



**Shin Ma** Shiatsu and Toyohari

## Sustainable Health

Lunar New Year 2010

“You cannot plough a field by turning it over in your mind “

Anonymous

Hello and welcome to the Year of the Tiger and the Late Summer edition of Sustainable Health.

It is quite fitting for us in the southern hemisphere that the Chinese or Lunar New Year falls in late summer as this time of year is associated with transformation and change. Late summer corresponds to the Earth Element and the nature of Earth is to ground, centre and nourish. So whilst the qualities of a Tiger year include action, courage and risk taking, take a moment to read these tips for sustaining your health by cultivating a stable axis around which you can fly.

### Body

Earth that has been well cultivated will offer up abundance at this time of year and the same goes for our bodies. We can enjoy more physical work, less sleep and less illness. The Spleen and Stomach correspond to this season so choose foods that harmonise this centre of our vitality. Avoid complicated dishes or over seasoning. Emphasis should be on grains and mildly sweet, yellow foods such as carrots, corn, squash, pumpkin, honey, peaches and apricots. Chew food very well and try to eat at regular times.

### Mind

An imbalance in the Earth element can show up as excessive thinking, worrying or ‘chewing over’ the one idea like a cow with its cud. If you find this is your tendency, make a habit of pausing, placing both hands gently over your belly and taking five, deep, slow breaths , filling out the space under your hands. Then make an action plan on paper rather than ruminating.

### Spirit

Lethargy is common amongst those with sluggish digestion or erratic eating habits but it can also be a result of an imbalance in your ability to give and receive nourishment at a personal level. As Earth is about balance it is important to cultivate our ability to give and receive in equal measure. A planet that has given up all its resources without any return will eventually not be able to sustain its inhabitants. The same goes for us. Self care is the core of our ability to care for others. If you want to run with the force and energy that the year of the Tiger brings, start by directing some of that energy towards yourself.

Wishing you health and happiness, *Elizabeth*