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TANYA'S NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends

Dear Friends,

Thanks so much for the compliments I received on my July newsletter! You made my day! I always love to hear any comments or suggestions. I also received some specific questions about Qi deficiency, so if anyone needs more information (about any of my articles), please feel free to reach out. info@tanyaswriting.com



And congratulations to those of you who earned yourself a free Zen book! I greatly appreciate the additions to my email list. Keep them coming! I am happy to continue rewarding people with free Zen stories (for each new person who subscribes to my newsletter) and free books (for 5 sign-ups)! If you run out of friend-emails, how about forwarding this newsletter to your local librarian? Or the people in a local book club? I sure would appreciate it! I need to grow my platform as I progress with my writing.

This time I have some good news and some bad news concerning my writing career. First, the bad news.

Last week, I attended a free, intensive online summit, wonderfully hosted by Daniel David Wallace, on *The Premise*. After six years of studying writing, I understood the premise of a novel to be the core concept or central idea of the story; the “what-if” scenario that drives the plot, characters, and conflict in a story. For example: “What if a for-profit conglomerate takes over the assisted living facility where my protagonist, Lisa, works and puts her beloved fossils at risk?”

But these days, readers are impatient. Agents are looking for the next Hunger Games, where Katniss volunteers within the first five minutes. So, this summit pushed the boundaries of the premise to include how the main character initially reacts; the choice she makes that disturbs the status quo of her day-to-day life. In other words, Lisa would go into action immediately. Which makes my current draft feel like it is off to a very slow start.

Daniel explained it like this: the basic “what-if” is merely the main character experiencing bad weather. An engaging premise includes the main character’s decision to cross a rickety bridge in the hopes of getting out of the bad weather...better yet, the bridge then collapses as soon as they have crossed, so there is no going back. Some instructors call that a “one-way gate.” I watched a dozen lectures by professionals on how the premise must grab the reader, impress the potential agent, and secure the book’s success. With over **four million** new titles being published just this past year, the competition is fierce.

Other presentations revealed that my prologue may be a dreaded info-dump at the opening of the story. Apparently, prologues that flash forward are acceptable, but not prologues that fill in backstory.



I also discovered that my query letter to agents (I already took two courses on this!) needs serious revision. But it will have to wait, because it sounds like my 6th draft will involve a fundamental rewrite!

In short, I thought I was just a couple months away from querying agents. Now, it's back to the drawing board (to use a tired cliché). Ah, the life of a writer... At least my Taste Life Twice Writers were encouraging when I read aloud the twelfth chapter during our July meeting. There is hope!

Now, for the good news. Plans are coming along beautifully for the re-release of Tanya's Collection of Zen Stories. My friend is working on the new ebook version, the audiobook is now looking at an earlier release date, and I'm booked for my first podcast interview!



"Jam Sessions with Tina" is a podcast with conversations on leadership, personal growth, and professional decision-making that focuses on ditching surface-level corporate advice to explore authentic perspectives on how leaders show up every day. I will be interviewed by Tina Eliana the end of July, and the podcast should be posted by August 11th. [You'll find it here on YouTube.](#)

I had to purchase a professional microphone, prop my computer on a pile of books, and set up a fitting backdrop. I thought a podcast was a voice-only interview, but it turns out that the video will be posted on Youtube. Too bad I didn't get that haircut sooner...

I'd still like to know what podcasts you listen to (or if you don't!). I only received two responses to my last newsletter, so please take a minute to tell me: What do you like to hear about in a podcast, any podcasts you would recommend, and what turns you off? info@tanyaswriting.com or the contact form on my website.

I hope you'll tune in to my first one, and let me know what you think!

Hugs,

Tanya

AGING GRACEFULLY: How to Prevent Qi Deficiency, Part Two

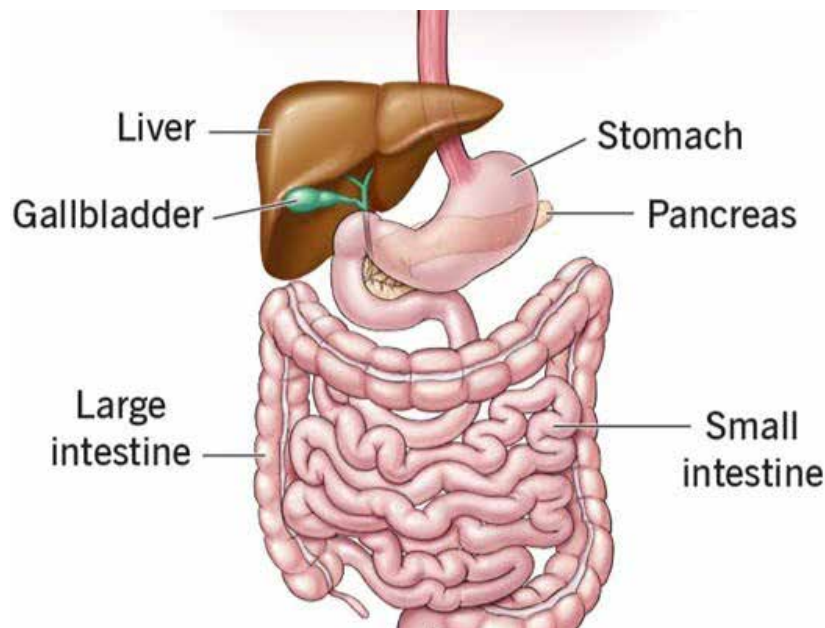
In the July issue of my newsletter, we began discussing one of the six major factors of aging: Qi Deficiency. I explained how the *stomach* and *lungs* play a role in aging, and gave you tips for keeping those organs healthy so your body receives the energy it needs to remain youthful and vivacious. ([Request a free copy of the July newsletter here.](#))

But the stomach does not act alone in the process of digestion. When discussing Qi Deficiency, we must consider the entire digestive system because it is critical to building Qi. First comes the stomach with its stomach acids to digest proteins, then comes the small intestine which digests fats with assistance from the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas. In this article, we'll look at how caring for your liver and gallbladder can also increase your energy. (We will cover the pancreas and, finally, the large intestine in Part 3, in the September issue).



The liver and gallbladder play a crucial role in digestion, so let's see how we can help them. The liver produces bile and the gallbladder releases it as needed into the duodenum to break down fats and help absorb essential vitamins. Most doctors check your liver function with a blood test. What if your liver values are poor (indicating inflammation)? What if you have high cholesterol which can lead to gallbladder stones?

Medication for high cholesterol has terrible side-effects. Instead, try helping your liver and gallbladder by changing one of two things: your diet or your yin (body fluids)—it depends on what type you are.



Let's talk about dietary changes first. If you have problems with liver values, reduce all toxins that could burden the liver (such as alcohol, pain pills, industrial chemicals) and reduce foods that cause high cholesterol (such as bad fats).

Examples of foods that should be reduced because they are a source of saturated fats include fatty meats and dairy products, such as butter, cheese, whole milk, cream, ice cream, and some vegetable oils (especially bad are corn oil and canola oil).

Trans fats are even more harmful. They increase the bad LDL cholesterol levels and reduce the good HDL cholesterol levels. Eliminate foods industrially made with vegetable oils: salty snacks such as potato chips and cookies, pizzas, margarine, cereal bars or hamburgers.

Good fats can be found in olives, avocados, nuts and seeds. As a vegan, I eat a handful of walnuts every day, and I enjoy sunflower seeds as an occasional snack.

Very good fats, called polyunsaturated fats, are in cold-pressed olive, sunflower, soybean, and flaxseed oils, also in walnuts, flax seeds, and fatty fish. Among these kinds of fats, Omega-3 is considered essential for humans and is related to the prevention of macular degeneration, cardiovascular diseases, age-related mental decline and degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Also, if you have pain, Omega 3 helps against inflammation. I take a daily flaxseed pill for Omega 3 because I am vegan and don't eat fish. (Eating pork is known to increase inflammation.)

Tip: Avoid bad fats, such as saturated fats and trans fats, which means reducing fatty meat (especially pork) and dairy products as well as cutting back on junk food. Consume good fats, such as polyunsaturated fats, especially Omega 3.

Saturated fats also make you tired, they make your mind foggy, and they weaken your immune system. But sometimes high cholesterol is not related to fats.

If you have high cholesterol quite suddenly, it could possibly be related to menopause: Yin deficiency caused by a reduction of estrogen results in less fluids in the body. Without enough fluids, the blood sometimes stagnates,

and cholesterol levels can read very high because waste products are not removed fast enough. Menopause is a complex subject, but mainly you need to find ways to drink more water, sweat less, and have less emotional stress as your body rebalances its hormones. (I do NOT recommend taking hormones due to their long-term side-effects.)

High cholesterol in healthy men can also be related to a yin deficiency: not enough body fluids. For example, if a man does too much sports, drinks too much alcohol, or uses a sauna—all of which drain body fluids—their yin deficiency can affect their digestion, and reduce their energy level. Drinking enough water and going to bed early (to build yin) can help.

Tip: *If you tend to be thin and you already eat according to the healthy protocol mentioned above, then to fight high cholesterol, be sure to conserve your yin (in this case, yin refers to body fluids).*

That pretty much covers the physical problems concerning our liver and gallbladder. But our internal organs can also be damaged by emotions. A weak liver is often associated with depression (if the person is introverted) and anger (if the person is extroverted). A weak gallbladder can be related to timidity and indecisiveness, often leaving a person bitter. If an organ is damaged, it can cause these emotions OR experiencing these emotions can damage the organ. It's the chicken and the egg problem! Although it is not always easy, we have the ability to change our emotions. Sometimes if you work to help the related organ on a physical level, it becomes easier to change your attitude.

Tips: *To help the liver: reduce stress, try meditation to let go of anger and depression, reduce any alcohol or toxins, and take milk thistle (silymarin regenerates liver cells). To help the gallbladder, let go of any bitterness or resentment you may feel (there are many visualization techniques for this), try to be more bold and decisive, reduce bad fats, and take herbs such as barberry bark, fennel seed, peppermint, burdock root and dandelion root. It is also best not to eat after 7pm (19.00). The liver and gallbladder are a couple in Chinese medicine. If you help one, you help the other.*

That ends Part 2 of Qi Deficiency on our way to aging gracefully. Don't miss the September newsletter for more helpful tips! And remember to be gentle with yourself. You are an amazing person, one of a kind. Someone to be cherished. Wishing you well on your journey!



Kay's Corner

A Dog's Life



Age 9 weeks (toddler)



Age 5 (35 human years)



Age 11 (77 human years)

Mom always talks about aging gracefully, taking care of your body. I say screw all that! Go out there and catch all the frisbees you can! Swim in icy water even if your joints ache the next day. Sprint until your tongue hangs out. Live like it's the last grass you are ever going to run through. Because you never know.

HOME ACTIVIST: Save on Soap

Hello to all you would-be Eco-Warriors! You may not be collecting plastic from the [Great Pacific Garbage Patch](#), but you can make a difference right in your own home. Change one behavior in favor of your environment, and you are a home activist!

Let's talk cleaning products.

VOC's: Sprays and cleansers release volatile organic compounds that evaporate into the air adding to ground level ozone and fog formation. Did you know that vapors escaping homes match industrial emissions in some major US metropolitan basins? Go easy on those nasty chemicals! [Cleaning products](#) can trigger asthma and reduce breathing capacity over time.

The answer is to use all natural products for your housekeeping, which are made from ingredients that are organic, safe, and biodegradable. [Eco-cleaning](#). I don't use a special spray for the windows and mirrors. No need for special floor cleaners or harsh toilet bowl detergents. I get by just fine with water and one basic bio-degradable soap...and a little elbow grease. I wipe down the windows and mirrors with a dry rag after I wash them, so they don't smear.

Rinsed chemicals like ammonia, bleach, and synthetic fragrances pass through local treatment plants and enter rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Leftover phosphorus and nitrogen compounds spur massive algae growth that suffocates fish and aquatic life. Certain maintenance and cleaning goods introduce persistent PFAS compounds that build up in marine food chains. All those fancy sprays and cleansers are not only hazardous, they are expensive! So, you can save money while you help save our planet by saving on soap.

I use very small amounts of dishsoap, for example when washing pots and pans. It helps to wipe the grease out of a pan with a used paper napkin or small piece of paper towel before washing.

Try to use less soap in the shower, too. Like when shampooing. It doesn't take much to work up a good lather. Not only are organic soaps and shampoos easier on the environment, they are better for skin and scalp health. No harsh sulfates that strip your body of its natural protective oils. Instead, the natural soap-making process creates glycerin, which locks moisture into the skin. Plus, organic bars and washes are packed with beneficial oils and butters that deliver vitamins and antioxidants directly to your body's surface.

Make a change today. Use natural, biodegradable soap. Use less soap. Future generations thank you.



GOING VEGAN: Curried Rice & Lentils



Eating curry during hot summer days triggers sweating to cool the body, stimulates sluggish warm-weather appetites, and utilizes beneficial seasonal ingredients.

One cup of rice with one cup of lentils, and you've got a complete protein. I like to soak them overnight, to shorten cooking time. After rinsing, add four cups of water and bring the rice and lentils to a boil, to simmer for twenty minutes. Then I add a teaspoon of salt, a couple of chopped carrots (including some of their younger greens if you've just pulled them from your garden) or whatever veggies are currently ripe (kohlrabi or zucchini are also good). Throw in a chopped onion if you've got one, then simmer for another twenty minutes. Next (after 40 minutes so far), I add a few good shakes of curry powder (7 shakes if the brand of curry is mild, 3 if spicy), and I put in some tumeric as well (3 shakes), even though most curry powders already contain some.

Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, has strong anti-inflammatory effects to ease joint pain, antioxidant properties that protect cells, and it improves insulin sensitivity to support your metabolism.

If you like sweet curry, you can add fruit at this point. My favorite are ripe plums or apricots. Grapes or sour green apples are also good. You can cheat and use canned fruit, if you must. If you use fresh fruit, you might want to add a couple tablespoons of sugar to the mix, according to taste. I make my own grape jelly, so I sometimes just dump one third to one half of a glass jar into the pot (when I don't have fresh fruit). Let that all simmer another ten minutes, then turn off the burner and let the pot continue to slow-cook on the stovetop for the final ten minutes. Finally, take a bite to see if the rice and lentils are soft enough. Enjoy!

Lentils are nutritional powerhouses that improve heart health, support digestion, and stabilize blood sugar. They lower "bad" LDL cholesterol, manage blood pressure with potassium and magnesium, and prevent heart disease by providing folate. Lentils stabilize glucose and insulin levels after meals, providing slow, steady energy while controlling appetite and aiding weight management.

I first saw lentils growing around Castelluccio di Norcia, a tiny mountain village in Umbria, Italy, about 3 hours east of Rome. Our paragliding group went there yearly because it was located inside an old glacial basin. Which means, we were encircled by slopes, so good flying no matter what the wind direction.

The lentils of Castelluccio di Norcia are famous tiny legumes grown on the high-altitude plateau (almost 5000 ft), known for their unique taste, delicate thin skins, and the stunning seasonal bloom they create. They are grown without chemicals, in poor, mountain soil rich with minerals left behind by the glacier.

Every year, we bought bags of lentils to take home with us. We were never there when the valley floor was blooming, but the flowers are a rainbow of purples, reds, blues, and yellows. I just remember the little old women sitting at tables in the marketplace, chatting with each other as they sorted the lentils by hand removing any small stones.



Want to see more paragliding pics? Write Castelluccio in my contact form and I'll send you pictures of me paragliding there.

(www.tanyaswriting.com)

LIVING WITH LYME: Optimize Your Energy

In the April 26 issue of my newsletter, I wrote how four months after I was bit by a tick in 2015, my symptoms of P.O.T.S. began. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome is common in patients with Chronic Lyme and Chronic Covid as well as in organ transplant patients where the immune system is compromised. (Request [April 26 issue here](#) for a list of POTS symptoms.)

In my blog [LIVING WITH LYME: The Emotional Component of Infectious Disease](#), I describe how my emotions had weakened my immune system at the time of my tick bite, allowing the Lyme bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) to take hold.

So, now, what can we do about it? It has been my experience—both personally, and with patients in my earlier TCM practice—that doctors shy away from patients with Chronic Lyme **because they don't have any answers**. The official medical consensus does not recommend long-term or repeated antibiotics for chronic symptoms because they offer no proven benefit and can cause harm.

Here are three things I have found especially effective in optimizing my energy:

1. Do a body scan twice a day. First thing when I wake up but before I actually get out of bed, and again just before I fall asleep at night, I take ten to twenty minutes for the following exercise. *Tip: If it is morning, you'd best set your alarm if you are worried about falling back asleep.* Lie on your back, continue to let go of any randoms thoughts that come up with a slow, deep exhalation. (If you do Reiki or Transcendental Meditation, you can use your symbols or mantras to enhance your relaxation.) Imagine that soft sand is pouring into the top of your head. Feel the sand pouring lightly over your forehead and eyebrows, and feel how it relaxes all the muscles in your face. Then continue to “scan” your body for tension or pain as the sand continues to pour over your shoulders and chest, then the rest of your body. The sand can pour internally, relaxing organs. It can be poured into any painful areas...and keep going all the way down to your toes. To the most difficult areas, send love and light. You can ask for help from God, angels, or people who have passed on before you. (I know it sounds weird, but it works.) For you scientists out there, we are shifting the mind into the Theta wave state of deep meditation optimal for healing.
2. Practice the neutral move from Medical Qigong. On my website, you will find a [free Qigong video](#) that I made over 25 years ago, with a series of healing exercises. The very first exercise is easy to perform and basically safe for everyone. It can even be performed in the sitting position until you have the strength to stand. I recommend you perform this single movement 21 times in a row as instructed on the video, or for twenty-one minutes. If done correctly at least once a day, your energy should increase.
3. Become ambidextrous. One of the most annoying symptoms of POTS is “exercise intolerance” or “post exertional malaise.” For example, while lying on my side and doing leg lifts, my muscles start burning and feel fatigued after only a few leg lifts! A symptom of POTS is a sensation resembling lactic acid buildup due to the inability to deliver adequate oxygenated blood to the muscles. I have learned to push the vacuum three times using my right arm with my left leg forward, then switch to the other arm and leg as needed. I alternate yoga stretches with strength building exercises, giving my muscles the chance to re-oxygenate when I work out. I can stir soup with either hand, wipe a counter with either hand, even brush my teeth with either hand (that one took some practice!). It soon becomes a habit to switch off which arms and legs, or which muscles, are doing the work. Since oxygen is a key element here, be sure to ventilate rooms (but don't subject yourself to a draft) and breathe deeply. Don't tighten up with the effort. Remain relaxed, and if something is particularly difficult, a spurt of hyperventilation (short, rapid breaths like a deep-sea diver about to go under) can be helpful.

These exercises are beneficial to ANYONE, but I especially hope they help to optimize your energy if you are suffering from POTS. More tips to come in future newsletters. And be sure to check out my [new blog explaining why I am against vaccinations](#).

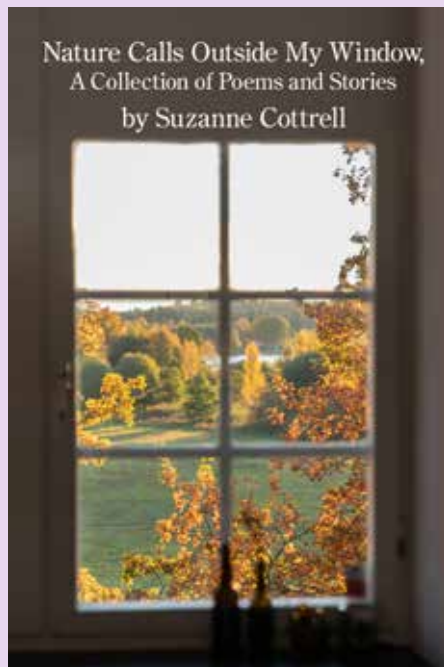
CURRENT ADVANCES FOR LYME: Investigational and Preclinical Treatments

- **Hygromycin A:** A narrow-spectrum soil-derived antibiotic that selectively targets Lyme spirochetes (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) while sparing healthy gut microbiome bacteria; it has advanced into early human safety trials. [1, 3, 4, 5]
- **Piperacillin:** A penicillin-class antibiotic shown in recent animal studies to clear Lyme bacteria at doses 100 times lower than doxycycline with minimal gut disruption, though human trials are still required. [1, 2]
- **Combination Regimens:** Experimental multi-drug cocktails (such as daptomycin, doxycycline, and ceftriaxone) targeted at slow-growing “persister” bacterial forms in animal models. [1, 2]
- **Forazemin:** A newer drug candidate being evaluated to clear persistent pathogen remnants in tissues safely. [1]



SPECIAL SHOUT-OUT

To my friend Suzanne Cottrell, who's book reached number one last month in Goodreads Listopia: Best Nature Books. <https://suzanneswords.com/>



Immerse yourself in the world of nature's creatures with her fourth book *Nature Calls Outside My Window, A Collection of Poems and Stories*, consisting of 67 poems and 12 personal narratives sharing breathtaking moments, interesting information, and humor.

Whether an elegy for the bobwhite, an homage to a skink, or a story about finding a snake in the bathtub, Suzanne Cottrell's prose and poetry will make you feel glad to be alive on this sweet, green Earth.

~Sy Montgomery, national bestselling author of *How To Be A Good Creature*.

UP NEXT:

Coming on September 8th:



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