Alchemy is one of those trendy words that’s used to describe all sorts of things these days yet has been around for thousands of years. But what exactly is Alchemy, and why are we, as a culture, suddenly fascinated with this ancient esoteric word?

Alchemy has a prominent place in the history of Chinese Medicine, with legendary practitioners like Sun Simiao and Ge Hong using Alchemy for the transformation of the human spirit. But Alchemy is not just a little bit of transformation at a time. It’s not about the typical evolution of a human being. We are always, as humans, in a constant state of growth, and it is our inborn nature to change and grow.

This kind of Alchemy is not about this comparatively slow evolution. Rather, it’s about radical transformation—the kind that alters the basic fundamental properties of an object, like base metal being turned into gold. Or, in this approach, Alchemy is more akin to actual mutation into something new. Transmutation might even be a better word. So in terms of the time it takes for a species to evolve, Alchemy does happen quickly.

The Alchemist’s way is to become a wizard in your own life. It’s about consciously creating your life, seeing clearly how to master reality, anticipating the arrival of change, and being curious about life, as if life is a series of ongoing lessons, so that even the so-called “bad” events are perceived as good experiences. Life flows with ease and grace and is powerful and magical. It is mastery—simply walking in the footsteps that are already there. This is called Wu Wei.

Wu Wei is the way of the Alchemist.

What is Alchemical Healing?

In the Daoist lineage of Ge Hong and Sun Simiao, there are Nine Stages of Alchemy. Initially Alchemists mixed elixirs for each stage, but these elixirs were made of poisonous materials like cinnabar and realgar. Over time, Alchemists began to realize that Internal Alchemy (through energy work and meditation) could be just as powerful as these elixirs. As a result, the Nine Stages of Alchemy are a set of treatments, exercises, and meditations that convey spiritual lessons to learn in order to master life, a path of evolution, transformation, and self-realization—a journey of self-discovery.

The Nine Stages of Alchemy are grouped into three trinities.
• **Stages 1 through 3:** These clear away what inhibits someone from being truly free in their life.

• **Stages 4 through 6:** These take away the blinders that limit perception of life, open the mind, and allow a truer life experience. Stage 6 is about flying in life.

• **Stages 7 through 9:** These defy the limitations of reality—such as the law of gravity, and the dictates of time and space—to allow for the true wizardry of time travel, flying, morphing, and becoming invisible.

### Why Practice Alchemy?

Practicing Alchemy is about you as a practitioner, more than your desire to help others. In fact, Alchemical Healing isn’t really about “helping” your clients—it’s about facilitating their personal transmutation—or you could think of it more as being a spiritual “tour guide” rather than a healer. As you witness the transformation of your clients through this work, you transform as well. And this is the main reason why you may want to embark on the Alchemical Healing path—to evolve yourself, not to help others. The Alchemical Practitioner needs to be an Alchemist—commitment to your own self-awareness and self-cultivation is the first step.

### Ling Shu Alchemy Treatments

Life is challenging at times for almost all of us. A few of us had idyllic childhoods that provided an environment where we could easily thrive. But very few people make it through to age thirty without any trauma or serious negative experiences.

Ling Shu treatments help the client let go of these serious traumas that are held in the body or the heart before embarking on the path of Alchemical transformation. Often, if we don’t release these experiences first, they will make the Alchemical journey come to a grinding halt later when they rear their ugly heads.

There are several kinds of major blocks to beginning Alchemy, including what Chinese Medicine calls possession and obsession. Trauma and negative experiences cause most of us to have difficulty being our authentic selves in the world. If these coping mechanisms involve possession and obsession, they must be dismantled before we can make real progress in Alchemy.

I typically do these treatments in half-day sessions which are four to six hours long, with the idea that a huge spiritual pivot or transformation will occur as a result. You can’t rush this kind of transformation. Often the person has been stuck for a very long time, so it’s unrealistic to attempt to shift that level of pain in an hour. The treatment’s goal is to reestablish a person’s true Qi. The result of the treatment is a sense of feeling lighter, like a heavy weight has been lifted away. These treatments are typically done in a single session, but in certain difficult cases of severe life trauma, they can be repeated.

Here is a summary of each treatment type.
The Ghost Points: Obsession

When a person has obsessive thoughts about anything, whether it’s past traumas, negative ideas, rational or irrational fears, or patterns of negative behaviors, accidents, disagreements, or undesirable outcomes, we say that the person is haunted or hooked, like a fish on a fishhook. You can only become haunted if you have an opening for it. You have to have a receptor in order for that thing to be able to hook into you, whether it’s a negative idea that got into your head, or a trauma-based fear that leaves you vulnerable. Even if the problem is that someone is stalking you in real life, the point is that you have an energetic opening for that issue to attach to you.

The Thirteen Ghost Points Treatment clears old trauma and removes the hooks that are stuck in you that can cause obsessive thinking and unwanted cellular patterns. The points of the treatment work on a deeper level to heal that vulnerability so that whatever strange or difficult issue you may be having can no longer affect you.

There are 20 Ghost Points in total, but the legendary King of Medicine, Sun Si Miao, created a specific treatment for these kinds of issues called The Thirteen Ghost Points. This specific series of points helps to cleanse the soul of guilt, shame, and trauma. It cleans all the skeletons out of the closet.

When past experiences of any type still haunt you today, we say you’re not really free to be yourself. We’ve all had the experience of having something bad happen and then wanting to prevent it from happening again. Some events are so big that they continue to haunt us throughout our lives: the loss of a lover, the death of a loved one, depression over lost dreams, or even a physical trauma, like a sudden accident, or coming into contact with some kind of parasite. All of these things can impact our energy and hamper our ability to grow and succeed in our lives.

The word ghost in Chinese contains the word for “hook” in its character. A ghost is anything that haunts you or has a hook in you. When you’re hooked, the ghost convinces you not to be true to yourself, and then you’re not free to be authentic and do what you want to do.

A Ghost Point Treatment releases all the areas where you may be hooked, for example:

- **Your eyes**—how you see the world
- **Your heart**—how you love
- **Your trust in yourself**—how much you believe in yourself
- **Your official rules**—whose rules you’re following

I recommend Ghost Point Treatments in the following situations:

- When life just feels like too big a struggle and you’re working too hard to overcome it.
- When you don’t feel free in your life.
- When you are living in a toxic situation.
• When you have past trauma that haunts you.

Typically I recommend a Ghost Point treatment with anything that feels very hard to overcome. If you are working very hard and not getting any results, that usually means there is something blocking you or haunting you. Most adults have some skeletons in their closet, so this is a good treatment to start with when embarking on a healing path.

I have been working extensively with The Thirteen Ghost Points for over fifteen years, doing them as a ritualistic, half-day treatment that includes music (the role of music in these ritualistic treatments is profound), and they have been nothing short of mind-blowingly amazing. I have hundreds of stories of people being set free from either their own emotional prisons or from very real and serious scenarios in their external worlds. Whatever strange story they may be carrying, what happens is the Thirteen Ghost Points Treatment is able to shift something that frees them to make new choices. It makes available choices they never had before.

I’ve seen this magical treatment work miracles to create deep personal transformation, to unravel unwanted cellular patterns, to break down emotional blocks, and to uncover and free a person’s true nature, true essence, or what we like to call their true Qi.

Living life causes many ups and downs. After you’ve been living this life for many years, it’s pretty much impossible to avoid having a few skeletons in your closet. The Ghost Points help to clear them out and return you to your original state of open potential.

Some stories that exemplify typical results are:

• A woman with severe chronic Lyme Disease resolved the ghosts of her childhood that haunted her in her present day. As a result, she was able to recognize the patterns in her life and make changes, not only healing physically but enabling her to enjoy a more active way of life and to feel happiness in the presence of her family.
• A mother grieving after her son’s death was terrified that her son’s ghost was haunting her house. She went from being in a state of terror to the realization that she was blessed with the ability to stay connected with the spirit of her son and was able to feel peace.
• A woman in a serious quandary about whether she should have another child after the loss of her infant came to the realization that her family of three is perfect.
• A woman hospitalized with severe psychosis suddenly “reawakened” as herself during a treatment in the hospital and began having a normal conversation. She left the hospital within a week and the psychosis never returned.
• A sister with severe anxiety that prevented her from driving reunited with her estranged sister the day after the treatment and found she was able to drive without anxiety.
• A mother rejoices that her teenage boy’s dark moods and scary tendencies have vanished and she has her “beautiful boy back.”
• The Ghost Points often get to the emotional and not-so-obvious roots of problems like anxiety and its related symptoms.
The Nine Heart Pains Treatment

The Nine Heart Pains treatment is an appropriate choice to address addiction issues and life-long feelings of loneliness, isolation, and self-hatred.

Heart pain is an intrinsic component of life. We experience heart pain when someone hurts our feelings or our dreams cannot be fulfilled. Maybe we are disappointed that we weren’t able to rise to the very top in our chosen career. Or maybe it’s the pain of not having become wealthy or prosperous. Whenever one of the Nine Palaces of the Heart (Career, Relationship, Health, Wealth, Home, Children, Travel, Wisdom, or Prosperity) is majorly struggling, you will often experience and accumulate heart pain. The pain of failed relationships and a sense of not belonging or loneliness are two of the most common heart pains.

• Heart Pain Treatments are used in the following situations:
  • When you are trying to overcome an addiction.
  • When you have trouble with low self-esteem, self-loathing, or the inability to love yourself. We also call this “The Loving Yourself” treatment.
  • When you’ve never felt “at home” in your life.

Internal Heart Block Treatment (also known as The Internal Dragons)

When a person has had emotional trauma, they can build a wall around their heart over time. They can become so blocked inside themselves that they can’t access their own heart. I say it’s like the person has a wall of cellophane wrapped around the heart, and no one can get in, and the person can’t get out.

Trauma or long-term emotional pain can sometimes have such a damaging effect on a person that the person gets lost. According to Chinese Medicine, the heart has a void inside it where our emotions, spirit, and Qi can move freely, via the blood. But when the heart is blocked, all of that gets stuck; nothing can move freely. This is how the true aspects of a person can become trapped and lost.

If this happens, they cannot proceed with Alchemy. There’s no way to move forward if their heart is not under their control.

Another possible reason for this kind of block can be that something else has set up residence in the heart so that the person’s spirit is no longer in control of their being. If the person suspects some kind of entity possession, we don’t even need to fully understand the nature of that block, but only to recognize that the person’s blocked heart must be released before proceeding with Alchemy. You can’t practice Alchemy if you have a roommate in your heart trying to manifest some other curriculum that is not your own.

The treatment is helpful in the following situations:
• When you feel like you are inaccessible to yourself and/or to others.
• When nothing you try has seemed to help.
• When you feel walled off from the world.
• If you’ve never felt the same after a traumatic event.
• If you’ve never felt the same after a long-term emotional upset.

What does an Internal Heart Block feel like inside? You feel like you are not at home in your own body. You may behave and function normally, but you feel vacant or vacuous inside. Or sometimes you might feel too intense inside, like you’re buzzing. Even though not everyone is trained in Chinese Medicine, we all have an inherent sense of when something is “off” with a person’s spirit. Our eyes are the windows to our soul and since Internal Heart Blocks are caused by deep, soul-level pain, we can easily see this pain in a person’s eyes.

Will Block Treatment (also known as The External Dragons)

If you’ve been subjugated to another person’s will for a long period of time, especially as a child or in an abusive relationship, your will can become blocked. In that case you can’t move forward in your life in any way. You may try, but the forces of your will cannot be summoned to help you take the next steps. When a person is unable to move forward in life, no matter how hard they try, they most likely have a Blocked Will.

The Chinese believe your Will, meaning the will to survive and take action, is housed in the kidneys. And it’s the kidneys’ job to help you know how to do what you need to do. A person may be completely accessible to their own heart, and they may even have many good ideas of things they want to do, but movement forward in life still somehow seems impossible.

I generally recommend Will Block treatments in the following situations:

• When you have a good sense of what you want to accomplish but you are unable to do it.
• When you feel like you can’t get anything done in your life.
• When someone in your life has blocked you from doing what you want and need to do over a long period of time, such as your parents.
• This type of block is uncommon in societies that encourage children to determine their own future, as in much of the United States. It’s more common with people who grow up in oppressive situations.

Ma Dan Yang’s Twelve Starry Sky Points Treatment

Ma Dan Yang created the Twelve Starry Sky Points Treatment for people who are out of alignment due to the effects of long-term emotional trauma. The treatment realigns the person with the cosmos, with the constellation of the Big Dipper. Ma Dan Yang believed
this treatment was the root treatment for all diseases. It especially clears emotional trauma that has lodged in the chest.

**The Grieving Treatment**

This treatment helps a person move through the blocks that can arise after a loved one dies. It is suggested in the following situations:

- Any recent, significantly difficult loss of a loved one.
- Anyone struggling to get over this kind of loss.
- The first anniversary of a loss, a key time for moving out of the stages of grieving.
- Anyone still strongly impacted by the death of a loved one even years afterward.
- The loss of a loved one is one of the hardest things any of us ever has to face.

The Chinese believe that it’s very important to walk through specific stages of grief in order to fully recover from the loss of a loved one, which is a process they believe should take approximately one year to complete. They believe that grief gives us a chance to contemplate what we have lost and, as a result, grow and change. For these reasons, they have specific energetic treatments to help anyone who feels caught up in that process.

**Restoring True Qi**

The Alchemical protocols are not just a set of points, they’re a way of treating. These treatments are Shamanic in nature—this means you must practice them from within the void. To access the void, you must first learn to go into the void of your own heart. From there you can access the void of the other person’s heart. From the void, you can help release the Xie Qi and find the person’s true nature... their True Qi.

As you embrace these treatments, you change as a practitioner. For this reason, it’s extremely helpful to become an apprentice in this tradition.

Alchemy is a road less traveled. If you’re attracted to Alchemy, it’s helpful to have friends who will share the path with you. Many Alchemists retreated to the mountains in the old days, to practice in small groups. This is a tradition of living life differently than people do in mainstream modern culture. The focus is on self-cultivation.

I’ve been practicing Alchemy for many years now. I’m lucky to have found and built a community of others who want to practice with me.

The Alchemy Learning Center ([AlchemyLearningCenter.com](http://AlchemyLearningCenter.com)) is a virtual mountainside that we’ve created for Alchemists all over the world to come together, learn, and practice together.