



I have been invited by the Worsley Institute to give this book review of *Senses and sensitivity: The 'doing' of Five Element constitutional acupuncture (2023)* by John Hicks.

In *Senses and sensitivity*, John has presented with passion his unique innovation of integrating Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and Five-Element. Tapping into his background skills of marketing and games invention, he creatively weaves together concepts from these three approaches, highlighting his perspective with diagrams and tools. It is a shame that John is reluctant to clearly identify this innovative approach as his own creation.

I first met John Hicks in 1974 when he attended his entry level training at the school founded by Professor J.R. Worsley (JR), the College of Chinese Acupuncture, later known as College of Traditional Acupuncture (CTA). At the time, I was assisting JR in John's training and was also present for all graduate classes and consultations that John attended; so, I am aware of John's background and training from that time until he left CTA in 1988.

In 1988, John traveled to Nanjing to study Traditional Chinese Medicine and upon his return decided to leave JR and CTA. John states that he disagreed with JR on how to teach the "practicalities of diagnosing the CF" and set out to create his own school and system. Despite this disagreement and avowed intent, in this somewhat diminutive text (a mere 128 pages with relatively large font and numerous diagrams), he mentions JR's name no less than 43 times. This reliance on citing JR gives a misleading impression of an anchored relationship between John's teachings and JR's.

In my more than 30 years as JR's student and in observing over 8000 consultations with JR, I only heard him use the phrase "emotion testing" a few times. He used it in the early days to loosen us up from our contracted, self-conscious state. He did not intend to teach us contrived, mental gymnastics. When he saw how John took this concept called "emotion testing" and developed a teaching model based on this phrase, JR never used the term again and did not want to be associated with what John was promoting because it was so distinctly not what JR was taught or teaching.

John justifies trying to explain JR through his own system by stating on page 10 that JR was "a demonstrator, not an explainer." I do not agree with this viewpoint. JR was a wonderful explainer, and he was also an astute observer who waited until the student was ready for his explanation.

During John's study with JR, John learned the concept of diagnosing the Causative Factor™, which was abbreviated as the "CF™". When John stopped working with JR, the term "CF" had already been used for over 25 years specifically in the context of Causative Factor.

As part of John's innovative approach, he began to teach the diagnosis of a "constitutional factor", which he unfortunately abbreviated as the previously trademarked term "CF". A significant confusion has thereby arisen within the field of Five-Element Acupuncture; now, when practitioners speak of diagnosing the "CF", it is unclear whether they are diagnosing the Causative Factor or the "constitutional factor". This book currently being reviewed, *Senses and sensitivity, 2023 by John Hicks* and the previous

book *Constitutional Five-Element Acupuncture*, 2004 by John and Angela Hicks and Peter Mole both amplify this confusion, and many are led to believe that these two diagnoses are one and the same, which they are not.

With the advice of a Copyright Solicitor, John was made aware that his use of the term “CF” was an act of “Passing Off”, which is misrepresenting John’s unique approach of diagnosing the “constitutional factor” and making the public believe that it is the same as diagnosing the Causative Factor. John Hicks refused to add an addendum to his recent book or to cease and desist the use of the term “CF”. To spare all parties the difficulty of a drawn-out legal proceeding, despite assurances that we would win our case, I will proceed to do my best to clarify in the arena of public discourse and teaching rather than continuing to pursue legal action.

John states on page 10 that “until there is another JR - that is, someone willing and able to give absolutely correct feedback - practitioners and teachers must be willing to take risks, commit and let the results of treatment be the guide.” On the contrary, there is no need to take such “risks”. How JR diagnosed is absolutely accessible to those who are willing to spend the time observing and learning from him. JR meticulously supported and taught his apprentices to do exactly what he was doing. I was his main apprentice and now support other apprentices in the same manner. This teaching method is based on oral tradition and on observing and learning from a Master, a lineage approach central to Chinese Medicine.

JR named me as his successor, and I spent over 30 years with him observing him teach and practice. JR did not use the term “constitutional factor” and did not diagnose in the fashion that John Hicks teaches in *Senses and sensitivity* and *Constitutional Five-Element Acupuncture*.

I applaud John Hicks for his innovative spirit that helped him develop his unique approach to Chinese Medicine. One of my roles is to prevent confusion and to represent JR’s life’s work in the world. My greatest hope is that this review brings clarity to the fact that *Senses and sensitivity* reflects John Hick’s unique approach of diagnosing the “constitutional factor”, an approach that differs in sum, substance and spirit from JR’s teachings and his approach in diagnosing the Causative Factor.

Moving forward, I ask that John Hicks and anyone diagnosing the “constitutional factor” stop using the trademarked term “CF” to help avoid propagating this confusion.

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