



# Volker Scheid at the SNS Conference 2020



## An Introduction to Meta-Practice

### SATURDAY

#### **Matters of Concern: Revisiting the Three Treasures as the Foundation of Meta-Practice in Chinese Medicine**

Over the last 50 years, our understanding of what Chinese Medicine is and how it should be studied and practiced has fundamentally changed. If we once thought it was a single system of medicine, we now know that Chinese Medicine is, in fact, a family of many different styles of practice. Historically, this plurality is one of the reasons underpinning the longevity of the Chinese medical tradition. For us practitioners, however, it also raises difficult questions. Should we study all of them? Some of them? Which ones? And why those and not others?

There are essentially three possible solutions to this problem: (i) stick with one style; (ii) synthesize different ones into a single new style; (iii) develop a meta-practice that allows you to work effectively with different styles. In this seminar I will introduce the concept of meta-practice and revisit the three treasures - *qi, jing shen* - to lay a firm foundation from which a meta-practice can be developed. I will mainly talk about physiology but also provide a few clinical examples for how meta-practice looks day-to-day practice.

### SUNDAY

#### **Developing Meta-Practice in the Treatment of Menstrual Disorders**

Building on the Saturday seminar this workshop will introduce you to the development of meta-practice in a clinically centered manner focusing on the treatment of menstrual disorders. To this end, it will provide you with:

- A deeper understanding of the Chinese medicine anatomy, physiology and pathology of menstruation. (How, for instance, does the uterus relate to the liver, the sea of blood, the *chong mai, ren mai* and the other extraordinary vessels? What changes when we think menstruation through the vessels and not the organs? How does menstruation tie in with the physiology of *qi*, blood and body fluids and how does that impinge on treatment?)
- A deeper understanding of how this knowledge has changed over time and how it differs from and links to biomedical knowledge.
- Diagnostic and therapeutic methods that build from the simple to the complex to which you will be able to add further elements from your own individual therapeutic toolkit and as your skills as a practitioner develop.
- An understanding of how meta-practice can help you in the development of clinical mastery over time

To this end, I will draw on my extensive knowledge the historical development of East Asian medicine, experience from almost forty years of clinical practice, and a deep engagement with trans-disciplinary knowledge throughout my academic career.

**Professor Scheid will also participate in the panel discussion on Saturday.**



# A Panel Discussion

Saturday, March 21



## **Ritual, Dharma and Treatment Method: Belief and Clinical Science in the EAM Clinic**

Research conducted by Ted Kaptchuk and others suggests a relationship between patient “meaning effect” and clinical outcomes, in East Asian Medicine (EAM) and biomedicine alike. The mechanisms producing these outcomes are not well understood.

Belief, ritual, and connection with a sympathetic provider are all observed to favor treatment effects, but clinical research has few tools with which to explore or even define these beliefs and behaviors.

In this panel discussion, three highly accomplished herbalists will discuss their (widely divergent) clinical and philosophical perspectives on the ways that elements of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism emerge in practice. Practitioners will share and explore their views on the ways in which belief and meaning function in the Western EAM clinic and impact patient and practitioner experience.

Questions addressed may include:

- Does EAM’s roots in ritual and philosophy make its meaning effect different from biomedicine’s, in quantity or in kind?
- Does it matter what tradition the practitioner believes in or practices?
- How might such belief manifest in the treatment provided?

**Kevin Ergil, moderator**

**Volker Scheid, panelist**

**Sharon Weizenbaum, panelist**

**Josh Paynter, panelist**