

SEASONS OF OUR LIVES

Clayton E. Spivey Copyright. All Rights Reserved.

This article was originally published in the Summer 2000 edition of MERIDIANS. It appears here with the permission of the publisher: Tai Sophia Institute. www.tai.edu

AUTUMN: GIFTS OF THE METAL ELEMENT

BY CLAYTON SPIVEY

Autumn—a time for reflection, inspiration, and letting go. The Chinese refer to this season as embodying the Metal element. In the cycle of seasons, it is a time when the trees begin to prepare for winter by bringing their energy inside, to the core, letting go of the leaves which adorned them all summer long. The energy can no longer be spared externally—trees and other creatures must prepare for survival. It is a time of letting go of things that are not necessary, keeping only that which is needed.

Just as the autumn is a time for letting go, the autumn of one's years is said to be a time for letting go of things that no longer serve life. It is a time to gather around you what has made your life valuable: memories of past joys and accomplishments, family, dear friends.

People with difficulties in their metal element often have problems with letting go: constipation or diarrhea, overly grieving their losses, or not grieving appropriately, being “prissy” or stubborn in holding onto ideas or ways of doing things when the old ways no longer serve the situation, or conversely, not respecting tradition, and honoring the past. Letting go also makes room for the new, just as letting go of old clothes in the closet makes room for new. Breathing out makes room for breathing in, letting go of old thinking makes room for creativity, letting go of old relationships that no longer serve you makes room for new intimacies, letting go of the remnants of yesterday's

digestion makes room in your body for something to eat today.

Those with difficulties in metal may also have difficulties with “taking things in:” they can't receive compliments or respect from others, they may have difficulty breathing (ie: asthma), or feel uninspired spiritually and mentally.

The lung and the colon are the officials of metal: they are the ones responsible for taking in and letting go. They are the arbiters of quality in your life, responsible for taking in new things and letting go of that which is unnecessary to sustain the quality of our lives. Together, they ensure that life continues with quality and value.

These are the gifts of the Metal elements:

PHYSICAL LEVEL:

Lung, colon, skin, protection from external pathogens, getting rid of waste

Out of balance: difficulties with breathing or bowels

Symptoms might be: shortness of breath, cough, asthma, weak or hoarse voice, easily catching colds or flu, constipation or diarrhea, abdominal discomforts, inability to “clear out” your mind, house, or life.

EMOTIONAL LEVEL:

Having self respect and respect for others ability to grieve losses and let go

Out of balance: no self-esteem, emotional emptiness

Symptoms might be: self-destructive

