

HEALTH

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TCM

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Stress relievers

According to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), emotions are manifestations of the organs' functions. TCM physicians regard anger, anxiety, fear, grief, extreme elation, over-thinking and terror as the most common disturbances. When these emotions become uncontrollable, they can damage organs. Extreme and prolonged emotional frustrations disturb *chi* flow (vital energy) in organs.

Based on the five-elements theory of wood, fire, earth, metal and water, the differing emotions correspond to specific organs. Anger impairs the liver, extreme elation the heart, grief and anxiety the lungs, over-thinking the spleen and fear the kidneys.

TCM has created methods that use so-called opposite emotions to solve problems, because often they're related to each other. An opposite emotion based on the five elements theory is often used to restrain harmful reactions.

Anger, for instance, corresponds to the liver and belongs to the wood element; it can be counteracted by either grief or anxiety. When someone is irritable, shouts or acts violently, TCM

suggests using sad news to calm and cool the anger. Extreme elation corresponds to the heart and belongs to the fire element; it can be counteracted by terror or fright to depress the excited mood.

Over-thinking corresponds to the spleen and belongs to the earth element; it can be counteracted by anger. When someone develops stress, is in low spirits or appears dull, enraging a person may reverse this state.

Grief and anxiety correspond to the lungs and belong to the metal element; they can be relieved by pleasant conversation and physical contact.

Terror and fright correspond to the kidneys and belong to the water element; they can be helped with over-thinking. When someone is timid, in a panic or has lost concentration, a thoughtful discussion may induce a deeper understanding of the problem.

