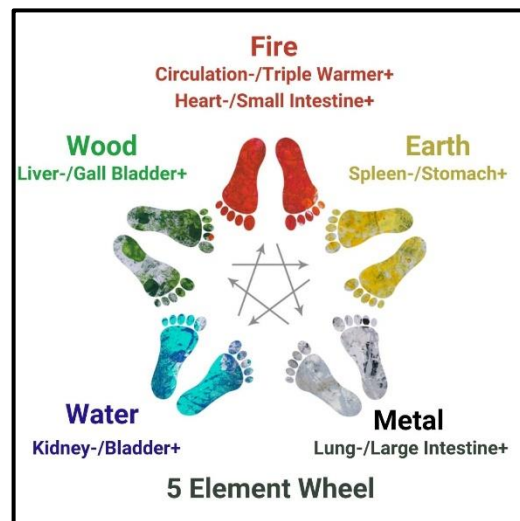
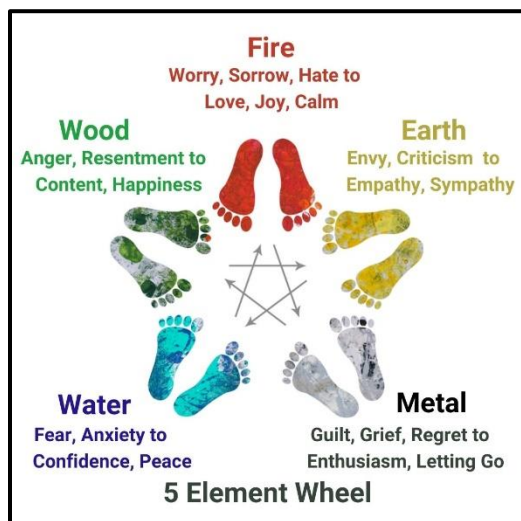
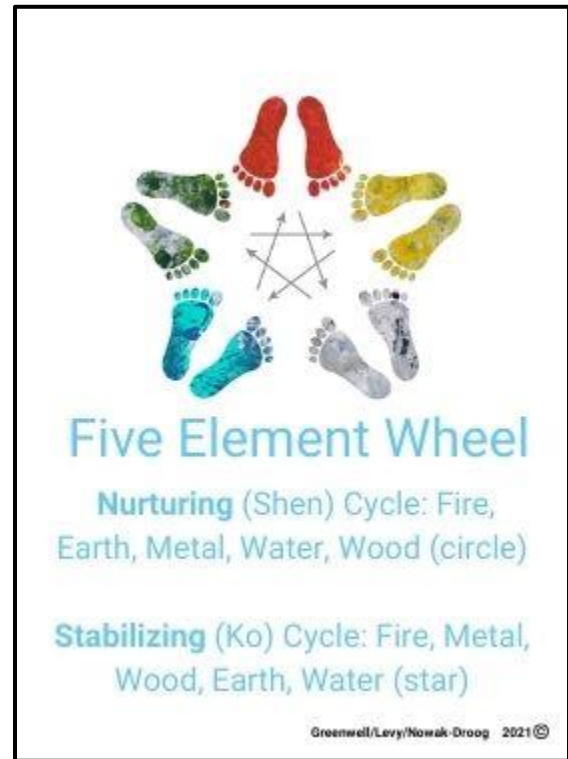


Do Balance and Flow support our continued Well-being?

Using the information that traditional Chinese Medicine embraces, when the systems in the body are open and functioning optimally, there is a synergy in the body where emotions, movement, and thoughts are supported. When movement, thoughts, or emotions become blocked or stagnant, this indicates an imbalance in the flow of energy and system support to the organ systems.

Using specific movement patterns that can open the body can bring balance and flow back to the systems. From Tai Chi, this could be Commencement at the beginning of the set, seated to standing Don Yu's, the first 17 moves from the Tai Chi set, or Move Hands Like Clouds. Simple patterns with profound results. Deep breathing is a part of the movement, as well as a focus for the mind to shift "Monkey Thoughts" or those repetitive ideas that seem to have a loop in the brain.

Balance and flow refer to the Five Element Wheel from traditional Chinese Medicine. This refers to several different cycles as well as aspects of each wheel. On the most basic level, there needs to be ease and flow around the circle which is referred to as the Shen or nurturing cycle. And there is a cycle for creation/destruction where changes can be made, this is referred to as the Ko cycle (as indicated by the arrows in the center).



When emotions become heightened or overwhelming this can indicate a change in balance and flow and where stress is building in the systems. Through activities, this can be shifted. Movement is a

simple and powerful way and is empowering to the individual when it can be done anywhere, anytime, and in any situation.

Very often a pain, or limitation in movement can be an indication of an imbalance happening. Thoughts or ideas that seem stuck or create anxiety or overwhelm, perhaps anger, can also indicate an imbalance. They can filter experiences through a lens that is stuck or hindered and can “cloud judgment” where a decision is made because of imbalance and the current emotional state. This can often be realized when someone says, “I can’t understand why I made that decision” or “I don’t know what I was thinking last night.” Through a different lens, the person may take different actions, and may not even be bothered by a situation.

How can you begin a journey of discovery about balance and flow?

Start by noticing what emotions, ideas, or hindered movements happen when you haven’t moved in a while. Notice the breath also to see how deep it is being maintained. Then stretch, put on some good music and dance, do a few Tai Chi moves, or take a walk. Doing something that creates flow in the body or begins the process. Joining with a friend or loved one who can be present with you can also support the shifts and changes. Notice what your thoughts are at the conclusion of your activity. Have they shifted? What do you notice now? Do you feel more like you?

For those looking for assistance in creating balance and flow through movement, join our Tai Chi classes at www.winecountrytaichi.ca in West Kelowna, B.C., or Tai Chi Cape Breton (flyer and Tai Chi events and resources found on <https://linktr.ee/dancedebut>). Classes are offered in-person, virtually, and through a video series on [YouTube: Tai Chi Wellness](#). From this special list, [check out one of our favorite sequences](#) using Brush Knee and Ward Off Monkey.

Michelle Greenwell is just completing her doctoral dissertation in Complementary and Integrative Health using movement to support well-being in the body. She has been a Tai Chi enthusiast for almost 3 decades and brings her 40 years of movement educator experience to the classroom to support students in their wellness journey. Michelle is the instructor for Tai Chi Cape Breton and a director with Wine Country Tai Chi Society. Michelle enjoys working intuitively with each class to support their wellness journey with personalized experiences of discovery and joy for learning how to use movement to maintain health and mental well-being.