

Professor J.R. Worsley: Causative Factor SM (C.F.SM) and More

Thank you to many for requesting that I share what I have practiced with great joy for almost 5 decades, a tradition as taught by Professor J.R. Worsley (J.R.) and one that he requested I present on his behalf. At the core of this tradition is the art and science of diagnosing and treating the Causative Factor (C.F.).

After collating questions and dialogues, I have concluded that we need to start with an historical context and work forward. I hope this approach will broaden and deepen our understanding of this medicine.

In order for Causative Factor to be understood in its correct context and full meaning, it is important that it be seen for what it is: a way of perceiving from a particular conscious mindset. It is for this reason that I have also chosen to progress carefully toward defining Causative Factor. I hope that this will ease the reader toward understanding just how naturally obvious and elegant Causative Factor is.

Some history:

- J.R. was taught by his Masters Ono, Hsui and Lok in the 1950's and 1960's; he studied in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea and the European continent. Essential to what he was taught was the concept and practice of diagnosing and treating the Causative Factor (C.F.). J.R. was asked to carry this lineage forward.
- Mid-1960's: J.R. started teaching. He had become a well-established and esteemed practitioner both in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, and at a clinic in the Harley Street area in London, England.
- 1971: While visiting England, Bob Duggan and Dianne Connelly met J.R. and subsequently sponsored him to teach workshops at Esalen Institute, California, and other cities in America through Cape Lecture Tours. Bob and Dianne also organised groups of Americans to come to England for training to become practitioners. The first class started in 1972. I was in the second class, April 1973. My entire training was taught by J.R. and Causative Factor, always referred to as "C.F.", was at the heart of the teachings.
- 1983: a delegation of senior Chinese professors from Peking (Beijing) visited the College of Traditional Acupuncture (CTA) in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. They told us: "You are not teaching traditional but *classical* acupuncture." Wishing to respect these distinguished guests, J.R. and I changed the name of the school we started in Miami and brand name to replace "traditional" with "classical."
- 1999: J.R. formally asked me to succeed him as the lineage holder, and I accepted.
- 2001: Nora Franglen in her book, The Simple Guide to Five Element Acupuncture, devoted Chapter 6 to "Guardian Element or Constitutional Element". When asked by the author to review the book, J.R. commented that these concepts were her creation and were not representative of what he had been taught or of his teachings, indicating that she should be fully credited with her concept. To this day, there is confusion about the relationship between "Guardian Element"/"The Element" and Causative Factor, a topic which is addressed in this document.
- June 2, 2003: J.R. died.
- 2004: Constitutional Factor by John and Angie Hicks and Peter Mole was published. In their book, the authors referred to what they described as "Constitutional Factor" as "C.F." It is no surprise that their adopting J.R.'s well-established terminology has

resulted in confusion despite the fact that Causative Factor and Constitutional Factor are *fundamentally different*.

- A few years ago, a respected colleague generously shared with me an apparent concern by some in the acupuncture community at large: that the word “classical” should not be used by those of us practicing in the Worsley tradition. The rationale was that some parts of what J.R. taught could not be directly cited and/or footnoted in the classical Chinese literature. Although I did not necessarily agree with the objections, I did not want there to be division or offence within the community based on a word; therefore, I once again modified the name, voluntarily dropping “*classical*” (adopted following the 1983 Beijing delegation visit) and changing to the apparently more acceptable nomenclature of “Worsley” for our tradition.
- 2003-2019: I reduced my traveling, teaching and consulting exposure. I lived quietly in retreat on our smallholding in England, worked with senior practitioners and patients and stayed as much as possible out of the public arena.
- November 2-3, 2019: webinar hosted by Worsley Institute and co-presented by Heiner Fruehauf and me on the subject of the Spirit of the Points. We explored the wisdom of the ancient Chinese tradition, which we both adore. Heiner and I agreed that it was a meeting of minds and hearts and that we encountered no contradiction between the essence of the ancient Chinese texts and J.R.’s teachings.

Context:

Although J.R. never claimed to be an *academic* scholar, he was a scholar in the ways that mattered. Many have referred to him as “genius”, “shaman”, and “extraordinary” undoubtedly because of his immense skill in observing with deep and profound insight - just as the Chinese classics direct us to do.

As a result of appreciating and understanding the macrocosmic and microcosmic Natural Order, J.R. understood what the ancient Chinese described: Health on all levels is a matter of the balance and harmony in our relationship between Heaven and Earth. This “relative state of balance” is not to be confused with a concept of perfect balance, which does not exist in the human domain.

Lack of relative balance, harmony and wholeness in this relationship leads to the manifestation of symptoms of dis-ease long before actual symptoms or conditions develop. Therefore, in order to serve the patient at the highest level, it is imperative that a practitioner seek to diagnose an imbalance within a person *before* it manifests into a state of dis-ease and/or symptoms.

J.R.’s teachers were aligned with the suggestions made in the ancient texts, which is to seek that which is subtle, deep and sacred. However, the knowledge recorded in the ancient Chinese classics did not necessarily prescribe exactly *how* the wisdom could be applied in different ages and in different cultures. Through the oral transmissions given to him and through his own profound understanding and insight J.R. brought to us transliterations for how we could live in accord with these ancient ways in a modern world, what he referred to as “A Way of Life”.

“Doctoring, like poetry, should light up all of the brain.”

(Daniel Becker, M.D.)

Through discussion with the author,

I can clarify that “the brain” refers to the full sensory capacity of the whole person.

The practitioners in ancient times worked as *Instruments of Nature* - assisting the person to be restored to relative balance before symptoms developed. Since well-being was defined as being in relative harmony with the forces of Nature, a practitioner had to be conscious of what was beyond the conceptual and material world. J.R. practiced and taught us these ways.

During our webinar, Heiner referred to the classics to describe a hierarchy of diagnostic perspectives: from the dense and material layer, such as the body, to the more refined and subtle level of the mind, with the subtlest and highest at the level of the Spirit.

“Knowing others is intelligence;
knowing yourself is true wisdom.
Mastering others is strength;
mastering yourself is true power”.
(Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching)

“Come to your senses.”
(J.R. Worsley)

J.R. urged us to loosen our grip and dependence on reading others through mental analysis; we were guided to follow ancient Chinese wisdom: “Know nothing”, be present and focus on what our senses (hearing, feeling, smelling, seeing and asking) give us. Through this simple and humble way of Being, all we need to know about our self and others will be revealed.

Fascination and humility lead us to discover how, through subtle but powerful indicators, the Elements, Officials and Meridian pathways are communicating clearly the sources of Life Force imbalance. Each of us:

- emits an *odour*.
- reflects a *colour* at the temples.
- manifests a primary inappropriate *emotion* and inappropriate *sound*.
- reveals what is known as the “*Level*” (Body, Mind, Spirit) of imbalance.

Through this process the root of imbalance is identified, hence the term “Causative Factor (C.F.)”. The element within the C.F. and the element within that element are also clearly identifiable. J.R., a master of the art and science of treatment planning, taught that treatment is a carefully considered matter. He always urged us to appreciate whole-heartedly the *unique* gifts of each point in the context of the *unique* needs of each person.

Apparently, there is a trend involving the notion that one can diagnose through behaviour or when observing an individual in a non-clinical setting, such as in a social situation or when viewing a television. Without the value of our sensory experience of *odour*, which triggers the other senses into a heightened state of awareness, one simply cannot fully engage with our own self or, therefore, with another. It would be akin to trying to receive a radio signal without an antenna.

A Matter of Physics:

The ancient Chinese taught that everything is energy. Match the frequency of the level of reality you want to access, and you will naturally tune in to that reality. This occurrence is not a matter of beliefs, ideology or protocols. It is physics. Based on how we choose to access our innermost self, accessing the deepest level of reality is achievable.

In the modern West, we have our own expression of “The Tao”. Albert Einstein is credited with saying: “*We are slowed down sound and light waves, a walking bundle of frequencies tuned into the cosmos. We are souls dressed up in sacred biochemical garments and our bodies are the instruments through which our souls play their music.*” When I shared this quote in the recent webinar, Heiner said: “It doesn’t get more Tao than this.”

J.R. taught us *how to be aware* of ourselves as “*an instrument through which our souls play their music...*”.

“We rarely hear the inward music, but we are dancing to it nevertheless.”
(Jalal al-Din Rumi, thirteenth century)

J.R. taught that one would be able to access the depths of another through examining the depths of one's own self. Without a doubt, J.R. knew this truth, practiced it and tried to impart this level of Being to those he taught.

It is stated beautifully by Claude Larre, s.j., and Elisabeth Rochat de la Valée in their article, The Practitioner-Patient Relationship: Wisdom from the Chinese Classics, Notes from a seminar: "Diagnosis through the sense organs relies on the deep examination of yourself." This wisdom directs us to transcend dogma for true insight and to experience a person on the levels of the Body, Mind and Spirit.

It was interesting that when Father Larre and Elisabeth visited the College of Traditional Acupuncture in Leamington Spa in the 1980's, Father Larre shared, "J.R. is the only living person I know of who is practicing the spirit of the classics as they were intended to be understood and practiced."

This simple and profound practice was also described beautifully by Carl Jung: "Who looks outside, dreams/Who looks inside, awakes".

If one deeply examines oneself, one will *naturally*, without trying, notice not only the odour of another but also the subtleties of the *kind* of odour. In other words, there is the even deeper layer of the odour, leading to the odour within; similarly, for colour leading to the colour within. The same awareness applies to the inappropriate emotion and sound displayed. There is the layer of the Causative Factor *and* the layer of the five elements within *and* the even deeper layer of the five elements within the first two layers. There is also the layer of the particular Official associated with the Causative Factor element. Moreover, there is the diagnosis of the Level of the Life Force and how it is disturbed within a person.

The more humbly one is willing to bow to Nature, willing to abandon the traps of dogma analysis and overthinking, willing to risk vulnerability through truly being in rapport with one's self (and thereby with another), then the more profound both the diagnosis and treatment will be.

Through this practice, a practitioner is able to evolve and discover that vulnerability is one's greatest strength, that "not knowing" is far more interesting than the illusion of knowing on a concrete conceptual level and that the more we are willing to discover our internal world, the more fascinating and enchanting the world around us becomes.

Unique Individual:

We are a *unique* combination of many layers that mingle and integrate to create each of us as a Unique Individual, a composite of *many* factors that do not change, such as our: *unique* natal astrological western chart, *unique* Chinese natal chart, *unique* genetic composition, *unique* nature including our preferences, tastes, personality traits, body structure, Constitutional Factor (based on body characteristics and behaviour characteristics), homeopathic miasm, ayurvedic type, Causative Factor (C.F. - the source of our imbalance) and so on.

Our *unique* individual nature becomes even more individualised based on other acquired factors: our experiences, socialisation and conditioning such as from family and school, traumas and injuries and how we live our lives. Free-will and the choices we make impact how we evolve as individuals along our totally unique and special path.

Causative Factor (C.F.) is:

- the element, which is the source, the root, of our imbalance.
- an essential component of the ancient lineage that J.R.'s teachers passed to him through the traditional means of oral transmission. He translated skilfully this

knowledge in a cohesive and understandable manner for the modern and western context, calling it the Causative Factor.

- obvious at the time of birth; therefore, it does not require verbal narrative relating to experiences, preferences, choices, perceptions and so on.
- a layer of our unique relationship within the Natural Order and is elegantly perceived through a gestalt: the element that is the source of the imbalance (the C.F.), the element within the C.F., the element within the within, the level (Body, Mind, Spirit) of imbalance and the Official involved.
- *only* diagnosed through a deep examination of our senses within our own self: observing the predominant odour and colour and the inappropriate emotion and sound expressed from the person in a *clinical setting*.
- *by coincidence* sometimes the same element as the Constitutional Factor or the Guardian Element/The Element but is determined using different means.

C.F is not:

- necessarily the same element as a Constitutional Factor or Guardian Element/The Element and is determined using different means.
- the cause of our personality, behaviour, choices and preferences; neither is it a lens through which to perceive these traits.
- something that changes in our life.
- used to characterise us in relative qualities of “good”, “bad” “strong”, “weak”, “source of struggle”, “guardian”, etc. These conceptual value judgments undermine the profound beauty one experiences when operating as an *instrument* of nature. Two-thirds of our experience in life (Body and Spirit) is on a non-verbal level. Therefore, any system of assigning a categorising label to a person ignores the fullness of our human experience.
- defined by the Chinese concept of “Xing” (性), or Innate Nature.
- based on categories of body shapes, body language, facial expression, and/or personality and behavioural characteristics.
- paired with “specific qualities of destiny associated with the five element virtues,” as suggested by Lonny Jarrett, for example, in Nourishing Destiny, published 1998.
- related to “personality, body language, emotion testing” as described by Angie and John Hicks and Peter Mole, for example, in Five Element Constitutional Acupuncture, published 2004.
- related to “Guardian Element” or “The Element” or “The Constitutional Element” as described by Nora Franglen in her blogs and books.
- a meaningful or reliable way to define or discover our self.

This detailed listing of what Causative Factor *is* or *is not* may seem academic and perhaps unimportant. However, the difference between Causative Factor and Constitutional Factor, The Element or Guardian Element essentially lies in these details. These varied terms do not reflect the same approach to diagnosis; there is a critical nuance distinguishing each from the other.

Over the years, some who graduated from J.R.’s school went on to develop and teach their own understanding of Five-Element Acupuncture. In certain instances, they may not have always indicated clearly that their conceptualisations were their own interpretations, interpretations for which they should be duly credited, and not representative of the teachings received and then transmitted by J.R. For the avoidance of doubt, I have no concern with individuals developing and conveying their own analysis; however, for the sake of clarity, appropriate use and understanding these concepts need to be properly acknowledged and differentiated from J.R.’s instruction.

The Elements:

The seasons are generally predictable in any one given geographic location and yet vary from year to year and from one regional locale to another. While the seasons remain essentially the same, their specific qualities and intensities vary – often dramatically. Such is also true of the five Elements, the qualities of which are associated with the cycle of the seasons. Each Element is part of a creative and unique whole that is not to be formulised.

Water can be frozen and hard, or it could be an ephemeral vapour; in either state, it is water. Earth can be packed hard and dense as concrete, or it might be loose, light and sandy; both are earth. It is impossible to confine the Elements into rigid qualities. Nature gives us a myriad of possibilities, not fixed absolutes. We can smell, feel, observe and hear the Elements. Once we try to capture them into containers, we lose their true Nature. Yet there seems to be a recent trend to conceptualise and personify the Elements into entities that allegedly control, cause and define human behaviour.

The ancients and J.R. taught that the relationship between the Elements within the Natural Order are not manifested as a limited spectrum of human, egocentric qualities but offer a *vast, unlimited* range of qualities within the Natural Order - to be observed without (macrocosmically) and within (microcosmically). These qualities are present in ever-changing, mysterious and creative patterns and should not be limited through intellectual personifications. To do so shrinks our ability to experience the vastness and magic of creation.

The Law of Least Action:

One of the Natural Laws in the Five-Element tradition is the Law of Least Action. This principle relies on ancient wisdom: “Less is more”. It is with great concern that I witness a current tendency to blend tools of Chinese medicine from various traditions with an apparent “more is better” attitude. This practice conflicts with the Law of Least Action.

It is useful to observe how similar conflicts may arise in our everyday lives, generated by a “more is better” culture:

- Many enjoy a varied diet, with an assortment of foods from a host of different cuisines. If one were to integrate all into one dish, most would find this concoction to be unattractive, inedible and possibly unhealthy. The unsavoury mixture of spices and herbs from the different cuisines would conflict and might even counteract their positive effects.
- Many adore music of various genres, but we do not play them all simultaneously. Our ears would hurt, and chances of a blissful experience vanish.

Nature itself *is* that master composer, that supreme chef! With all our inherent limitations, humans simply cannot do better.

My plea is that, while respecting diversity, we master a particular tradition that we have been properly trained to practise and devote ourselves to doing it well, with utmost humility, integrity and safety.

I hope that we will be wary of the “more is better” modern Western-culture attitude that has infiltrated and seemingly undermined what Heiner Fruehauf, in his Introduction to Classical Chinese Medicine by Liu-Lihong, refers to as the “sacred science” of classical ancient Chinese medicine.

“Death is not real. Love and God are real and live on forever”. (J.R. Worsley):

J.R. and the classical Chinese writings were pointing to “the moon” and were not meant to be construed as a literal or dogmatic way to see or experience life. It was meant to suggest that we look inside and, in doing so, find the treasures, what J.R. referred to as “The God Within”.

I was blessed to be guided by a man who was looking where the ancient Chinese texts suggested we look: to the Natural Order. He did not do this because he was told to do so; rather, he was driven by a deeply inspired truth. He had an unusual willingness to be a student – a willingness that I observed until the moment he took his very last breath: to bow to the true, the sacred and the humble.

J.R.'s greatest wish for us was that we would discover the bliss and freedom of our true nature, a freedom expressed exquisitely by Victor Hugo:

“Be like the bird, who halting in his flight
On limb too slight.
Feels it give way beneath him, yet sings
Knowing he has wings.”

It is my honour to share, in the context of our current times, what J.R. brought to our culture and what I was so fortunate to experience, both then and now.

*By J.B. Worsley, DAc, JD, President Worsley Inc. (WInc), Advisory Board WI
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