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Confluences: Cleansing and Stabilizing the Elemental Sandhi of Spring

Nothing exists in isolation, because we are magnificent microcosms of a magnificent macrocosm—and that is only the beginning of our inter- and inner-connectedness. Never separate, always in relationship, we move with and respond to the great ebb and flow of the *pancha mahabhutas*.

These elements determine our constitutional makeup, shaping both our propensities toward imbalance and our greatest strengths and capacities. It is their constant ebbing and flowing—the eternal cycling of the *bhutas*—that creates our seasons, and with them, the rise and fall of each element within ourselves.

It is during seasonal transitions—the confluences of the elements—that the greatest havoc can arise. Yet these moments also hold our greatest opportunity: the chance to cultivate resilience when we navigate them with the wisdom of Ayurveda.

Seasons as Doshas

What is commonly referred to as Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, we “Ayurvedins” simply describe as Vata, Pitta, and Kapha seasons. This language more accurately reflects the elemental expression of the season and, when understood, guides us in how to live with it wisely.

The confluence of late winter and early spring is Kapha season—a meeting of Air + Ether with their elemental opposites, Earth + Water. This convergence can be particularly tumultuous because of the opposing qualities involved.

Macrocosm and Microcosm

Look first to the macrocosm. The drama is easy to see: gentle spring rains, sudden thunderstorms, hail, lightning, even tornadoes. These disturbances arise when colder upper-air currents—Vata—collide with warmer, moisture-laden air masses—Kapha. A meeting of opposites. A restless stirring of the elements.

Now look inward, to the microcosm.

Our bodies respond in kind. We become incubators for these elemental disturbances. Fluid retention increases. Sluggishness sets in. Heaviness accumulates. The water element, like snowy mountain runoff, gathers and flows. Mucus builds. Seasonal allergies emerge, and our Kapha-dominant friends often feel it the most.

We may feel moody, tired, headachy, dull, or even a bit despondent. You know the feeling—spring fever... with an actual fever. Outer tumult, inner torpor.

Nothing exists in isolation.

Preparing for the Confluence

So, if this quagmire of Air + Ether mingling with Earth + Water begins to stir an unholy war within, here's the secret: start sooner.

Don't wait for the obvious moment of seasonal change. By then, the shift is already underway in subtle ways you may not yet perceive.

Beginning in late January, start preparing the body. Lighten the diet. Favor foods with pungent, bitter, and astringent qualities. Let the winter baking slow down—maybe set aside the sourdough for a while—and begin sprouting beans and seeds instead.

And move. Move your body.

If you haven't already cultivated a well-honed *dinacharya* (daily routine), chances are you haven't yet established a *ritucharya* (seasonal routine) either. This is where the guidance of a

skilled Ayurvedic practitioner can be invaluable, helping you develop routines aligned with your unique constitution.

These practices are the basics—the foundations that cultivate strength, balance, and resilience.

Panchakarma: Deep Resilience

And then there is the MAHA program for restoring vitality and deep resilience: Panchakarma.

Undergoing Panchakarma during Kapha season is one of the most powerful times of the year to remove accumulated ama—those metabolic impurities and stresses that quietly build up in body and mind. It is a profound return to constitutional balance, restoring *ojas*, our deepest reserve of vitality and immunity.

The inner landscape of the body, after all, must be tended like a garden when the seasons shift. Panchakarma tills the soil, loosening and removing impurities that might otherwise give rise to disturbance—large or small—during these elemental transitions.

Its aim is simple and elegant: to restore each dosha to its proper home within the body so that it may function as intended. In other words, to restore elemental harmony—functional intelligence, coherence, and the natural rhythm of the five elements doing what they were designed to do.

Macrocosm, meet microcosm—your new best friend.

Thank you, Panchakarma.

The Wisdom of Seasonal Cleansing

There is an old saying: “If the cloth is not clean, the dye will not catch.”

Seasonal cleansing and rejuvenation are essential if we wish to sustain our health, vigor, joy, and resilience. Ayurveda—and the profound process of Panchakarma—offers one of the most comprehensive and intelligent systems we have for maintaining this balance.

Panchakarma: A Three-Step Process of Deep Cleansing and Rejuvenation

Panchakarma is a profound three-step process designed to cleanse the body deeply and restore balance. In the 22 years that I have been practicing Panchakarma, I continue to be amazed by its capacity to restore the body’s functional intelligence.

The process begins with a 5–6-day preparatory cleanse, followed by 7 days of in-house therapeutic treatments. Afterward, the body enters a three-week period of rest and recovery, during which foods and activities are slowly and mindfully reintroduced.

While this is a simplified explanation, the transformation that can occur through Panchakarma is truly profound. The process works to reestablish balance within the neuroendocrine system, mobilize and eliminate metabolic waste from the tissues, and cleanse the liver, lymphatic system, and blood.

At the same time, the doshas are guided back to their natural home sites in the body, and the body begins rebuilding the seven layers of tissue (*dhatu*s). As this restoration unfolds, the body's vital essence—known as *ojas*—is replenished.

Panchakarma is not simply a detox; it is a deeply transformative experience that supports renewal on physical, mental, and energetic levels.

It reminds us of something both ancient and beautifully simple:

Our bodies are not separate from nature.

We are expressions of it.

And when we learn to live in rhythm with the great dance of the *pancha mahabhutas*, the storms—both inner and outer—become something we can meet with strength, wisdom, and grace.

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Wahneta Trotter, CAS PKS, began her study of Ayurveda in 1999. After five years of private study, she attended the California College of Ayurveda. While in Grass Valley, she attended trainings, workshops and retreats with other luminaries of Ayurveda including, Dr. Svoboda, Dr. Frawley, Dr. Cravatta, Dr. Douillard, Dr. Rao, Dr. Vaidya, Ysha Oakes, David Crow, Prashanti DeJager and many more. Her dedication led her to study in India as well to run a center in Goa. Her passion now is teaching Panchakarma and passing on her wisdom and experience to the next generation of practitioners. She can be reached through her email at wawaji@me.com and her website at www.satmyaayurveda.com