Basic Balance Method

One of the most profound concepts I learned from Dr. Tan was the development of the Ba gwa. The reader is referred to Dr. Tan’s book “The Twelve Magical Points” for further explanation on the development of his balance method system. The Dao or the Way is the source of Yin and Yang. Below the solid bar represents Yang and the broken bar represents Yin.

As we know, the progression of yin and yang can go through infinite iterations. However, in the development of the Ba gwa, the I Ching and the systems and meridians of Chinese medicine, only a few are necessary to image the whole.

Since we know that all things stem from yin and yang then two is our first magical number. Remember that any number (n) raised to the zero (0) power is one (2^0 = 1). The number one represents the Dao, our infinite soup or matrix of energy. The first iteration of the Dao creates Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang advance from the Dao and are
represented by the number two, \((2^1 = 2)\). The second iteration is similar to cell division. It divides and copies itself (on the bottom row) and adds to it the opposing polarity on the second row (to maintain balance). Numerically, we have four variations \((2^2 = 4)\).

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{Yang} & \text{Yin} \\
\hline
\text{Taiyang} & \text{Shaoyang} & \text{Shaoyin} & \text{Taiyin} \\
\hline
\text{Metal} & \text{Fire} & \text{Wood} & \text{Water} & \text{Earth} \\
\end{array}
\]

The third iteration maintains the first row and adds to the sequence by changing the polarity of the second row and adding the third row by alternating the symbols of yin and yang. This gives us eight variations, \((2^3 = 8)\).

These are the eight basic trigrams of the Ba gwa. If we continue the iteration process to the sixth level we will end up with the sixty-four hexagrams of the I Ching, \((2^6 = 64)\).
So to review two (2) is a magical number represented by yin and yang. Three (3) is a magical number which generates the eight trigrams of the Ba gwa \((8 = 2^3 = 2 \times 2 \times 2)\). Six (6) is a magical number which generates the sixty-four hexagrams of the I Ching \((64 = 2^6 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2)\) and the six Chinese meridian names.

The eight trigrams of the Ba gwa arrangement are shown below in a linear grouping. This linear grouping represents the basis for Dr. Tan’s first two balance method systems.

Heaven  Lake  Fire  Thunder  Wind  Water  Mountain  Earth

These eight trigrams, arranged in a circular grouping, are the basis for the Fu Xi gwa shown below. This arrangement of the trigrams is thousands of years old. It is used in many aspects of Chinese culture, philosophy and medicine.
The circular arrangement of the Fu Xi gwa is the basis for Dr. Tan’s advanced balance method systems for internal disorders. A summary of his basic balance systems is shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Five Basic Balance Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>Same Chinese Meridian Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opp. Side</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Yin - Yang
Taiyin – Yangming
Shaoyin – Taiyang
Jueyin – Shaoyang

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Tan’s Balance System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand Meridians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

System 1 and 2 Development
The most ultimate yang meridian is the Du and the most ultimate
yin meridian is the Ren. Therefore, the Du meridian is associated with the Heaven gwa and the Ren meridian is associated with the Earth gwa. From Five Element theory the other meridians are placed according to their association. The Metal Element corresponds to the Lu and Li meridians. The Fire Element corresponds to the Ht and Si meridians. The Water Element corresponds to the Ki and Ub meridians. The Earth Element corresponds to the Sp and St meridians. The Wood Element corresponds to the Wind and Thunder gwa. As you can see, the Hand meridians are on the left and the Foot meridians are on the right. Also notice the following balances: Lu - Sp (Hand & Foot Taiyin), Li - St (Hand & Foot Yangming), Ht - Ki (Hand & Foot Shaoyin), Si - Ub (Hand & Foot Taiyang), Pc - Lv (Hand & Foot Jueyin), Sj - Gb (Hand & Foot Shaoyang). Notice the Wood element is the home of the Jueyin and Shaoyang meridians. Also, notice that each gwa balances each other, yin bar with yang bar: Heaven - Earth, Lake - Mountain, Fire - Water, Thunder - Wind.

One approach to classify each gwa is to count the number of segments in each line and total them. For example Heaven has three segments and Lake has 4 segments. Our earlier definition of a yang bar included just one segment, while our definition of a yin bar includes two segments. So a gwa with an even number of segments are classified as yin and odd numbered segments are classified as yang. Therefore, Heaven is a yang gwa and Lake is yin gwa. Notice that from side to side a yin gwa balances a yang gwa and vice-versa. Note that
both Shaoyang and Jueyin are assigned to the Wood Element. This deviates from many schools of thought regarding the Sanjiao and Pericardium zang-fu, which includes them in the Fire Element. However, it is easily seen that balance is maintained, across the centerline of the table, with this "new" configuration for these two meridians. Since the middle of our table separates the upper body meridians from the lower body meridians, it’s easy to see that Shaoyang belongs in the middle of our table, which agrees with TCM theory.

**Ba Gwa Meridian Assignment**

There are five basic systems used to balance meridians. The first two have been represented. The third system is dependent on an arrangement of the meridians, based on the Fu Xi gwa. Notice that each is numbered one through eight.
In this arrangement, Heaven represents the uppermost portions of the body (specifically the head) and is considered yang. In fact, imagine a person’s body standing in the middle of the Fu Xi gwa with arms outreached overhead one pointed toward the Lake gwa, the other toward the Wind gwa. The two meridians that mostly occupy the head region are the Gallbladder and Urinary Bladder meridians. Therefore, these two meridians are assigned to the Heaven gwa. Since Earth is a yin gwa opposite to Heaven, the two yin meridians that balance the Heaven gwa are the Kidney and Liver. So, we have now defined four of the twelve primary meridians to two of the eight gwa. Six gwa and
eight meridians remain.

Drawing an imaginary horizontal line through the body intersects the Fire gwa on the left and the Water gwa on the right. This line represents the middle jiao, which is governed by the Spleen and Stomach meridians. The Fire gwa is a yin gwa and therefore the Spleen is assigned to it. Since the Water gwa is a yang gwa and Stomach balances Spleen, Stomach is assigned to the Water gwa. Four gwa and six meridians (Lung, Heart, Pericardium, Large Intestine, Small Intestine, San Jiao) remain.

Three of the remaining zang-fu, are physically, in the upper body. They are all yin meridians: Lung, Heart and Pericardium. Since the Lake gwa mimics the shape of a “valentine” heart, then the Heart and Pericardium are assigned to the Lake gwa. By default, the Lung is assigned to the Wind gwa.

The Thunder gwa balances the Wind gwa. Therefore, Large Intestine is assigned to the Thunder gwa. That leaves the Small Intestine and San Jiao meridians to the Mountain gwa.

**Final System 3 Arrangement**

The Dao manifests Yin and Yang, a system of bipolar opposites. The key word here is bipolar. The prefix bi- denotes “having two”. So, actually, all we have to really be concerned about is this magical number two and how to fully use it. In our earlier discussion of the Ba gwa and the development of each gwa, we constructed each gwa from yin and yang bars. As we discovered, the two separate bars can be
combined in such a way to form eight trigrams \((2 \times 2 \times 2 = 2^3 = 8)\).

The Fu Xi gwa arrangement is depicted below. This arrangement is based on positioning each gwa in relation to the tai-ji yang-yin symbol. System 3 balance is based on the interior-exterior relationship of each meridian.

To maintain balance we must have 4 Yang and 4 Yin gwa. Since the Heaven gwa represents ultimate Yang and has three segments, all other gwa also having an odd number of segments must also be considered to be Yang. The Yang gwa are Heaven, Thunder, Water and Mountain.

Since the Earth gwa represents ultimate Yin and has six segments,
all other gwa also having an even number of segments must also be considered to be Yin. The Yin gwa are Lake, Fire, Wind and Earth.

Right away you can see that there exists “yin within yang”, and “yang within yin”. For there can never be truly only one or the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Tan’s Balance System</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ub – Gb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**System 4 & 5**

Balance system 4 is based on the channel opposite on the Chinese clock from the channel requiring balance. Balance system 5 is based on the same polarity (yin or yang) of the neighbor on the Chinese Clock.
Some time (several years) after Dr. Tan defined the five basic balance systems, he began to add two more systems to his basic balance class.

Balance system 6 is based on using a point on the sick channel unrelated, geographically, to the diseased region. Examples: UB 57/58 for UB channel pain of the low back; GB 43 for Shaoyang type headaches; LV 8 for lower abdominal pain; GB 41-44 for tinnitus; SP 3 and ST 3 for knee pain and swelling; LV 1 for hernia or genital swelling; ST 36 for eye problems.

Balance system 7 is based on three major channel groupings on the
Chinese Clock: Taiyin-Yangming (Metal-Earth), Shaoyin-Taiyang (Fire-Water) and Jueyin-Shaoyang (Wood). The balance meridians are as follows: LU-ST, LI-SP, HT-UB, SI-KI, PC-GB, SJ-LV.

**Acupuncture 1, 2, 3**

1. Identify the sick meridians according to the cutaneous regions
2. Choose the balance meridians
3. Choose the points on the balance meridians based on mirror or image