

Associate Editors Notes: I think Ms. Wakefield needs to add some paragraphs: describe specific symptoms of addiction, stages associated with addiction, where and how in this long-term disease do these treatment protocols help. What are the specific symptoms that each protocol she describes address, at what stage in addiction recovery would she implement each of these protocols, how long do symptoms take to diminish, and why does she favor these points over other points or treatment styles.

JW NOTES: GREAT ARTICLE! THERE ARE A COUPLE OF AREAS THAT COULD USE A SENTENCE OR TWO OF EXPLANATION OR TRANSITION. OTHERWISE I MADE MOSTLY STYLISTIC CHANGES TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE JOURNAL'S STYLE GUIDE.

“SHEN-OCIDE”: THREE PROTOCOLS FOR THE TREATMENT OF Psychospiritual Aspects of Opioid Addiction with Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine

by Mary Elizabeth Wakefield, L. Ac., M. S., M. M., Dipl. Ac., NCCAOM

Abstract

“Shenocide” is a coined word. Shenocide is a term to describe the killing of the spirit or *shen*. Opioid addiction, which effectively destroys the patient’s *shen*/spirit, is responsible for a growing number of deaths worldwide. Opioid addiction has reached epidemic proportions in the United States. Here are some relevant statistics:

- In 2011, an estimated 4 million people in the US used opioids recreationally and were addicted to them.²
- 23 million Americans needed treatment for addiction in 2012, and only 2.5 million actually received treatment.³
- Close to 38 million people used opioids illegally in 2013⁴, and the number continues to grow!

In this article, we will focus on the treatment of psychospiritual or *shen* imbalances that result from opioid addictions.

Three Protocols For Shenocide:

As a palliative for dependence and symptoms resulting from addiction, three suggested acupuncture protocols for Shen disturbances will be introduced. These can be integrated into your acupuncture practice in the context of a constitutional treatment. The author has employed all three treatment protocols to good effect, not only for addiction, but also to treat *shen* disturbance resulting from other issues such as sexual and emotional abuse, spiritual possession, PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Dysfunction) and traumatic memory loss.**Introduction**

Opioids are substances that are used medically for both acute and chronic pain relief, for reversing opioid overdose, and for suppression of other symptoms. Some of the side effects of these drugs are:

- drowsiness
- depression
- euphoria
- hallucinations

- compromised immune system
- hormonal imbalances

Continuous use can foster dependency and tolerance to the drug; this increases the need for higher doses, and gives rise to intense withdrawal symptoms, when it is discontinued. Withdrawal symptoms include:

- severe dysphoria
- manic raving
- depression
- irritability
- nausea, vomiting, sweating
- tremors and insomnia

Misuse of opioids can cause severe psychological obsessions, and contribute both to lack of judgment and dangerous behavior, i.e., serious accidents and/or death.

Background

The word “opioid” harkens back to the earlier drugs classified as opiates, which are naturally derived from the dried latex of the red poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), the principal one of which is opium, *lachryma papaveris* (literally, the “tears” of the poppy plant). Historically, it was one of the most popular drugs used for medical, recreational and religious purposes. In the 3rd century BCE, the Sumerians grew poppies and harvested opium from their seed pods, although the earliest archaeological finds of opium seeds date back to the Neolithic Era, approximately 5,000 years ago.

In 1804, Friedrich Wilhelm Adam Sertürner, a German pharmacist, first isolated morphine from the opium poppy, naming it after the Greek god of dreams, Morpheus. Shortly after this discovery, codeine was similarly isolated from opium. In the 1850’s, the invention of the hypodermic needle made possible the injection of these and other substances into the body during surgery, to address post-operative pain, and for general anesthesia. Synthetic morphine derivatives were formulated in the 20th century, and these substances were called opioids, a word which means “opium-like.” A doctor could then give a patient a rapid dose of a desired narcotic; for the recreational user, this translated into the notorious “quick fix” of the drug addict.

Chinese Medicine vs. Western Medical Approaches

In Taoist philosophy, the Three Treasures refer to three intrinsic and inseparable forces that embody Heaven (*shen*), Humanity (*qi*) and Earth (*jing*). In order to promote health, well-being and longevity, it was necessary to refine *jing* into *qi*, *qi* into *shen*, and *shen* into openness. This was accomplished in a transformative alchemical practice of directing the three *jiaos* with breath, meditation and acupuncture, which served to align the practitioner with *Tian* (Heaven) and the Source. Any malaise, or manifestation such as an addiction, was perceived as originating in an imbalance in all three levels of being and so healing was approached from a holistic perspective.

In contrast, Western medicine tends to target the patient’s symptoms. Consequently, drugs are freely prescribed for chronic, non-cancerous pain. This indiscriminate overmedication can cause severe side effects and facilitate eventual addiction to the opioids. Since opioids have a sedative action upon the body, they can

depress the functioning of the respiratory system, causing patients to lapse into coma. If taken to extremes, the heart will stop, and death is the inevitable result.

The Old Chinese Axiom: “The Shen Leads the Qi”

The *shen*, through the medium of thoughts and emotions, leads the flow of *qi* in our physical being. *Shen* being ethereal in nature, is not as dense as the body, and thus, within this corporeal vessel, it can become stagnant. The associated emotions, if not expressed, lodge themselves in the cells, creating a state of psychospiritual toxicity. If this spiritual blockage is not moved through the action of the *qi*, then the person may seek something or someone to help them forget their longing and emptiness.

The *Gui*: Ghosts

A Story of How A Demon Affects the Shen

Poney Chiang, Ph. D., in an article, *Spirits, Ghosts and Chinese Medicine*⁵, relates a fascinating account of demonic possession, and how a specific acupuncture point was utilized to expel a demon. Apparently, a *Tui-na* doctor from China witnessed his aunt exhibit a superhuman ability, by which she leapt upon the roof of the house. This was followed by uncontrollable dancing, as if she were possessed by a malign spirit.

Her husband, a martial arts instructor, climbed up on the roof to bring her down, however, she overpowered him and threw him off the roof without any effort. Due to the tremendous commotion, a crowd quickly gathered, and speculated as to whether the doctor’s aunt was possessed by a specific demon.

After several other attempts to subdue her failed, the uncle was instructed by an unknown villager to strike his aunt in her armpits. When he did so, she immediately collapsed, and, upon regaining consciousness, she had no memory of the incident.

Dr. Chiang observes that this point in the axilla could only have been H 1, *jiquan*, Summit Spring, the entry point of the Heart meridian, and the abode of *shen*. For the *gui* to affect the *shen*, it needed to invade the Heart. The pain that the possessed woman experienced from the striking of this point caused the *gui* to depart and to return to its original host.

As a metaphor for opioid addiction this story vividly describes *shen* possession that is so apparent in addictive patients. Dr. Chiang also indicates that Ge Hong, the famous Taoist alchemist from the 4th century CE, used painful contact moxibustion to treat madness, rage and epilepsy. Pain was intentionally inflicted on the body to resuscitate the *shen* disturbed patient, and to dispel the *gui*/pathogen.

***Gui*: The Personification of the Shadow**

Sun Si Miao (581-682 CE), Taoist doctor and acupuncturist from the Tang Dynasty, named entities which seek only material sustenance *gui*, or ghosts. These entities can be either inherited as predispositions that we repeat throughout our lives without any awareness, or they can take the form of addictions: opioid abuse, alcoholism, eating disorders, smoking, or any imbalance that imprisons the *shen*.

Gui can be regarded as the embodiment of the “dark” side of the human psych — forces and drives that remain unconscious. They also can be personifications of all the haunted, suppressed qualities that we have

stashed away in our emotional closets – judged by us as being negative, wrong, inferior, scary or frightening. These forgotten shards of ourselves have been shoved down “under the belt”, only to emerge when abnormal stresses or pressures manifest to disturb our daily lives – death, loss of employment, divorce, etc.

It is then that the *gui* emerge from those deep recesses of our being, showing their faces to the light of day; these demons take control, manifesting as fright, fear, depression, rage, and even mania. The *shen* is disturbed and the *gui* searches for something to dampen the pain, and uplift the spirit. At this time, the euphoric effect of opioids may seem attractive to the suffering person. Jung would have regarded the *gui* as being synonymous with the shadow, because it represents all the orphaned, disembodied, rejected aspects of ourselves.

Giovanni Maciocia has observed⁶ that the Chinese characters for both the *Hun*, the Ethereal Soul, and the *Po*, the Corporeal Soul, contain the radical for *gui*, and that these souls are independent of the mind. In my opinion, this means that humanity possesses free will, or a choice as to how they live their lives. However, while the path of opioid use may originate in conscious choice, this addiction eventually robs the person of their capacity to choose, stripping them of their dignity. They are not in control of their impulses, and the demons take hold of the “dark forces” of the psyche.

PROVIDE AN INTRO INTO THE 3 PROTOCOLS YOU ARE ABOUT THE DETAIL...ALONG WITH ANY CLINICAL EXPERIENCE OR SUCCESSES.

Protocol 1:

Gui: The 13 Ghost Points

I have used Sun Si Miao’s 13 Ghost points in my practice and have taught them to students in the Alchemical Level of the 2-year International GOLD STANDARD FACIAL ACUPUNCTURE® Certification Program at Northwestern Health Sciences University. I have also included them in the curriculum of a course that I co-created with my partner, MichelAngelo, *Vibrational Medicine: 5 Element Intergenerational Patterns and GeneAstrology™*. The latter course utilizes Acutonics® tuning forks on the points and meridians of the body, instead of needles. These points are extremely effective when integrated into a constitutional treatment, and address anything that imprisons the spirit. ANY CLINICAL FINDINGS?

Sun Si Miao first documented these points in his 7th century work, *The Thousand Ducat Formulas*. They relate to the removal of energetic blocks and emotional fixations, and alleviate symptoms of manic depression, epilepsy, fright, bipolar syndrome, mental unrest and disturbed *shen*, all of which are categorized as forms of possession. The treatments employ a combination of needles, moxa and bleeding techniques.

I do not recommend that the practitioner use all 13 of the points in one session, unless exceptional circumstances should indicate that they do so. I usually rotate 2 or 3 Ghost points in each session, and integrate them into a constitutional treatment protocol, focusing on anchoring the *yang qi* and nurturing the *yin*.

In my research, I discovered Sun Si Miao’s *Ode to Needling the 13 Ghost Points*⁷, translated into English. Apparently, the Ode rhymes beautifully in ancient Chinese, and provides an ample demonstration of its author’s knowledge, skill, artistry, and sense of humor. Sun Si Miao referred to a “ghost evil” as a disorder associated with demonic possession, and offered the following associated symptoms:

- Seeing ghosts: delusions of ghost-like imagery; hallucinations

- Ghost talk: delirious speech, ranting and raving
- Floating ghost talk: mental unrest, disruption of the spirit
- Floating corpse talk: delirium manifesting during the terminal stages of tuberculosis
- Mad Ghost walking: disturbed sleep walking

All the Ghost points address these manifestations of disturbed Shen; some of them expel internal and external wind, restore consciousness and clear heat:

Point	Pinyin Name	English Name	Sun Si Miao's Treatment Technique
Du 26	<i>gui gong</i>	Ghost Palace	Needle 0.3-0.5 cun
Lu 11	<i>gui xin</i>	Ghost Convincing	Needle 0.1-0.2 cun
Sp 1	<i>gui lei</i>	Ghost Fortress	Needle 0.1-0.2 cun
P 7	<i>gui xin</i>	Ghost Heart	Needle 0.3-0.5 cun
UB 62	<i>gui lu</i>	Ghost Road	Warm needle; 3-7 quick thrusts
Du 16	<i>gui zhen</i>	Ghost Pillow	Needle 1 cun
St 6	<i>gui chuang</i>	Ghost Bed	A warm bleeding needle
Ren 24	<i>gui shi</i>	Ghost Market	Needle 0.2-0.3 cun
P 8	<i>gui ku</i>	Ghost Cave	Needle 0.3-0.5 cun
Du 23	<i>gui tang</i>	Ghost Hall	Needle 0.3-0.5 cun
Ren 1	<i>gui cang</i>	Ghost Hidden	Moxa 3 times (men); moxa stick (women)
LI 11	<i>gui cheng</i>	Ghost Official	Warm needle; 3-7 quick thrusts
Extra point: Hai Quan	<i>gui feng</i>	Ghost Seal	Prick and bleed the midpoint of the frenulum under the tongue

Protocol 2:

A Rarely Used Psychospiritual Point: SJ 2, *yemen*, Fluid Gate

The second treatment protocol involves *San Jiao 2*, a *ying-spring* point that clears heat from the upper body. It could have been, in my opinion, a 14th Ghost point, although there is no reference to *shen* in its name.

It is useful in the treatment of local pain, heat and swelling of the back of the hand, with contracture of the five fingers, referred to as DePuytren's Syndrome. The *San Jiao* meridian ascends to the head, the outer canthus of the eye, and enters the ear, therefore this point also addresses tinnitus, deafness, earache, headache and other symptoms of heat imbalance. It can also be very effective in the treatment of *shen* disturbances.

SJ 2, *yemen* functions:

- Moistens the mucuous membranes and regulates fluids in the upper body
- Calms heat and benefits the eyes and ears
- Calms the Shen

Indications:

- Red and dry eyes and face
- Palpitations, frayed nerves, epilepsy, insomnia, shortness of breath, and psychospiritual imbalances

SJ 2 is the water point on the fire channel, and it transports fluids to the face and head, which cools, moistens and calms this area of the body. The *San Jiao* exterior/interior relationship with the Pericardium, which wraps around and protects the Heart, the abode of *shen*, allows SJ 2, *yemen*, to treat a patient who is unable to “go with the flow,” one who lacks fluidity in their life.

For more serious psychospiritual/*shen* manifestations, such as manic depression, manic raving, ceaseless laughter or weeping uncontrollably, I needle this point in tandem with Sun Si Miao’s fourth Ghost point, P 7, *gui xing*, Ghost Heart.

This powerful combination cools and moisturizes the head, face and sinuses, and clears heat from the Heart, calming the Shen.

Protocol 3:

A Japanese Treatment for Opioid Addiction

This third protocol was originally designated for opiate abuse, and addictions that toxify and damage the Kidneys. The first point needled is Japanese K 9, *zhubin*, Guest House. In *Grasping the Wind*⁸, it is explained that the radical *zhu* means to “attack” and the radical *bin* means “to expel”, i.e., the pathogen from the Kidneys. *Zhubin* is a *xi-cleft* point which addresses emergency conditions, and being a *yin* point, also treats blood and *shen* imbalances, because the blood rules the *shen*. This makes it a perfect point for manic depression, fear, fright and chemical toxicity that can arise from opioid addiction.

K 27, *shufu*, Shu Mansion, is the Kidney transporting *shu* point, where the *qi* of the Kidney is collected. It is a mansion that abundantly contains Kidney *qi* and essence.

Indications:

- Long term addictions, which damage the Kidneys
- Opiate addiction: opium, heroin, morphine, codeine and opioids
- *Shen* disturbances
- Overuse of steroid hormones
- Overuse of anti-inflammatory drugs

Needling Protocol:

Japanese K 9, *zhubin*, is 3 *cun* below K 10, *yinggu*. Needle K 9 perpendicularly and bilaterally, or use direct moxa.

K 27, *shufu*, is needled bilaterally and transversely toward the Ren Mai, the sternum.

Retain these needles in the body for the entire constitutional treatment unless otherwise indicated.

Conclusion: A Few Insights

“The non-medical use of prescription drugs has been fueled by the medical community’s over-reliance on the use of prescription opioids to treat both acute and chronic pain.”⁹ INCLUDE AN IN TEXT CITATION TO ATTRIBUTE QUOTE Both medical and non-medical use of opioids has escalated in recent years. It is important

for us, as acupuncturists, to collaborate with doctors, therapists and other healthcare professionals in treating and addressing this wound paralyzing our society.

We are representatives of a medical tradition that has endured for thousands of years, that makes use of both logic and intuitive insight. Oriental medicine is both an art and a science; it respects individual differences and the significance of specific patterns or archetypal imbalances that may arise during the course of treatment.¹⁰ We know how to treat imbalances of *shen*, such as addiction affecting both the physical and psychospiritual levels. We can compassionately educate patients about change, choice and the possibility of healing and transforming their lives.

Bio:

Mary Elizabeth Wakefield, L. Ac., M. S., M. M., is the internationally recognized author of *Constitutional Facial Acupuncture* (Elsevier UK, 2014). She is an acclaimed teacher, acupuncturist, herbalist, cranio-sacral therapist and professional opera singer. www.facialacupuncture-wakefieldtechnique.com

² "Report III: FDA Approved Medications for the Treatment of Opiate Dependence: Literature Reviews on Effectiveness & Cost-Effectiveness, Treatment Research Institute". Advancing Access to Addiction Medications: Implications for Opioid Addiction Treatment. p. 41.; accessed 1/10/18.

³ Tetrault, Jeanette M.; Butner, Jenna L. (2015-09-03). "Non-Medical Prescription Opioid Use and Prescription Opioid Use Disorder: A Review". The Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine. 88 (3): 227–233; accessed 1/10/18.

⁴ "Status and Trend Analysis of Illicit [sic] Drug Markets". World Drug Report 2015; accessed 1/10/18.

⁵ Poney Chiang, "Spirits, Ghosts and Chinese Medicine. Oriental Medicine Journal, New Year edition, January, 2008, 25-31.

⁶ Maciocia, Giovanni, The Psyche in Chinese Medicine: Treatment of Emotional and Mental Disharmonies with Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs. London: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier, 2009.

⁷ Dale, Ralph Alan, *Acupuncture: The Special Function Points*. North Miami Beach, FL: Dialectic Publishing Inc, 1996.

⁸ Andrew Ellis, Nigel Wiseman and Ken Bass, *Grasping the Wind: An Explanation into the Meaning of Chinese Acupuncture Point Names*. Brookline, MA: Paradigm, 1989.

⁹ Tetrault and Butler, op. cit.

¹⁰ Mary Elizabeth Wakefield, *Constitutional Facial Acupuncture*, London: Elsevier, 2014.