

Healing Hearts

Healing, Consciousness & Wellbeing News

October 2022



Photo Silver Falls: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

HEALING HEARTS

Edited by Suzanne King, *Reiki Energy for Life*

Now that the long dark days of winter are behind us, and we have a spring in our step, its a perfect time to explore all the wellness opportunities that Mt Wellington / kunanyi has to offer. There's plenty of ideas within this edition to get you pulling on your walking boots.

We meet passionate story-teller and walking guide Andy Crawford, from Walk on kunanyi, while Craig Doumouras will wet your appetite to go waterfall hunting. Piet Blokker of Stay Koel, takes us on 'Wild Wellness Fire and Ice Walk', plunging you into the art of cold-water immersion and the Wim Hof breathing technique. And Jono Stagg tells us how easy it is to go forest cruising and just roll down the mountain on one of his Hobart Mountain Bike Tours.

After all that activity, this edition also seeks to inspire new ways of thinking about healing, consciousness and wellbeing this Spring.

- Craig Doumouras, Waterfall Expert
- Piet Blokker, Stay Koel, Cold Water Therapy
- Andy Crawford, Walk on kunanyi
- Jono Stagg, Hobart Mountain Bike Tours
- Medical Intuitive Summit & Qigong Summit
- Energy Medicine & Healing the Liver

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Editor's Letter

The beauty of the trees
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass
speaks to me.

The summit of the mountain,
the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me.*

Indeed our majestic Mt Wellington / kunanyi speaks to everyone. For the First Nations palawa peoples, kunanyi is a place of deep cultural and spiritual significance, where the sky above, the waterways and the mountain speak of connection to country, to ancestors and centuries old Creation Stories. This is where ancestors gathered food, where they walked, where their spirits live. A deeply sacred place - a beacon representing the past, present and beyond.

Today, many Tasmanian's like me attest to feeling a great connection and reverence for the mountain. Just seeing the famous Organ Pipes resplendent in the pink light of dawn is a reminder of how lucky we are to have such beauty and wildness at our doorstep. As Andy Crawford of Walk on kunanyi explains in this edition, the mountain is a sprawling extension of our own backyards and is the doorway to South-West World Heritage area. All it takes is just a quick drive to Fern Tree to fill your nostrils with the smell of mountain air and a hint of adventure. A plethora of walking trails, waterfalls and wondrous velvety mossy glens await. This edition is dedicated therefore to highlighting some of the spectacular, memorable and indeed life-changing experiences available on kunanyi.

Apart from immersing ourselves in nature, the recent round of world Qigong and Intuitive Medicine Summits and reiki research provide lots of food for thought on how to strive for wellness this Spring. I loved an analogy of Suzanne Geisemann, Medical Intuitive (identified as one of the 100 most spiritually influential people of our time) who said: If you think about why a dandelion pushes itself up through the cracks in the concrete, it is because it has the natural impulse for growth and regeneration - and your body is no different. Your body has the same impulse to flourish.

If you are after ways to feel renewed and motivated and holistic ways to think about rejuvenation and wellbeing, this edition of *Healing Hearts* covers a lot of (Spring-time) ground.

*Excerpt: Written by Chief Dan George
(Chief of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, British Columbia)

Best wishes to all,

Suzanne King
Reiki VII Practitioner
Reiki Energy for Life

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Silver Falls, kunanyi

I only went out for a walk
And finally concluded to stay out
till sundown

For going out,
I found,
Was really going in.

By John Muir

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The Art of Waterfall Hunting in Tasmania



Interview with waterfall expert Craig Doumouras

About Craig: Having hiked to hundreds of locations in Tasmania, Craig can be considered the State's leading authority on waterfalls. He has published a dedicated waterfall website as a resource for the community and has authored two definitive waterfall guidebooks. His resources are used extensively by hikers as well as families who are just seeking accessible falls for a day trip with children.

Craig, why did you start documenting waterfalls in Tasmania? It really began when my mum passed away and I was collating photos for her funeral. There were very few photos of my mum where she was smiling, but one photo in particular showed her grinning, pointing at a waterfall we later learned was Russell Falls. She truly looked happy, and in my grief for months afterwards, that one photo spurred me to chase the happiness she had experienced. At the same time, I started to learn photography and discover auroras. Even though I hadn't been a hiker, I started to venture out and went to one waterfall, then another. I soon found though that waterfall information in Tasmania was sparse and if there was information, it was often incorrect. I had to piece together information from say a Council website or Parks and Wildlife or Forestry Tasmania website. I started to look up GPS coordinates which also led me astray. One day I found myself standing in the middle of a paddock, 200 km off course! That frustrated me so much that I started to think about putting together my own resources.

Where did you even start to create such a voluminous resource? I have a degree in Computer Science - Software Development, so I knew I had the skills and the resources to develop a proper database and website to document waterfalls. Once I'd set up the database and website, a friend helped me to create the *Waterfalls of Tasmania* Facebook page, which worked to attract other dedicated waterfall chasers. So I learned a lot through the Facebook community and every weekend I went hiking to a new destination, tracking down waterfalls one by one. Importantly, others became involved and started to document waterfalls for the website as well. So it became a community effort. I initially shrugged away from the idea of writing books, mainly because information about waterfalls changes over time. But then I realised a book is an historical piece of literature showing a snapshot of time. In years to come people could use the book and realise what some of our waterfalls were like back in the generation we lived in.

When you were researching, did you come across aboriginal references? Oakes Falls (commonly known as Myrtle Gully Falls) near the Cascade Brewery comes to mind. That was given a palawa kani name of turikina truwala (meaning simply 'Mountain Waterfall'). Also, the Punchbowl Falls near Kings Meadows; it's palawa kani name is luyni mungalina that translates to 'rock raining'. This is particularly poetic as the waterfall comes to life after good rainfall. When I was first told about the name of luyni mungalina, I was told it translated to 'rock crying' which is more beautiful, but the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre officially translated it to 'rock raining'.

How would you say chasing waterfalls has benefited your health and wellbeing? I've struggled with depression and anxiety but find being in nature helps a lot. The challenges of being out in nature, pushing my body; it makes you appreciate things. As a young man I would only appreciate material things but what I have seen out in the wilderness has changed my perspective. I now think nature is far more precious than material things. Nature has a way of making you tune into what is more important and I love hiking into the wilderness.

[continued next page]

Interview with Craig Doumouras continued



What are your favourite waterfalls on kunanyi / Mt Wellington?:

There's a lot of smaller waterfalls that are easily accessible, like Silver Falls at Fern Tree. Then there is an easy walk to Secret Falls on the Myrtle Gully Track. It's only a 2 km hike so easy for families. And from there you can visit Myrtle Gully Falls which is 50 metres further along the track.

My favourite is Wellington Falls, accessible from the Springs. From the mountain you can see the coast and then you climb further across the rock field (known as the 'Potato Fields'). This area also passes the famous Disappearing Tarn.

For those who are unfamiliar with Wellington Falls, it is a large waterfall which drops over a sheer cliff face into a river that meanders through a gorge. It's magnificent, and worth a visit, but people need to be prepared for a moderately lengthy hike to get to it.

Wellington Falls
Photo: Courtesy Waterfalls of Tasmania

Can you describe some of your experiences?: When visiting waterfalls, I always get a rush of excitement, especially when I can start to hear the waterfall for the very first time. As you near a waterfall, the sound gets louder and more enticing. For me, I listen to the sound to try to visualise what the waterfall will look like. I spend some time trying to guess its height and its flow. I guess it builds up my suspense, and helps me appreciate the waterfall even more!

I remember visiting Rinadena Falls in the Walls of Jerusalem National Park. I had not visited this waterfall before, and the hike into it was through a sensational forest. We had been walking for about four hours and the waterfall had finally reached our ears. The final approach was up a small hill. And as you're looking towards the top of the hill, you first see the sky and the trees above the hill. The further you walk up, the top of the waterfall begins to come into view. Each step revealed something new, and finally you're at the top of the hill admiring the waterfall in all its splendour. It was the most unique welcoming waterfall that I have ever experienced! The waterfall unveiled itself from the top down, slowly revealing itself from the hill that hidden it from view. It's beauty was nothing short of stunning.

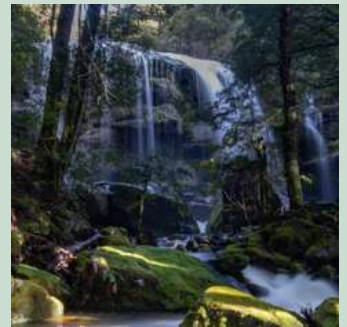


Photo: Rinadena Falls
Courtesy Waterfalls of Tasmania

My wife (who had been lagging a few metres behind) joined me on the hill. I remember her face just lit up, and her mouth gaped at such an extraordinarily beautiful waterfall. I will never forget how we were both so mesmerised.

Would you say that the journey is as important as the destination then? Often the journey itself has made a big impact on me. Like when I trekked to Warners Falls, deep in the Great Western Tiers and Central Highlands. I walked across the plateau and along a bluff for about 20-30 km and got to the source of the river system. I'll never forget standing there, with water lapping at my toes, thinking this is the source of eco-systems which work to feed waterfalls.

For more information, refer to the Waterfalls of Tasmania website. The website is administered by a community of volunteers actively documenting waterfalls and hikes for the purpose of helping other like minded people visit regions across Tasmania in a safe and environmentally friendly way. Happy waterfall hunting!

Website: <https://waterfallsoftasmania.com.au>

Plunge into the chill, Wake Up and 'Stay Koel'

Interview with Piet Blokker - Cold Water Therapy & Wim Hof Breathing Expert



About Piet: Piet offers guided breath-work and cold water immersion therapy sessions for his Stay Koel business and also for Wild Wellness Method in Tasmania. He promotes being strong, happy and healthy, pain free and able to live and love life to the full and advocates that a primary way to do this is by practicing the Wim Hof breathing technique and through cold water immersions. He teaches how to enjoy plunging into Tasmania's icy shores and waterways; a practice which activates immense health benefits. Piet exudes warmth and vitality which is an enormous feat after experiencing serious illness. He is now free from cancer, enjoys a rewarding life at his property on the Forth River and constantly strives to connect to nature and the universe.

What led you to learn the Wim Hof breathing method? I was in hospital for four weeks and as I lay there, I knew I was losing weight, that I was slowly dying and that I needed to do something. I realised then that it's not about how many houses you own. I was about to become a grandfather and I wondered if I would ever see my grandchildren. As I am very family centred, this was a poignant moment and deeply insightful. I then became peaceful and felt like I was having a rebirth and released my old life. I didn't know how I would turn my life around but I ripped out my nasal gastric tube and said to myself "that's it"! So that was the start of my 'awakening'. I started to get involved with essential oils, to learn reflexology and kinesiology and I started to feel energy flowing through my hands. I started to realise that we have the capacity to heal ourselves but due to my lymphoma, I still had to have eight gruelling months of chemotherapy. I felt my body decline and became very acidic, and I developed painful rheumatoid arthritis. At that stage I could hardly get out of bed and I only got through my days by taking 16 panadol a day. My sister read about Wim Hof and when I looked at his website, what jumped out at me was "how to get control of your body through breathing, scrub out acid in your body and get rid of inflammation."

What happened when you started to learn the technique for yourself?: I started a 10 week course and by Week 4, 90% of my rheumatoid arthritis was gone! So Wim Hof breathing has been completely life-changing for me. I started to feel on top of the world. Within one month I had gone from 16 panadol a day to none! Then I thought the next step was to fill the bath with cold water. I have to say it was difficult at first, and yes, it was painful. I only did 5 minutes the first time, but I persevered, and when I combined the breathing exercises, it wasn't painful anymore. Then I thought, if I can do this, I can teach this. I became passionate about becoming an instructor right at the time when Wim Hof was coming to Australia. I attended his two-day course, then started to teach friends and family and the following year returned for a Master Class.

How do you feel during a breathing exercise?: I feel like I'm in a dream state. I feel really connected to my body, my inner truth and nature. Its like a beautiful spiritual journey. And the people who come to my courses feel this too. We do a journalling exercise, and they report feeling grounded, content. They see beautiful visualisations, report seeing their ancestors, spirit guides – they have truly amazing experiences. So the breathing exercises and the cold water immersion therapy that I teach, it connects people to nature, to their spiritual sides. When they are in this breathing state, they can see a side of themselves they don't normally see.



Photos: Courtesy Stay Koel

Interview with Piet Blokker continued



Photo: Courtesy Stay Koel

So between 10.00 am to 4.00 pm people have had a life-long, memorable experience and they have learned new skills, to keep promoting health and wellbeing in their daily lives.

What are the health benefits of practicing this breathing method and doing cold-water immersions?

Many positive health benefits emanate from the practice, like reducing inflammation and releasing stress from the body. To begin with, the therapy activates the parasympathetic nervous system. This is incredibly important, as statistically 70% of people permanently live in their sympathetic ('flight, fight and freeze') nervous system, which of course negatively impacts the body in numerous ways and impacts quality of sleep. The method that I teach activates the parasympathetic ('rest and digest') nervous system plus the hypothalamus which acts as the body's thermostat. This all lays out the conditions which are perfect for mitochondria to multiply. People generally don't breathe properly and due to lack of oxygen, their mitochondria are in a very poor state. Lots of oxygen equals healthy mitochondria, which works to promote longevity. Also, when it gets colder, the body starts to produce more brown fats (which hang around the organs) so that's a good thing too! The therapy gives your mitochondria a work-out, kicks in your metabolism and elevates your mood.

Can people have private sessions with you? Yes, I also teach four hour 'Breakthrough Sessions' for people who are stressed and maybe feeling stuck or feeling lack of motivation. And I see the difference in people. For example, one of my clients (who is an athlete) told me that after a course he had improved his performance, running a personal best. I have sessions running across the State - at my peaceful property on the Forth River, to teaching for Wild Wellness Method at The Cove near Devonport to kunanyi to the beaches close to Hobart.

What is your vision for the future?: I want everyone to be happy, healthy, strong and feel the power of healing themselves. Listen to pain as it's a messenger to change but be gentle on yourself and learn to respect your beautiful human body and the beauty of nature.



For more information about Piet Blokker and Stay Koel contact:

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Can you lead me through the course you teach on kunanyi?:

The 'Wild Wellness Fire and Ice Walk' includes instruction from myself plus a guided walk (refer next interview with Andy Crawford of 'Walk on kunanyi'). We start at the end of Betts Road and walk along the Cathedral Rock track to the North West Bay River. People start to learn why the mountain is so incredibly special as we walk through magnificent rainforest featuring man-ferns which have been there for hundreds of years. I teach the breathing exercises first, before we arrive at a beautiful rock-pool where we do our cold-water immersion.

After the fire and ice walks we converge in a shed in front of a wood heater. This is a very beautiful, special space provided by Matt of 'wisdomthroughwood.com'. And this is where we warm up next to the fire and where we journal our experiences.



Photo: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi & Wild Wellness Method

For information on 'Wild Wellness Fire and Ice Walk' on kunanyi and other Wild Wellness Method day trips and courses:

Website: <https://www.wildwellnessmethod.com>
Email: alice@tailoredtasmania.com

See kunanyi through the eyes of a storyteller



Photo: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi

Interview: Andy Crawford of Walk on kunanyi

About Andy: Andy offers a unique way to experience the mountain through his 'Walk on kunanyi' range of guided day walks. Through a lifetime of work and recreational activities, like rock-climbing and looking for hut ruins, he's developed an intimate knowledge of the mountain. Not only does he know kunanyi from a geologist, geochemist and catchment manager perspective, but he's also a walking library of mountain stories. He is passionate about connecting people to kunanyi, which he describes as a magical treasure-trove and one of the most sacred sites in southern Tasmania.

What was the catalyst that made you start 'Walk on kunanyi'?: I've always called Tassie home and seen the mountain as an extension of my own backyard. There's amazing geology, plants and animals, and so much history and so many stories, like aboriginal stories, early settler and bushranger stories. And one of my favourite past-times is to look for hut ruins. So I've always loved the mountain's landscape, the flora and fauna, it's geology, its history and learning how the palawa people lived in harmony with the mountain. I'd already started to wonder how I could bring all the mountain's stories to life for people. For example, I love Charles Darwin's commentary about the mountain in 1836 – he was completely enamoured by its beauty. He said of the tree ferns at the time, *"I saw one which was at least twenty feet to the base of the fronds, and was in girth exactly six feet. The fronds forming the most elegant of parasols, produced a gloomy shade, like that of the first hour of the night."*

So I was already working on the mountain as the catchment manager and thinking all of these things when a dear friend of mine died of a stroke (he was only 31 years at the time). He'd already decided a few years previously to ditch the corporate life. His death and his life philosophy was a big wake up call to me. Just before he died, I'd also had a thought that "I wish someone was a catalyst to celebrate all that the mountain has to offer." So then I started to plan a business model that allowed me to offset carbon emissions and help support preserving Tassie's wild places by contributing to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy. I also wanted to ensure that 'Walk on kunanyi' became a vehicle that allowed people to connect to nature.

How do your guided walks make people see the mountain differently?: It's always amazed me, how much the mountain is loved and how little people know about it. Everyone looks up there every day to check what the weather is doing, but their version of 'doing the mountain' is going to the pinnacle and taking a photo. Apart from the walks, I'm passionate about 'mountain stories', as I think its stories that will really stick in people's minds. So while we are walking, I will be sharing stories and pointing out things like the unique mountain shrimp's habitat. They might be locals and seen the mountain all their lives, but I think the walks, listening to stories, being immersed in history, that's when people feel a renewed appreciation and love for the mountain.



'In Darwin's Footsteps' walk in unique forests
Photo: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi

[continued next page]

Interview with Andy Crawford continued



Photo: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi

How does the mountain make you feel?: It slows me down and gets me away from decisions and all that daily input. But calm walks in perfect weather don't push you, so I like the hard stuff too, like walking through torrential rain. You are really present in that moment, all your senses are alive and you remember those kind of walks years later. I also see and feel the change in seasons really intimately, like I will see the fungi season start, if plants are growing early or late, and I notice when all the migratory birds have gone and only the local birds are left. So appreciation for the whole natural world and its constantly shifting and changing aspect – I love that.

What are the types of plants you point out along the way?: While we're walking I will point out plants that were used by the palawa people for medicinal purposes, like Tasmanian pepperberry. Also various plants and berries that they used to eat, like cheeseberry and pink berry. I have had an opportunity to combine my walks with a custodian led experience, so those walks present more stories and more information about the mountain from a palawa perspective. I've also done custodian led star-gazing tours, where people learn about the palawa people's creation story.

You're obviously a passionate storyteller. What sorts of stories would you tell people on one of your guided walks?: From a geologist perspective, I love telling people how the mountain was formed. It's a story that links us to Gondwana (the previous super-continent). I explain how in the Jurassic era (when Australia broke away), hot molten rock came rushing up through the earth's crust. That was the start of dolerite forming, creating over 30 million years the distinctive vertical columns of dolerite which is evident across Tasmania; from tall sea-cliffs to Cradle Mountain and kunanyi's Organ Pipes. Then I love talking about the mountain's 'romantic era' when people would walk from one hut to another and have Devonshire teas. People even carted a piano up there, and you could play croquet! Then there's hermit stories, early settler stories and bushranger stories, like Rocky Whelan and his band of not so merry men.

Can you give an example of a harder walk you offer, which requires a guide and a good level of fitness?: Even if you are an avid walker, it's tricky to put together the guided walk I offer called 'Sea to Summit'. That's a big day out! We start by touching the water at the waterfront and then walk up the Rivulet Track behind the brewery. We keep climbing and go along the Zig-Zag Track and up to the summit. It's rare to find a walk from sea-level to alpine areas and a mountain summit in the space of a day. There's an amazingly varied environments along the way (dry forest, wet forest, rainforest, sub-alpine and alpine). And when you reach the summit – sure there's the famous view across Hobart, but if you look south-west, you are looking into the wilderness, to the South-West Wilderness World Heritage area. So when you think of it, there's practically World Heritage wilderness right to Hobart's doorstep. Richard Flanagan summed it up beautifully when he said that *"kunanyi is the finger of the south-west wilderness that reaches out to touch the heart of Hobart."* [continued next page]

Interview with Andy Crawford continued:



Photo: Courtesy Walk on kunanyi

What are some easier walks that would be suitable for a family?

- **Organ Pipe Track**

One of the most popular walks on the mountain is the Organ Pipe Track and one of the tours I offer is right under the Organ Pipes. I collaborate with the kunanyi explorer bus so people are dropped off at a point where we walk along a flat section of trail (so flat you could push a pram along!). To your right there is the towering Organ Pipes and to the left, a beautiful view across snow-gums and sub-alpine environment and there are so many beautiful unique Tasmanian plants along the way too. After 2 km, we start to wind downhill to the wetter forests and come out at the Springs, get a coffee at the Lost Freight Café (and that's where the bus picks you up).

- **Myrtle Gully Falls Track:**

Another nice short walk is the Myrtle Gully Falls track. You drive to the end of Old Farm Road (behind the Cascade Brewery). You walk through rainforest to get to Myrtle Gully Falls (known in palawa language as turikina truwala). It's a smaller version of Russell Falls and only takes about half an hour return!

- **Octopus Tree:**

This is another easy half hour round trip and is a family favourite. You park at Shoobridge Track below the Springs. The Octopus Tree is a towering eucalypt whose roots grip an enormous sandstone boulder. This area is a significant site for the palawa people, particularly the Mouheneene People of the South-East Nation.

What is your vision for the future: Continue to connect people to Tassie's wild places. If I can keep on doing that, then I'm on a winner!

Iconic guided walks & experiences include:

- Under the Organ Pipes - Half Day
- Wild Wellness Fire & Ice Walk - Full Day
- Explore Dark Skies & Southern Skies
- In Darwin's Footsteps Half Day
- Sea to Summit Full Day



We walk on kunanyi in muwinina country, and acknowledge the palawa people of lutruwita as the traditional owners, who have looked after the land, sea and sky for more than 40 thousand years. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

For more information about Walk on kunanyi contact:
Website: <https://www.walkonkunanyi.com.au>
Mobile: 0481 226 981
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King of Forest Cruising

Interview: Jono Stagg of Hobart Mountain Bike Tours



Courtesy: Hobart Mountain Bike Tours

Background: Jono is a Hobart identity - locals know him well and there's plenty of client feedback that suggest he's a bit of a 'legend.' He's known for his mountain biking knowledge and loves a chat; whether he's behind the handlebars of a mountain bike or behind the counter at The Stagg (cafe opposite Franklin Square). Maybe you've popped in to grab a coffee on the way to work or had a giggle at the groan-worthy 'saying of the day' on the sandwich board outside. Whether you've interacted with Jono or not, his positive, upbeat nature makes him everyone's friend. So who better to go biking with!

How did you begin Hobart Mountain Bike Tours?: I was riding with my mates and one of them was talking about a bike tour on the mainland which included a swanky lunch. That made me think about how I would run my own bike tour. I think it's more than just the view - it's about stories they will be talking about with friends, long after the bike ride has finished. It's also about friendship from start to finish and building stories about Hobart life. I love giving people memories, trying to create memories through experiences and delivering something that I think people will remember. So that's when I started to pick trails with my mate, and the mapping out process took about 12 months.

Do you need to be an experienced mountain bike rider?: Beginners and advanced riders come along, but I'd say the people that get the most enjoyment out of a tour are the beginners. You don't need any mountain biking experience as I take people on basic trails as an introduction to the mountain. We start at Nieka and roll down the Pipeline Track. There is a fabulous point on the track where we pass man-ferns 20-30 feet high. We keep riding right the way down through the Waterworks to where the track ends at Molle Street. After two hours we end up at Grinners Pub where I buy everyone a beer. Along the way I've tried to make people fall in love with Hobart - and that's not hard is it! I love swapping stories as we are riding along, I get a buzz out of meeting people.

What do you love about kunanyi / Mt Wellington?: The mountain makes me feel so relaxed, away from daily frustrations. As soon as I get off the road and get on the bike within the first 50 metres I just sigh with relief. The way the beauty of the mountain changes - around the Springs you have the eucalypts and forests, classic beautiful mountain terrain, and up further there's gnarled trees fighting to hang on. Then up towards the summit, near the Look Out, if you look west, the mountain drops down to 'Dead Island'. There is a real alpine beauty above the treeline and sub-alpine terrain. Then there are the huts - there are secret ones like 'Luckman's Hut' (heading away from the summit, if you look hard enough, there is a green tin roof). I love finding those huts. I feel the sense of heritage and it makes me wonder 'what happened here?' The Disappearing Tarn is also special to me. One day I took my son and we got there before dawn for a photographic opportunity. That was so special to share that experience with him.

What are your favourite areas on the mountain?: I love the accessibility of the Lost World, O'Grady's Falls, Sphinx Rock and the Octopus Tree. These are all examples of genuine mountain experiences that give you a real sense of wild and makes you think this is what life is all about, away from the chaos. A couple of times a year we ride to the back of the mountain, and that's when you get a sense of how enormous it is. There's a fire trail that you can follow that links up with North-West Bay and you can go all the way to Willie Smith's Apple Shed in Grove.

What is your vision for the future?: I hope to keep helping people really see the mountain and see it in a respectful way and continue to have relaxed encounters with people.

For more information about Hobart Mountain Bike Tours contact:

Website: <https://hobartmtbtours.com.au>

Mobile: 0416 644 504

Email: Jono@HobartMTBTours@outlook.com.au



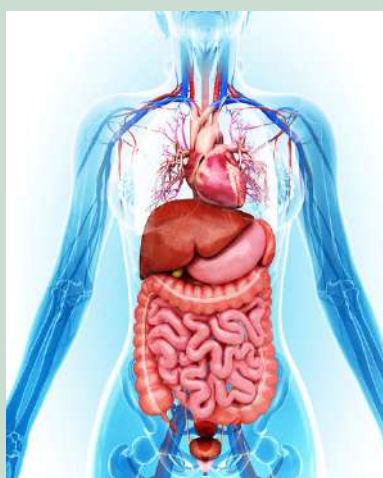
Energy Medicine Concepts

Introduction to the body's 'river' system

Introduction to energy medicine traditions: Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), qigong and reiki are all types of energy medicine practices which treat the body holistically. This means that the body, and the organs, are considered within a complex web of inter-connecting relationships, made up of subtle layers of energy centres, fields and pathways. Organs are viewed on a deeper level, more than just their isolated and anatomical functions.

For example, it is understood that emotions, beliefs, thoughts, and traumas all play a role in impacting the organs and work to either promote or deplete the body's all-important power supply (known as Qi or Ki). In addition, TCM and qigong practitioners also teach a sensitivity to how seasons can affect the organs. (Refer to the following article 'Healing an 'Angry' Liver - An Energy Medicine Perspective' which refers to the seasonal affect of Spring upon the liver). Regardless of which energy medicine modality you choose however, all practitioners are working towards the same objective, which is to promote wellbeing naturally through activation of Qi/Ki.

The body's 'river' system: The body's energy centres (known as chakras), located at primary points of the nervous system, and the network of subtle energy pathways (known as meridians) play vital roles in directing energy around the body. You can think of meridians as the body's river system. When energy is flowing through the meridians, through the organs, down to the fingers and back, the body is healthy. Yet (just like a river system) if a blockage develops the vitality of that area will stagnate and suffer.



Organ categories: From a TCM and qigong perspective, it is helpful to firstly understand the inter-relationship of organs. World renowned Qigong Master Robert Peng explains that the organs are divided into two categories being Zang (Yin energy type) organs and Fu (Yang energy type) organs and both categories of organs are connected to the brain.

- Zang (Yin energy type) organs relate to more solid organs, being the lung, spleen, heart, pericardium, kidneys, and liver. These are hidden organs which store the body's vital power supply known as Qi/Ki as well as to store blood.
- Fu (Yang energy type) organs are like the gall bladder, large intestine, stomach, small intestine, and bladder and relate to the transformation of bodily fluids (involved in receiving and digesting food, absorbing nutrients, and transmitting and excreting waste).

Explanation of Yin and Yang organ pairings: There are therefore yin and yang pairings of meridians and organs. The yang more 'male' type of energy in Chinese terms, is dynamic and produces heat whilst the yin 'female' type of energy is calmer. For example, the liver (Zang/Yin) is paired with the gallbladder (Fu/Yang type) and the lungs (Zang/Yin) is paired with the large intestine (Fu/Yang type).

The reason why organ pairings are important is that, from a TCM perspective, everything in the body has an equilibrium. According to esteemed Qigong Master Dr Jwing-Ming Yang, if any "organ does not have the appropriate level of Qi, it is either too Yang ... or too Yin" and this will 'affect the body's metabolism, and eventually even damage the organs."

References:

- The Shift Network: 9-module live video program, Yin & Yang Qigong: Open All Your Meridians to Unblock Unlimited Energy, Focus & Potential, taught by Qigong Master Robert Peng, https://theshiftnetwork.com/course/01RPeng03_22
- Yang, Jwing-Ming Dr, The Root of Chinese Qigong: Secrets for Health, Longevity, & Enlightenment

Healing an 'Angry' Liver

An Energy Medicine Perspective



Diagram: Location of the liver

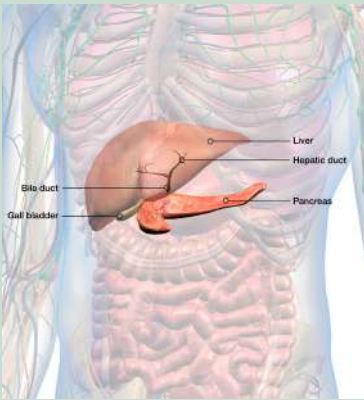


Diagram: Location of gallbladder

Introduction: In the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) tradition, the liver is paired with the gallbladder to maintain yin/yang equilibrium. In addition, the liver plays a vital role in storing the body's energy (known as Qi or Ki). Now that these key principles have been introduced, this article presents a closer look at the inter-relationship between the liver and the gallbladder and considers the factors which cause an imbalance in the liver and how to heal the liver (from an energy medicine perspective). These considerations are presented by Registered Acupuncturist Geraldine Robinson of Willow Massage & Wellness and Suzanne King, Reiki VII Practitioner or Reiki Energy for Life.

Exploring the liver/gallbladder partnership in more detail:

Acupuncturist Geraldine Robinson explains the relationship between the liver and its partner the gallbladder: "We think of the gallbladder as the liver partner. On a physical level, they are connected to storing and secreting bile and working to govern the soft tissues of the body. In that context, the gallbladder is very connected with the liver as it nourishes soft tissues with blood. Also, due to the job of releasing bile (which aids in digestion); if the liver/gallbladder is stagnant or deficient, it may not release enough bile, which in turn could lead to the development of digestive upset."

Qigong Master Robert Peng further explains that the liver "governs emotional states and helps regulate menstruation ... influences digestive functions of the stomach and spleen, and controls muscular activity, including the flexibility and agility of tendons and ligaments. In addition, the liver is known in TCM terms as housing the 'Hun' or soul." After these brief descriptions it becomes evident therefore that an inefficient or damaged liver could create major imbalances in other organs.

The role of the liver meridians: Now that we have explored the physiological and energetic aspects of the liver, it is also important to outline the role of the liver meridians. There are two liver meridians, or subtle energy pathways, which are particularly related to the liver. These meridians move life-force Qi/Ki energy from near each of the big toes, up the inside of the legs, up the thighs, through the groin, along the side of each hip and waist, stopping at just below the chest (on either side of the body). In summary therefore, the liver is one of the six key organs which stores Qi/Ki and the job of the meridians (i.e. the liver meridians) is to move Qi/Ki around the body.

The emotional side of the liver: As stated previously, energy medicine practices take into account the fact that negative emotions, beliefs, thoughts, and traumas can all work their way into an organ which has the potential to create energetic blockages. Indeed, famous medical intuitive Caroline Myss teaches that 'your biography becomes your biology'. So what negative emotions might get caught in the liver, which would cause a flow-on effect of an imbalance, disrupting the free flow of Qi/Ki and lead to pain and discomfort? According to Qigong Master Robert Peng, the liver is vulnerable to and associated with "aggressive behaviour, anger, bitterness, depression, frustration, impatience, irritability, jealousy, moodiness, negative outlook, nervous tension and resentment." [Continued next page]



The liver is vulnerable to negative emotions, especially in Spring

Healing an 'Angry' Liver - An Energy Medicine Perspective continued

The emotional side of the liver (continued): Acupuncturist Geraldine Robinson explains: "Apart from the physiological aspect of the liver and gallbladder, there is an energetic and emotional level as these organs relate to decision-making and the ability to assert oneself. As energetically the liver governs free flow of Qi/Ki around the body, if Qi/Ki is stagnating in the liver that often equates to people saying how 'stuck' they feel."



Spring wind can stir a deficient liver causing irritability

Signs of a liver imbalance: Geraldine further explains the signs of an imbalance in the liver: "an ashen complexion, eye problems (i.e. blurred vision), muscular weakness and complaints of insomnia. If a client complains of being irritable, moody, angry, frustrated all the time, then that is one of the first indicators of a liver problem."

Spring and the liver: In energy medicine terms, the liver and gallbladder meridian changes its rhythm in Spring. Geraldine explains how "Spring can be a hard time for more 'livery' people. The Spring wind can stir a deficient or stagnant liver and cause irritability or anger."

If you think of the way Spring entices sprouts to grow, rise and move outward, that is the same for anger residing in the liver. Symptoms such as pre-menstrual tension, migraines and even being more short-tempered, all relates to the season's impact on the liver. Of course, Tasmania's traditional Spring-time wind doesn't help matters!

To heal an 'angry' liver: There are of course many options available for healing an angry liver but if this article has resonated with you, or if you feel like you are stressed and feel blocked emotionally (known as 'stuck liver Qi') you could try some of the following therapies.



Acupuncture

Registered Acupuncturist Geraldine Robinson advises that acupuncture helps restore the free flow of liver energy and reduce stagnation.



Reiki

Reiki VII Practitioner Suzanne King advises that reiki works to pour healing energy into the body, open energy centres (known as chakras) and stimulate the flow of Qi/Ki throughout the body. Suzanne explains that the solar plexus chakra is "incredibly bright and visually it appears to me as usually a bright white light through to a lemon or golden colour."

"From a practitioner perspective, it is easy to determine if there is an imbalance in the chakra. It should literally feel like I am putting my hand into a light globe. So if that doesn't happen and if I see an opaque or grey colour, then I know the chakra is imbalanced or deficient. Applying reiki to particularly the solar plexus chakra (the closest chakra to the liver) will stimulate liver Qi/Ki. Reiki will also elevate mood, providing a means to feel energised, rejuvenated, balanced and centred."

Healing an 'Angry Liver' - an Energy Medicine perspective continued



Qigong

Qigong exercises to promote the flow of Qi/Ki through slow movements and practices which regulate and relax your breathing, your mind, and your body. Try local Zest East West range of Qigong and Meditation classes or there are plenty of online resources with many world renowned Qigong Masters like Lee Holden or Robert Peng (refer below).

Therapeutic Massage

Visit an Acupressure or Shiatsu practitioner, have a therapeutic massage or try reflexology. A regular treatment would be beneficial however you could also try the following at home - try pressing the point on the foot called the 'taichong' which stimulates the liver. This point is located between your big toe and the next toe and down a little. Massage the point just before the bones meet for five minutes.

Nutrition

Herbs and leafy greens: Just as your liver might feel fired-up, angry and imbalanced in Spring, there are Springtime ways to combat that disharmony. Now that your veggie garden has started to well and truly flourish, there are loads of opportunities to ensure your diet consists of lots of leafy greens. Eating leafy greens like spinach, silverbeet, kale and bok choy will work to nourish the blood and liver Qi/Ki. Also Chinese herbs are a fabulous option for treatment. To find a trained, registered and insured practitioner, refer to the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association (AACMA) list of registered practitioners.

There are many herbs and home remedies that you can use to promote optimum health in your liver too. For example, try drinking lemon water as the sour taste can help soothe the liver and flush toxins from the body. In addition, Acupuncturist Geraldine Robinson notes the importance of avoiding fried and/or greasy foods, alcohol and coffee. Unfortunately although these are the things you might crave most, they just aren't good for a deficient liver/gallbladder as they add too much liver heat.

Mental Health

From a mental health perspective, it is also good to not keep your emotions suppressed and just push them aside and try to 'soldier on'. A psychologist or counsellor can help guide you in a safe, supportive space to help you get 'back on track'.

Conclusion: As you can see from this brief article, there are a myriad of ways to nurture your liver and find ways to feel calmer and more balanced emotionally. If you would like to learn more about how energy medicine considers organs as more than just a set of physiological processes, you could start by referring to Qigong Master Robert Peng's online course available on The Shift Network: *Yin & Yang Qigong: Open All Your Meridians to Unblock Unlimited Energy, Focus & Potential*. In summary, Spring provides a perfect time to feel renewal in mind, body and soul. All of the practices above will start making you feel like you are flourishing - just like your beautiful Spring garden.



Geraldine Robinson
Registered Acupuncturist

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For more information about reiki contact Suzanne King, Reiki VII practitioner:

At: Reiki Energy for Life
Address: 86 Hampden Rd, Battery Point
Website: www.reikienergyforlife.com
Email: reikienergyforlife@outlook.com

Qigong Global Summit

The Shift Network presented an array of interviews with world renowned Qigong Masters including Lindsey Wei, Daisy Lee, Robert Peng, Ming Tong Gu and Lee Holden. Key learnings are presented below but for more information refer to The Shift Network <https://qigongglobalsummit.com> and references provided in this article.



Lindsey Wei: Founder & Head Martial Arts & Qigong Instructor Wudang White Horse, Martial Arts & Qigong Instructor

Lineage: 24th generation disciple of the Chun Yang Sect of Wudang Daoism

Training: Trained in Traditional Chinese Gong Fu at a remote mountain temple in the Wudang Mountains

Teaches: Online classes in tai chi, qigong and longevity practices

Author: The Valley Spirit: A Female Story of Daoist Cultivation

Website: www.wudangwhitehorse.com (refer website for archived classes)

Presentation: Ecology, Fasting of the Mind and Qigong Practice 'Dragon Qi Returns to Source'

Lindsey discussed the importance of Xin Zhai which refers to 'fasting of the mind'. Being able to empty your mind invites a place of stillness. This peaceful state calms the nervous system which in turn supports your health. In contrast, our constant immersion in media, our addiction to devices and tending to overthink, are all aspects which negatively affect our health as we are not moving, or resting. Fasting of the mind can be achieved through qigong and qigong seated meditation practices. Also, immersing ourselves in nature works to nourish the mind and body. There is a beneficial cyclic effect as qigong practices provide a way to switch our consciousness towards connection with the earth whilst nature provides a way to calm our nervous system.

Key factors underpinning Daoist traditions is respect for the earth and understanding that our lives are connected to the longevity of our habitats. In essence, external and internal ecology and all connected.

Lindsey presented a practice which emphasised this connection between internal and external landscapes called 'Dragon Qi Returns to Source'. She explained that the dragon is represented in rivers, waterways, lay-lines, ridges and mountains. In qigong, there is a beautiful practice which calls dragon qi (the energy of the power within the land) back into the body to our meridians (subtle energy pathways within the body). The feelings conveyed in this practice represents the feeling of quietness, stillness, and letting the landscape (ourselves) to rest.

To listen to the full interview with Lindsey Wei and to practice 'Dragon Qi Returns to Source' with her, refer to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQ0v9IN2MyY>



Master Ming Tong Gu: Founder of the Chi Center (a 79 acre retreat near Santa Fe) Named Qigong Master of the Year by the 13th World Congress on Qigong and Traditional Chinese Medicine

Trained: Received extensive training under Grandmaster Pang at the largest Qigong medicine-less hospital in China

Teaches: Wisdom Healing Qigong online (i.e. Qigong for Life Mastery and More Energy, Health, Love & Fulfillment)

Website: <https://chicenter.com>

Master Ming Tong Gu discussed his healing from chronic fatigue, his studies with Grandmaster Pang and his immersion in China's largest medicine-less hospital. Of importance was his awakening that energy is in our bodies and the universe, and that we can cultivate this universal energy. Once you do this, you open your heart and body to love, joy and you feel 'at one' with the universe. Qigong practices help to remove blocks and allow the sparks of healing to occur. When asked 'what are the blocks to healing' he answered that we need to understand that everything is interconnected. Diet is just one aspect. You need to take into account your relationships, work and what happened in your past. There must be a recognition that you have the power to change negative patterns; the first step is self awareness.

Intuitive Medicine Summit

The Shift Network presented an array of interviews with world renowned medical intuitives including Suzanne Geisemann, Farzana Nayani, Wendie Colter, Dr Titus Chiu and Peng Roden Her. Key learnings are presented below but for more information refer to The Shift Network <https://intuitivemedicinesummit.com> and references provided in this article.



Suzanne Geisemann: Former US Navy Commander and Aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff now working as a spiritual teacher and medium.

Teaches: Mediumship training; a simple method to connect to higher consciousness; the 'Sip of the Divine' meditation technique.

Author: Messages of Hope: The Metaphysical Memoir of a Most Unexpected Medium; Still Right Here: A True Story of Healing and Hope (and many more)

Website: suzannegiesemann.com (refer to website to view documentary 'Messages of Hope' which follows her journey from the devastation of 9/11 to working as a medium).

Suzanne conveyed ways that we can intuitively participate in healing. Meditation is a good way to begin, to start to understand that we are connected to one universal field which is intelligent and harmonious. With meditation you let go of your busy mind and leave your worries and your stories behind. So what is left is simply 'being'. By entering that state of consciousness, you surrender to total peace. And it is when you are in this peaceful state, that is when you receive healing insights. For example you might become aware of disharmony around you (like noticing patterns of negative thoughts and feelings). By developing awareness, you become attuned to how it feels if you are about to do something that will cause disharmony and pain and you can steer yourself towards more balanced, harmonious way of being. To assist people who are grieving, Suzanne teaches that our loved ones are still around us, and through her mediumship skills, becomes a conduit for messages from loved ones who have passed. She also teaches that this life is just one segment of our entire existence and that this life is just preparation to what follows.



Dr Titus Chiu: World renowned Functional Neurologist **Website:** drtituschiu.com

Background: Managed to overcome depression, low energy, brain fog, chronic pain and a life-threatening concussion after a car accident and is now on a life mission to teach people how to heal their brains.

Teaches: Online training programs on the brain and root cause neurology. Refer to website for articles relating to brain trauma, what to do to stop your anxiety (and more).

Author: BrainSAVE: A 6-Week Plan to Heal Your Brain from Concussions, Brain Injuries & Trauma Without Drugs or Surgery

Dr Chiu discussed that specific neural networks are related to emotions, like joy and happiness, and there are neural networks which are related to intuition, creativity and healing. If these neural pathways are not working however, then you will be unable to experience these wonderful aspects of life. One of the biggest problems he explained is "brain stress; when the nervous system gets short-circuited due to trauma, sickness and chronic stress." To find a path to healing, the first thing he advises to to stabilise the physical foundation of the brain, then clear out the chemical brain, clear out gut infections, then look at stabilising the emotional brain. One of the key techniques he found to being able to unlock intuition, creativity and healing was to activate the vagus nerve. Indeed he credits the vagus nerve for unlocking his own healing potential. The vagus nerve (which relates to the parasympathetic response of rest and digest) is located within the medulla in the bottom of the brain stem. One favourite way to activate the vagus nerve is to just gently place the fleshy part of your palms across your closed eyelids and you can combine this technique with deep breathing. This simple technique shifts the brain from the sympathetic nervous system (fight, flight and freeze responses) to calm and this occurs as the gentle pressure on the eyeballs activates what is called an 'ocular cardiac reflex'. In summary, you are eliminating the light and stimulation occurring around you. Dr Chiu explained this was also a good exercise if you suffer from 'brain fog', work on screens a lot and/or suffer from headaches.

Reiki Research



Evaluation of the Impacts of Reiki Touch Therapy on Patients Diagnosed with Fibromyalgia Who are Followed in the Pain Clinic

Journal: Holistic Nursing Practice: The Science of Health and Healing

Authors: Cinar, H.G., Ilhan, S., Alpar, S.

Published: 31 Jan 2022

The aim of the study was to investigate the effects of reiki natural energy healing on pain, anxiety and quality of life in patients who were suffering from fibromyalgia. The study separated 50 patients - 25 people in the experimental group who received reiki once a week for four weeks from a qualified reiki practitioner and 25 people in the control group who received 'sham' reiki from an anesthesiologist for the same period of time). Data was collected using a variety of techniques including the McGill-Melzack Pain Questionnaire and Visual Analog Scale to measure pain and anxiety levels of patients. Findings included significantly increased quality of life scores (relating to improved physical function, energy, mental health and reduced pain) compared to the control group. The study concluded that reiki treatments for patients with fibromyalgia may have positive effects on reducing pain, improving quality of life, and reducing state and trait anxiety levels.



Effects of Distant Reiki on Pain, Anxiety and Fatigue in Oncology Patients in Turkey: A Pilot Study

Journal: Asia Pacific Journal of Cancer Prevention

Authors: Demir, M., Gulbeyaz, C, Kelam, A, Aydiner, A.

Published: 2015; 16(12): 4859-62

The study was to determine the effectiveness of distant reiki on the pain, anxiety and fatigue of oncology patients. Of the two study groups, the control group received normal nursing care compared to the experimental group who received normal care plus five distant reiki sessions (one each night for 30 minutes). The results of the study were that patients in the reiki group reported significantly lower pain, stress and fatigue scores than the control group. The study concluded that reiki may decrease pain, anxiety and fatigue in oncology patients.

What is Distant Reiki?

Reiki practitioners are attuned and trained to send reiki by distance to the recipient. As the above-mentioned study indicates, the patient can receive reiki without even being in the presence of the practitioner. This practice is particularly helpful if the patient is in hospital or interstate.

As reiki is a complementary practice and works in harmony with treatments as prescribed by a medical practitioner, surgeon or oncologist, distance reiki provides an additional support mechanism by helping to reduce pain and anxiety.

Of course, a 90 minute in-person consultation is a far more in-depth treatment, which will leave the patient feeling more aligned, centred, in less pain and far calmer. Yet if you are unable to see a reiki practitioner in person, then distance reiki is an option and does provide a comfort if you are going through a stressful or painful time in your life. A practitioner can still connect to your energy and pain from a distance and can still feel when your pain has reduced. For more information, refer to: reikienergyforlife.com

Courses

Yoga, chanting, mindfulness courses (and more) with Mountain Mindfulness:

Sangita offers various full day retreats at Fern Tree which include a walk to Silver Falls. Currently available is: Chanting Retreat - 4 Dec 2022.

Phone: 0400 519 323

Email: contact@mountainmindfulness.com.au

Website: www.mountainmindfulness.com.au



kunanyi Mountain Run

Dates: 24-26 March 2023

What: kMR is a trail running festival celebrating Hobart's mountain culture. Runs include a 27 km mountain run, 68 km solo run and 68 km ultra relay.

Website: <https://kunanyimountain.run>

HeartMath Institute

Offers a range of education and resilience training resources including free resources, blogs and podcasts all dedicated to easing anxiety, stress and fear. Each podcast includes a restorative heart tool to help empower your life. To learn how emotions affect our heart rhythm patterns and to seek ways to achieve a coherent heart rhythm pattern through positive emotions refer to following websites.

Website: <https://www.heartmath.com> or <https://www.heartmath.org>

The Science of Healing: A Return to Wholeness - Energising Whole Person Health (8 week course)



Dr Shamini Jain,
Consciousness &
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Syllabus: Consciousness, Healing and the Biofield, Mind-Body-Spirit Practices, key studies that show the efficacy of hands-on energy healing and cutting edge advances in cancer treatment.

Produced by: Consciousness & Healing Initiative (CHI) Website: <https://chi.is>
Website: <https://scienceofhealingcourse.chi.is>

January 2023 edition

- Retraining your brain to be happy
- Developing new friendship networks
- Self-Compassion through mindfulness, self-kindness & common humanity
- Coming home to your body with breathwork
- Exploring wellness opportunities in the wild

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