



# Five Spirits: Alchemical Acupuncture for Psychological and Spiritual Healing

By Lorie Dechar

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The Five Spirits are the Taoist map of the human psyche. The system provides a view of the nervous system and forms the basis of Chinese medical psychology. It also describes a precise and efficient technology for spiritual transformation, the process through which a human being rediscovers their essential wholeness and innate connection to the divine.

The Five Spirits themselves can be understood as the Taoist version of the chakra system of Vedic India. Like the chakras, the spirits exist as centers of consciousness in the subtle body rather than as structures in the physical body. Just as each chakra relates to a particular level of consciousness, each spirit relates to a particular aspect of human awareness, a particular vibration or frequency of psychic energy. An understanding of the Five Spirits is the key that opens the doorway to the mysteries of Taoist psycho-spiritual alchemy. By taking advantage of the discoveries of Western archetypal psychology and new discoveries about the mind and nervous system, we can decipher the Five Spirits and reorganize the system in a way that has proven to be clinically invaluable in treating psychosomatic, emotional, and psychospiritual distress.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Reviewed by Andy Wickens

In her first book, Dechar aims to identify the essential tenets of acupuncture and Chinese medicine, melding the mythic practices with thephilosophy and techniques taught to modern practitioners. Central to her practice, as illustrated here, is her notion of "Alchemical Acupuncture"?theblending of acupuncture, the Five Spirits of traditional Chinese medicine, and the psychosomatic healing of Taoist psychology. Dechar presents case studies throughout, illustrating principles from her practice. She strives not to translate Chinese medicine into a Western form of understanding but instead supports Western expansion of consciousness to allow for anunderstanding of this type of reality. Her depth of understanding is evident, and this impressive goal may best be placed into the hands of existing practitioners. Dechar's book is admirable in its scope but difficult in its detail. The concepts are explained well, but the average consumer may find it all a bit overwhelming. Recommended for public libraries and alternative medicine collections and highly recommended for students in the field.

#### About the Author

**Lorie Eve Dechar**'s unique approach to the practice of traditional Chinese medicine emerges from her commitment to discovering a healthier and more integrated way for herself and other human beings to live on planet Earth. Her background includes a master's degree in Acupuncture from the Traditional Acupuncture Institute and training in Archetypal Psychology, Gestalt and Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy as well as stints as a gardener, environmental activist, poet and Zen student. Lorie currently maintains a private practice in Manhattan and Nyack, New York, where she focuses on the interconnections between physical, emotional and spiritual issues in her patients' lives. She is a member of the faculty of the Tri-State College of Acupuncture in New York City and leads workshops and trainings nationwide. Lorie divides her time between New York and East Blue Hill, Maine.

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