Have you ever wondered what life would be like if you had a little angel whispering comforting and supportive messages in your ear throughout the day? Just imagine how useful that would be as you navigate the ins and outs of your day. Here is an example of how your angel would help in a common family scenario:

Your unruly teenager is pushing back at you after you asked him to clean his room. Every part of you wants to scream at him because he isn’t doing what you asked him to do. You’re tired, you’re irritated at how your boss treated you earlier during the day and just as you were about to open your mouth and let loose... your little angel whispers in your ear a sweet message of “Love”. The angel reminds you that this teenage was once your chubby little baby. The angel affirms that there is no emergency here, the angel reminds you that a shouting voice is used when there is an emergency and action is needed right away... and by the way, there is no actual emergency right now - therefore a shouting voice is not needed here. The angel tells you to step back, breathe, and laugh at yourself for how sucked into the drama you were getting. Then the angel reminds you that by being curious and creative you can usually find a solution.

So, you do all that, you stop, take a breath and look at your pimply, grumpy boy and remember the flood of joy he brought in your life. You affirm that, yes he is pushing his boundaries, but taking out your work frustrations on him is not what is needed here. “Be creative, be curious”, you remember the angel telling you. So you ask your teenager how his day was going, and to your surprise he too had a bit of an off day. You offer some comfort by sharing your day and sure enough, he starts talking about his day. Before you know it, you both realize that you both need to take time to relax and you negotiate that the room will be cleaned in a day. The resulting experience thanks to the angel left you both feeling open and loving.

Wow! Imagine now if the angel was not there... you can imagine the anger and frustration of your day could have easily been vented on your teenager. Likewise, your son, not feeling great himself, would have lashed back with his own frustrations.

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The Benefits of a Healthy Perspective

by John Stan, DrTCM
The result in this scenario is that the two of you would have said things you didn’t mean, and the interaction would have left you both feeling contracted, judgmental and frustrated.

Having the angel appear helped soften your usual approach and enabled you to make different choices. By reminding you of some important truths inherent in yourself, the input of the angel created a much happier and satisfactory outcome.

“Having an angel’s perspective 24/7 would be a great thing” - I can imagine you thinking now. Well, I have good news for you. You can grow your own angel by taking a tiny bit of time each day to do a simple mind/body exercise called “Qi Gong for the Yin Brain”.

Qi is the Chinese word for energy or vitality. Together, the words “Qi Gong” translates as energy exercises. Once you learn this wellness technique you can grow the type of comforting emotions and perspectives that your inner “angel” would most likely offer throughout the day.

**Nature, in its wisdom, equipped us with a highly sophisticated brain to help us survive and thrive in this ever-changing world.**

Nature, in its wisdom, equipped us with a highly sophisticated brain to help us survive and thrive in this ever-changing world. As you may already know, our brain is actually two brains, each with its own specialties. While the complexity of the interactions between our two brains is complex, research has shown that the left brain dominates our logical, mathematical, and analytical thinking and is more solution-oriented. The left brain is the “Just Do it” voice in our head and its tendency is to get a little wired and stressed when things are not going our way.

On the other side is our right brain. Our right brain processes space, shapes, and relationships amongst others. Our right brain taps into higher functions like creativity, music, and spiritual truths.

You may have heard of the concepts of Yin and Yang. In Chinese health philosophy, Yin and Yang describe the nature and quality of something. Some examples of Yang qualities are: directed, linear, hard, focused, action oriented, up, out, bright, just to name a few. Yin qualities, on the other hand, are the opposite pairings of the yang qualities, and those would be based on the previous yang words: free-flowing, non-linear, soft, divergent, passive, down, in, and dark.

When we think of our two brains we could say our Left brain was the Yang brain, and our right brain is the Yin brain. The left, Yang brain is all about doing and survival, the Yin brain, like the angel, is softer, more creative and looks at creating new order out of randomness.

Another aspect of the concepts of Yin and Yang in Chinese health philosophy is that Yin and Yang co-exist at the same time; you cannot have one without the other. Simply put, that means if something exists, its opposite also exists. Thus, to have a “front” there automatically assumes there is a “back”. Let’s take this idea and bring it back as a way of thinking about our nervous system. If we think about how our left/Yang brain is working hard trying to make sense of our crazy world and to get all the things done that we need to do within a day, it would more likely be prone to experience the following types of emotions… anger/frustration, sadness/emptiness, worry, confusion and fear.
In fact, these are the emotions most of us default to when things do not go our way, because, quite frankly, we try to fit too much in our day, or expect too much of ourselves or others.

But, if you remember for every Yang, there is a Yin. For each of the previously mentioned stress-related emotions, we have the following ones to counter-balance them... creativity, playfulness, trust, clarity and resourcefulness. These are the emotions that spontaneously emerge when our right/Yin brain is active and strong.

A health goal for all of us, therefore, would be to nurture and promote the functioning of the right/Yin brain so that these positive, angel-like emotions will become our first responders when our left/Yang brain is struggling.

Ask your practitioner about the “Qi Gong for the Yin Brain” technique. It is easy to learn and requires no special equipment or environment. Once you have learned it, you will be able to grow your own team of inner angels to comfort and provide perspective on our otherwise busy and demanding days. So, here’s to you learning to bring balance to your left/yang and right/yin brains. Dominance never worked for anything, and balance always brings ease!

This article was written to empower patients to participate in maximizing their health. Dr. Stan believes that by working with your integrative healthcare practitioner, optimized health becomes a reality.

Recommended reading for more insights in Chinese Medicine health philosophy:

- Rhythms of Change by Mary Saunders
- Never Give Up: Conquer Stress & Depression by David Lloyd

Both books are available from your practitioner or at www.easterncurrents.ca