



Shin Ma Shiatsu and Toyohari

Sustainable Health

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**“Under heaven, nothing is more soft and yielding than water.
Yet for attacking the solid and strong, nothing is better.”**

Tao te Ching

Hello and welcome to the Winter edition of Sustainable Health.

Winter Solstice, on June 21 in the Southern Hemisphere, marks winter's deepest point when we have the longest night and the shortest day. In this deepest, darkest place is held the seed of new beginnings. From this day forward the sun will shine a little longer each day reminding us that all things come to pass.

The associated element of winter is Water and the virtue of Water is wisdom. If we can learn to conserve our resources during winter then we will have an abundance of energy to draw on when required. This wisdom will hold us in good stead for the length of our life. Just as good financial planning will ensure our ability to ride times of adversity, wise expenditure of personal energy means we will have enough reserves to see us through the challenges of illness, old age or personal crisis. As desirable as good health is, more important is our ability to care for and build on the level of health that we have.

Body

Backs, knees and feet love to play up during winter. To counteract cold, keep feet and lower back/kidney area covered at all times, and eat warm, slow cooked high protein meals such as stews, soups and roasts. The shorter days indicate that we should also get more sleep during the winter months.

Mind

The emotion that corresponds with Water is deep fear such as fear of the dark, fear of financial ruin and fear of death. Nightmares can also run wild at this time of year. The ability to focus our will to overcome fear and direct our life according to our dreams can indicate the strength of the Water element in us. Consider what your dreams and fears are telling you about your inner needs.

Spirit

Like a dormant seed below the frozen earth, so too is the seed of our potential buried within us. Just as dripping water can wear away stone over time, the qualities of endurance, perseverance and strength through adversity are the gifts of winter. The key is to keep on going without force but rather with a gentle persistence along the path of least resistance, like a river finding its way to the sea.

Wishing you health and happiness, *Elizabeth*