that he had fallen asleep in the previous session. He said he is physically tired because he practiced football very hard. His mother seemed to be pleased with the last two sessions. His mother mentioned he had not complained of headaches since the last session. I felt the rapport I established between us has become very comfortable and stable.

His pulses still indicate that Bladder and Kidney are weaker than the rest except Pericardium and Triple Warmer. In other word, the symptoms he was presenting were autism, physical fatigue, anxiety, hyperactivity, as well as weak pulse in the Water element.

I conducted *Shu* assessments to assure that it is Bladder and Kidney that were imbalanced. He told me that both BL 23 (Kidney *Shu* point) and BL 28 (Bladder *Shu* point) were sensitive.

#### **Action Taken**

I offered the anti-hyperactivity pattern that I offered in the previous session. I decided to do energy transferring using the Breeding Cycle or Mother/Child Cycle (*Shen Cycle*). I double checked his pulses that the Mother meridians; Lung and Large Intestine (Metal element) were stronger than the Child meridians, Bladder and Kidney meridians. His pulses indicated that the Mother meridians were balanced while the Child meridians were deficient.

Metal --> Water Breeding Cycle Transfer

BL 28 (Bladder *Shu* Point) w/ BL 67 (Tonification Point), BL 64 ( Bladder Source Point)  
BL 23 (Kidney *Shu* Point) w/ K 7 (Tonification Point), K3 (Kidney Source Point)

#### **Response from the Client**

Client again fell asleep during the anti-hyperactivity patterns. At the end of GV 20 w/ M-HN-1 combination, I noticed he was sleeping. He always brings a small toy, an action figure that calms him down when he is agitated. However, I have not noticed that he needed it in my practice room yet.

All the points I held today responded very well. The energy transfer was successful, in my opinion, as his pulses for the Water element were a lot stronger to match with other pulses. However, his Triple Warmer still appeared to be deficient. I decided to give him Triple Warmer Neck release.

SI 10 (Both sides)  
TW 15 w/ TW 13, TW 5  
TW 16 w/ TW 4, TW 23

I finished the session with a Neck and Shoulder release. His pulse did not show too much difference for Triple Warmer meridian, yet I suggested to his mother that she monitor him closely in next few days.

### **Observation from the Mother**

His mother observed Client closely for a few days after the session. She informed me that he seemed to be a lot more relaxed. She said he seemed to stop over preparing. I believe that his calm spirit was from the anti-hyperactivity patterns. Both his mother and I were astonished to see his improvement. Another significant observation made by her was that he was quite restless and agitated for a few days. She said he accidentally kicked a child who was playing under a dining table. It was an accident, yet could be due to his restlessness.

### **Five Elements Assessment**

Gathering information from his mother's observation, symptoms presented, and his pulses, I started thinking that Client is a Water CF, particularly hypoactive *Chi*. According to Iona Teegarden, "[c]ontinual apprehension results in excessive adrenal stimulation, producing temporary bursts of energy which ultimately fatigue and exhaust the body." She continues that "the result is a low energy state of *fearfulness* ... [which] easily degenerates into panic when a threat does arise." Frequent fear drains the reserved qi, and weakens the Kidney Meridian. As the result, the body is always under fatigue.

Client experiencing fatigue, having anxiety and occasional panic indicated to me that he may be a Water CF. I asked his mother whether he has had problems with bed-wetting which she confirmed. Also, his mother told me that the emotion he sought the most among Respect (Metal), Reassurance (Water), Control (Wood), Protection (Fire), and Understanding (Earth) is ***Reassurance***.

### **Fourth Session 4:30 (Time of Bladder)**

LU =	ST =	HE -	BL --	PC =	GB =
LI =	SP =	SI =	KD --	TW =	LV =

Client came to our fourth session in very relaxed mood. His mother said after a few days of agitation, he was calm for the rest of the week. Even his father recognized the improvement we have made together.

There was a difference in his pulse this day. His Triple Warmer pulse was balanced, but his Heart Meridian appeared to be deficient.

### **Action Taken**

With the observation of his mother-- agitation lasted for a few days after the session-- and the time we normally have sessions (4:30 pm), excessive night urination as well as being mentally and emotionally overwhelmed, I thought to apply an Exit-Entry session. The pulses indicated to me that Small Intestine Meridian is balanced enough to enter into the Bladder Meridian. However, the pulses also indicated that the Heart Meridian was deficient as well. Therefore, I did two exit-entry patterns. I usually start with the anti-hyperactivity pattern;

however, since the Exit-Entry treatment needs to be offered before proceeding to the rest of the session, I did the Exit-Entry pattern first.

Exiting from Spleen and Entering to Heart

SP 21 (Exiting Point) w/ SP 3 (Source Point)  
SP 21 w/ HE 1 (Entering Point)  
HE 1 w/ HE 7 (Source Point)

Exiting from Small Intestine and Entering to Bladder

SI 19 (Exiting Point) w/ SI 4 (Source Point)  
SI 19 w/ BL 1 (Entering Point)  
BL 1 w/ BL 64 (Source Point)

Then, I proceeded to the anti-hyperactivity pattern.

**Response from Client**

He fell asleep again. All the points responded very well. The pulses were all balanced in the end. His mother was not there to pick him up when we completed the session, so I let him sleep until his mother showed up. He was snoring and sleeping very deeply.

**Fifth Session 4:30 (Time of Bladder)**

LU +	ST =	HE =	BL -	PC =	GB +
LI +	SP =	SI =	KD -	TW =	LV +

Client came for another session two weeks after the fourth session. His mother observed that anxiety came back again. Although Client denied it, I thought there might be something imbalanced again.

His pulses were not awfully imbalanced except for the fact his right pulses were stronger than his left pulses. I felt his Heart and Small Intestine as well as Pericardium and Triple Warmer were just as strong as usual, but his Lung and Large Intestine as well as Gall Bladder and Liver were pounding hard whereas his Bladder and Kidney were deficient.

**Action Taken**

I was contemplating whether I should work on his Water element or Treat the Husband and Wife imbalance. However, I decided that the Husband and Wife imbalance is more acute. In his article "Five Element Acupuncture Husband Wife Imbalance and Bipolar Disorder: A Case Report" Dr. Charles Moss explains that the Elements and Officials in the right hand or "wife" side of the energy system relate to love and relationship; self-nourishment and acceptance; and self-esteem and the letting go of old energy. His mother told me about an extremely stressful football game they had in the week before. They lost the game. Knowing his chronic stress from the fear and phobias and stress from not being able to perform as well as he hopes or he thinks others expect him to, adding these beyond the day-

to-day stress may have made his "wife" energy system hyperactive. As the result, some acute symptoms emerged. The imbalance was not as bad as I had observed before in different individuals; however, I decided to treat it before it became worse.

BL 23 (Kidney Shu) w/ BL 67 (Draw Metal to Water)  
KD 7 (Draw Metal to Water)  
KD 3 (KD Source)

BL 18 (Liver Shu) w/ LV 4 (Draw Metal to Wood)  
LV 3 (LV Source)

BL 15 (Heart Shu) w/ SI 4 (SI Source)  
HE 7 (HE Source)  
KD 24

### **Response from the Client**

All the points I held responded strongly. At the end of the session, his left pulses were stronger except the Bladder and the Kidney Meridians. He was very relaxed and slept again.

### **Five Elements Assessments and Conclusion**

It was quite obvious from the beginning that his CF was the Water. His mother mentioned that his aggression and anxiety came back from time to time. I believe his aggression is stemmed from the fear: fear for not being able to do as well as other people expect him to do, and as well as he expects himself to do. He recently expressed frustration and stress from failing exams and from losing games, which resulted in his anxiety and agitation.

The course of action from now on is how to balance the Water element. The season is changing to the winter soon, and it may be a great time for us to work on his Water Element and its congestion.

I cannot say that we have made dramatic differences through the last five sessions; however, I believe we have made some improvements in his body-mind-spirit. It is my pleasure to be able to witness the little steps we have made.