

## Your Energy Practice

### Anxiety and the Adrenals Energy Medicine Solutions for Unraveling Fear and Worry – Part 6

*My heart aches in corners I did not know existed.*  
-- Najwa Zebian

There is a lot of discussion swirling around a relatively new hypothesis that grief is an initiate of much of the anxiety disorders that plague us. This concept has gained a lot of traction, in large part due to the research of Claire Bidwell Smith and the recent publication of her book *Anxiety: the Missing Stage of Grief*. While not all anxiety disorders have their roots in grief, and anxiety is a common and expected part of the grieving process, Smith contends that grief is a much larger contributor to anxieties of all kinds than previously thought and worthy of deeper examination.

*Grief can make you feel like you are going crazy....Grief can leave you confused and forgetful, anxious and angry. Grief can leave you in a heap on the dining room floor in the middle of the day, and it can keep you up in the darkest hours of the night.*

A grieving person is frightened, fearful of the future, uncertain of the next step. Grief throws the psyche into the same biochemical worry and stress loop that anxiety does. A grieving person and an anxious person, biochemically, are indistinguishable.

From an Energy Medicine perspective, grief and anxiety are energies that feed each other. From an Energy Medicine perspective Smith's thesis is right on and here's why.

Lung meridian in TCM holds the energy of grief. Some TCM schools call the Lung meridian the *container of un-cried tears*. Lung meridian shares a Yin and Yang relationship with Bladder meridian. Lung meridian is the Yin energy to the Yang meridian of Bladder. Bladder governs our nervous system and it governs the expression of anxiety. When Lung gets triggered by a grief Bladder meridian reacts with an expression of what we call anxious symptoms. Those who study anxiety disorders are just now recognizing the strong connection between grief and anxiety. But the grief and anxiety connection has been around for 1000's of years and has its roots in ancient Chinese medicine.

When we suffer a loss — the lung energy holds that loss. Lung is Yin energy and that Yin energy holds things in. Yin is about inward movement of energy. Bladder energy in its Yang expression helps lung to process that loss. Because Bladder is Yang, Bladder is tasked with carrying that loss out of the body. Yang is about outward movement of energy.

While this explanation of the Lung/Bladder relationship is a huge oversimplification of this process it is still illustrative of the relationship between grief and anxiety. It is also illustrative of why, clinically, treating Lung meridian can be effective at relieving anxious symptoms. The Traditional Chinese Medicine community has been treating anxiety with Lung remedies for 1000's of years. Thanks to Smith's recent research people with grief-initiated anxiety are now being heard and understood by the psychological community that treats our emotional wounds.

There is a syndrome discussed as *Complicated Grief Syndrome*. The Mayo Clinic online information site defines Complicated Grief Syndrome with the following explanation:

*Losing a loved one is one of the most distressing and, unfortunately, common experiences people face. Most people experiencing normal grief and bereavement have a period of sorrow, numbness, and even guilt and anger. Gradually these feelings ease, and it's possible to accept loss and move forward.*

*For some people, feelings of loss are debilitating and don't improve even after time passes. This is known as complicated grief, sometime called **persistent complex bereavement disorder**. In complicated grief, painful emotions are so long*



*lasting and severe that you have trouble recovering from loss and resuming your own life (mayoclinic.org).*

From an Energy Medicine treatment perspective complicated grief syndrome is a failure of the relationship with Lung and Bladder to process the grief energy. Over time, for many reasons, Bladder is not able to move the grief from inward to outward, resulting in the sensations of anxiousness settling into a habit in the body. These stress habits, elaborated on in past articles within the thread of this series, continue to trigger the anxiety hormone sequences. With Bladder not able to move, the grief stuck in Lung keeps a person locked in the cycle of stress. This perpetuates the sensation of grief and loss. This embedded pattern results in what Mayo Clinic refers to as the Complicated Grief Syndrome.

So — how to help?

From an Energy Medicine angle we would start with treating the Lung meridian first.



### Rubbing Lung Alarm Point

The first point on Lung meridian — Lung 1 — is known as the Lung Alarm Point. This point is significant in that the Lung Alarm Point will show imbalance when there is something that is “alarming” taking place within the realms of what Lung governs in the body. If there is a long-standing unresolved grief the Lung Alarm Point is a good place to start. Rubbing with pressure Lung 1 will begin to send energy all the way through the meridian to the end point on the thumb.

### Tracing Lung Meridian

Very often when patterns have difficulty moving energy, manually tracing the meridian where that stuck pattern is embedded will get the energy moving again. Tracing a meridian from the first point to the last is helpful in restoring the regulating rhythm of energy that has been lost to imbalance.

### Flushing Lung Meridian

When a meridian has energy that is stuck there is a technique called flushing. Flushing is tracing the meridian from the last point to the first point one time followed by

tracing the meridian from the first point to the last point three times.

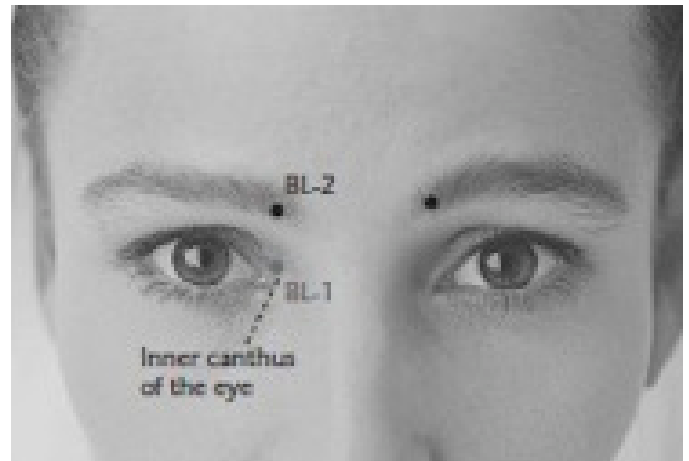
One time backwards – three times forward – that is what is called flushing a meridian.

The idea is simple. If you have stale energy in a meridian and you want to restore that meridian with fresh energy – it is a good idea to move the stale energy out first (moving backwards on a meridian is moving stale energy out). Moving forward on the meridian three times is moving fresh energy in.

If you have a cup of coffee that has been sitting in your cup and you want a fresh cup of coffee, we would dump the stale coffee first before filling the cup with fresh coffee. That is the logic behind a flush. Move stale energy out and pull fresh energy through.

Now onto working with Bladder meridian.

**Bladder 1** is called Eyes Bright – sometimes also called Clarity of Vision. Bladder 1 is often referred to as the point that enables us to discern the difference between looking and seeing. This point opens the mind’s eye and the spirit’s eye. It enables us to see from a broader perspective and not from the current moment of our suffering. It is a point used to help the burdened heart rise above the current suffering and garner meaning from difficult events.



**Bladder 2** is called Bamboo Gathering. Bamboo to the ancients is a symbol of virtue. Bamboo is said to reflect the soul and emotions. Bamboo serves as an example of harmony between nature and humans. This point is used to release mental fixations and is used to treat nervous system disorders and mental exhaustion. This point enables the psyche to gather all the virtues and create



harmony between you and the inevitable losses humans will endure. This point moves obstructions from the heart and stops pain.

## How to use the Bladder points:

- Hold with slight pressure Bladder 1 & 2.
- Put thumbs in the Bladder 1's and tips of the middle fingers on the Bladder 2's.
- Hold for 3 deep breaths.

## Putting it all together:

1. Rub Lung 1 alarm point bilaterally with deep pressure for one or two deep breaths — this “turns the alarm off.”
2. Trace Lung meridian from first point to last point to stimulate movement in the meridian do both sides.
3. Flush Lung meridian: trace one time backwards and three times forward. This gets old stale energy out and fresh energy in. Do both sides.
4. Hold Bladder 1 and Bladder 2 for three deep breaths. This brings a broader perspective to the mind and begins to harvest meaning from the suffering experience.
5. Repeat any individual steps or all as needed.

Clearly not all who suffer loss and are grieving will spiral into Complicated Grief Syndrome. And yes, any grieving person will have anxiety. Thoughtful awareness that grief can give way to deeper anxiety patterns are worthy of examination. Being mindful that Lung and Bladder will play a part of any grief. The energy anatomy of grieving primarily is the relationship between Lung and Bladder. The techniques outlined in this article could prove helpful to any grieving person, but they are especially helpful to the one that is caught in overwhelming grief and anxiety syndromes. €



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## References

1. Claire Bidwell Smith, *Anxiety: the Missing Stage of Grief*, 2018.