

Case Study #1

Frustration and the Wood Element

Elaine de Montmorency

Clarissa is in her late 50s and had worked in a managerial position for many years until complications from surgery that resulted in heart problems forced her to go on disability twelve years ago. She has Congestive Heart failure, Type II Diabetes, renal failure and was on dialysis for several months two years ago and quit against the doctor's recommendations (she was told she would die within two weeks of quitting) as she found it was not improving her health but making her more exhausted and depressed. After quitting dialysis, her health improved and the doctor admitted they had made a mistake and that her renal failure was not as bad as it was believed to be. After about six months of improved health, she started have severe lower back pain, high blood pressure, edema and breathing problems. Clarissa has no feeling in her feet and her feet are very swollen at all times and she has a nurse do a foot treatment every six weeks to minimize the chance of her needing an amputation which is common with diabetes. She has constant tremors in left arm and right leg.

She lives with her family members. Her father was just diagnosed a heart problem and given six months to live adding extra stress to Clarissa's daily concerns. As a result, her sleep has been affected and she is getting two to three hours of sleep each night which affects her ongoing health issues. Talking to Clarissa, it was very evident that she was depressed and weary. Her eyes lacked life, her complexion very pale and despite wearing bright blue, she looked washed out. Her voice was harsh, almost biting off words and she was very negative and angry at the world including her family and a household helper.

Her doctors have been unable to help her get any relief since any medications to help with these problems would result in further damaging her kidneys. Consequently, she decided to try a holistic approach.

First Three Sessions-1:00 PM-Small Intestine Time

Clarissa's biggest concern at this first session was lower back pain and severe lack of sleep. I decided to do the Great Regulator release for this session as this was her first sessions and with the numerous health issues, using a strange flow would open all the pathways and added JSD #15 & 16 to address the back issues. When checking pulses, all pulses were very hard to find, unable to locate any pulses on the left side and the right side all pulses were very fast and weak.

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Due to the diabetes, this session was just a tonifying one resulting in very little energy being felt or transferred but points JSD #2 4 & #13 did cause pain in right leg. And the end of the session, pulses did not show any change and Clarissa was very disorientated and had trouble focusing her eyes for about 30 minutes. I showed her JSD #35 to help with stress and Standing on Toes exercise using a chair for

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balance to help stimulate the Kidney meridian. I reminded her that the acupressure may have an effect on her insulin levels and to watch carefully for the next few days.

The second session, one week later, Clarissa arrived in better spirits and said she was using the #35 point regularly and it seemed to be helping with the stress. Her lower back was a bit better but she had noticed ankle pain and headaches and sleep had not changed. And I elected to do the Great Regulator and added #12 for headaches, insomnia, high blood pressure, back pain and #41(Three Yin Crossing) for insomnia, depression and retention of urine. Pulses again were hard to find and extremely fast and weak.

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Again this session was a tonifying one but there was a definite different in the points-. She noticed pressure at the #19's and felt all the leg points. During the closing, she felt me push on KI 1 on the right foot and could feel her big toe being touched. Pulses remained unchanged after the session and while not as disorientated after the session, she still had problems focusing her eyes.

The third session, again one week later, Clarissa arrived smiling and had noticed her right foot was tingling for most of the week. She also said she was able to lie on her back without having problems breathing and was not using her inhaler anymore. Her disrupted sleep had not changed but she felt calmer and was not getting as upset when there was squabbling in the house; she just stayed out of it and remained calm. Her lower back was bothering her but she had no other issues. Again we did the Great Regulator in a tonifying manner adding #16 Ambitious Room, #17 Soul Gate and #18 Rich Vitals Correspondence for her back but also for breathing. Again pulses are weak and hard to find, extremely fast

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Back points were very tender and slow to release. Clarissa did noticed more tingling in both feet when doing the leg points. Pulses at the end of the session were unchanged but this time there was no disorientation but the eyes still were slow to focus. There still was no change in her insulin and on a whole she was definitely feeling better.

Fourth Session: 1PM Spleen Time

Clarissa arrived for the fourth session, angry and tired. She had only one hour of sleep the night before, was very frustrated with home life. Her back was very bad and the tingling in her feet had lasted three days and now they were back to being numb. Her tremors were still bad with her left hand but much

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better with the right leg. Pulses still are unchanged, the left side was really hard to find due to the tremors, and again the pulses are very weak and fast.

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Due to the fact that I had never been able to register a pulse with the Kidney meridian, I elected to do the Kidney Meridian release. Foot points were very sensitive on the left side along with left intercostal points. When doing the 16Shu and noticed warmth going down the opposite leg, this happened on both the left and right. 3:K also was extremely tender and the shoulder points very painful on the neck release so stopped and did P6 and BL 54 and then back to the neck release and everything released nicely. Had a lot more feeling in Right foot and the toes were able to bend quite easily. I was able to find GB, LV and KI pulses but KI pulse, though weak was there.

Session Five: 1PM Spleen Time

Clarissa arrived for the fifth session with no real complaints. Back pain was better although still there and her shoulders were very tight. Her eyes are starting to look brighter but she still has a very negative attitude to the world. We started this session with a chair massage to address the shoulder and back issues and after this her shoulders felt better. I did a Spleen Release for this session to help with the edema and the Kidney function and to help to move Qi which stagnates due to worry.

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H --	LV ↓	KD ↓	LI ↓	SP ↓	P ↓

Her pulses were again very weak and fast, but Kidney pulse was there and had not changed since our last session. During the release, Clarissa felt a lot of pain in the left leg when doing R #7 & 8 and but when doing L #7 & 8 pain was felt in the right shoulder. Her feet had more feeling again this week and movement was more noticeable in both feet. This made Clarissa very happy as it had been at least 10 years since she had had that much movement. Pulses changed after this release with the Spleen very much stronger and the Pericardium noticeably stronger. Clarissa had very little eye problems after this session and was able to leave shortly after the session.

Session Six: 1PM Spleen Time

Clarissa arrived this time, with a totally different look on her face; she had more color and brightness to her eyes. After her last treatment she had warm ripples running down her right thigh and then extremely bad stomach cramps that lasted about five minutes. She remembered that she used to have

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the same stomach cramps years ago and she had been going to the bathroom more, which was fabulous due to her renal failure. Both feet were continuing to have movement and her blood sugar had dropped 1.5 points lower. Even though there were so many positive changes this week, she had a lot of stress this week due to her father's health issues and her back from her shoulders to waist was extremely sore and she was very uptight and tense. Checking her pulses this time, I noticed a big difference. Her pulses were easier to find and they were slightly slower and a bit stronger all except the Pericardium which was very faint, left side pulses are still weaker than the right.

SI ✓	GB ✓	BL ✓	LI ✓	ST ✓	TW ✓
H ✓	LV ✓	KD ✓	LI ✓	SP ✓	P ↓

I decided to do a Pericardium Release with added back points (13, 14, 15, and 16). Clarissa was very uptight and tense at the beginning of the session and it wasn't until halfway through the session she began to relax. She felt a lot of pain in her shoulders during this release but then it felt like her shoulders were lighter. She noticed more feeling in her feet and was able to identify which toe was being touched on both feet; this was the first time for that! At the end of the session, she really looked like the weight of the world had been removed from her shoulders, she was more at peace. During the session she told me that even though her number of sleep hours had not improved, the quality of her sleep had, she was no longer having dreams about fighting with her mother and when she awakened she felt more rested.

Conclusion

Working with Clarissa has really been a rewarding experience for me, seeing the improvements in her health and mind state. When I first began, there were so many health issues and using the Great Regulator Channel was a perfect way to introduce Clarissa to the power of Acupressure. As the Great Regulating Channel controls the basic yin and yang energies of the body, she was able to see a difference in her health and mental well-being after just one session which gave her hope that this would help her.

In the beginning, I was not sure what Clarissa's CF was but, as the sessions went on, it became evident that she was a very unbalanced Wood CF. Her voice, the clipping, angry way she spoke, her symptoms, depression, frustration, hip pain, soft nails, itching. She had resigned herself to life and just plodded through each day, building more resentment to her fate. She had stopped caring about herself and put others needs ahead of hers and this led to great frustration. In her own words, she just wanted everyone around her to be happy and like her, even if it meant doing things that made her unhappy. She would retire each evening at 10 and she would not fall asleep till almost 11 and then be awake again at midnight only to fall asleep again between 3 and 4 to get up at 5:30 for her insulin. She was angry with her siblings for their lack of support/assistance with her father's health care but would not say

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anything to them because she felt: “what good would it do?” She also felt frustration toward her other family members but she would not say anything as she wanted them to like her, and so Clarissa’s silence built up more resentment within herself.

Each session we made small breakthroughs, both physically and emotionally. She began to understand that her frustration was causing her back issues, and that when she chose to stand up for herself by speaking up for her own needs people did not lash-out at her in response but instead said “oh, I didn’t know”. As a result, Clarissa began to smile a bit more. She had never said anything about her mother until the sixth session and this will be a doorway that we will be exploring. I suspect there is a Husband/Wife imbalance and this maybe the reason that her left pulses are hard to find and weaker than the right.

It has been very fulfilling as a practitioner to see the changes that have occurred in Clarissa. She arrives with brightness to her face, and she is not as angry with the world. She is learning stand up for herself and enjoy a bit of quiet reflection and organizing her life again. In the beginning I was truly not sure of what direction to go due to the amount of health issues and wondered if acupressure would really help. Each week seeing small changes has renewed my confidence in my abilities to choose the correct course of treatment. Even though, I believe Clarissa to be a Wood CF and I have not really worked in the Wood meridians, changes have been happening. The biggest changes seemed to occur when working in the Water and Earth meridians which would make sense as Water is the mother of Wood and Wood controls Earth.