

Surviving the Winter Blues



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Now that the Christmas season is behind us, the true feeling of winter takes over. There is a stillness, quiet, almost trembling of the earth awaiting the dawn of spring. The seeds we have planted are germinating beneath the ground. And so the germinate is in us also.

Winter is about reflection, listening, being in the unknowing. This is what is so frightening to some people. It really is okay to be still, be with yourself, walk in nature and appreciate the stillness. At no other time of year will you experience the tremendous power of the stillness of nature.

Winter is about power, strength and determination. It is

associated with the water element in Chinese medicine. When all is well, we feel very strong and powerful inside. We are persistent and relentless (like the ocean) and clever (like streams). When things are out of balance, fear creeps in. We are sometimes frozen in fear and can't move out of it. This is similar to the feeling some people get at this very yin time of year. It is a time of contraction, hibernating, going within. In acupuncture we strive to balance this energy, so we can flow more easily through these energetic shifts.

Winter is a time to gather your resources for the upcoming spring. Get more sleep, take time for reflection, restore your energy. It is no accident that the darkness sets in so early. Nature is saying, "rest." The Chinese in the classical text, *The Nei Jing*, say that if one is not careful to flow with nature in the current season, it could bring illness in the upcoming seasons. Not to scare you, but just to get your attention.

Tips for Flowing with the Season of Winter:

- **Reflection** – of the past year

and the year to come

- **Stillness** – Walk in nature and observe the absolute stillness of the trees
- **Power** – Know your own power in moving through any situation
- **Persistence** – Drive forward persistently when it is important to you and it serves others
- **Wisdom** – Tap into the deep wisdom – like the bottom of the ocean
- **Cleverness** – Watch how clever water is through the movement of streams

If you are subject to depression at this time of year, go out and be with people. This is really a fire (summer) activity, but recommended when times are tough. As much as you can, practice being still with yourself, a warm bath (no reading) with some quiet music; a walk (alone); a meditation, some QiGong, a hot stone massage (quiet). It really is okay to cut off the noise of the world and our mind. We will be okay. The seasons will turn and we can say we've lived another precious cycle of seasons. What a gift!