

GRAHAM MARKS

FIVE-ELEMENT ACUPUNCTURE



"Over the course of the last 15 years, Graham Marks has been there for me, helping me through things as simple as tendonitis, as serious as cancer, and as emotional as the death of a loved one. Graham's wisdom, humor, professionalism and kindness have added more to my life than I can ever express."

-Pam E.

[Graham Marks featured in New York Post](#)

Five-Element Acupuncture

Healing for Body, Mind, and Spirit

Having evolved over thousands of years, acupuncture is one of the oldest continually practiced medical modalities in the world. Acupuncture is a safe and drug-free therapy that involves the insertion of fine, sterile, hair-thin needles just under the skin at specific points along the body's energetic pathways. The goal of acupuncture is to restore the balance and harmony of a person's vital energy, enlisting the innate healing process and abilities of an individual from within.

Five-Element Acupuncture takes into account the marvelous complexity of each person. Symptoms in Body, Mind, or Spirit are seen as distress signals and are not in themselves considered the prime imbalance. By addressing the underlying pattern of disharmony, the practitioner looks to treat the cause of the problem, not just palliate the symptoms. This approach, using five-element acupuncture, where the whole person is treated, is referred to as Traditional Acupuncture.

Most commonly known for treating pain, acupuncture is often effective in treating a wide range of conditions such as arthritis, anxiety, addictions, insomnia, fibromyalgia, nightmares, headaches, digestive problems, depression, infertility, fatigue, exhaustion and chronic illness. Acupuncture can also be particularly helpful with difficulties that are the effect of mental and emotional conflicts within a person's life and from the stresses of living in these challenging times.

Five-Element acupuncture has been the foundation of Graham's practice for the last 22 years. Additionally, when appropriate, he will make use of The Balance Method and Tung style treatment, based on the I-Ching. These additional methods are an elegant and effective style of acupuncture for the treatment of pain and a variety of other conditions.

"WHETHER THE FOCUS OF TREATMENT IS PREVENTATIVE, A CHRONIC CONDITION, PAIN, THE STRESSES OF MODERN LIFE ON THE BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT, OR HELPING TRAUMATIZED POPULATIONS AFTER A DISASTER, IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO WITNESS THE PROFOUND GIFTS OF THIS REMARKABLE FORM OF HEALING"

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What is Acupuncture?

Looking through the lens of Chinese Medicine there is no difference between inside and outside. The elemental forces of nature that create the dynamic energies of the seasons move and shape the exterior landscape as well as the interior terrain of body, mind, and spirit. The explosive energy of Spring; the radiant, joyous, energy of summer; the mellow ripening of late summer; the essential sadness of Fall's energy when trees let go of their leaves; the deep, primordial, embryonic energy of winter: all are distinctive manifestations of the vital energy or animating life force that is basic to the universe and every human being. This energy is known as Ch'i (pronounced "Chee").

Acupuncture theory has its own logic and grows from a world-view that is quite different than the western bio-mechanical view of how the body functions. Ch'i energy flows through the body along defined pathways, or meridians. This is a discrete system, separate from, yet influencing, our other bodily systems. When this flow of Ch'i is unrestricted, good health and vitality are maintained. Illness in body, mind, or spirit is associated with a disruption in the flow of this vital energy.



Look at what happens in nature. A stream moves unimpeded through the landscape, flowing as nature intended. This is a perfect metaphor for health and balance. When there is an obstruction in the natural flow, such as when the beavers move in and obstruct the stream, the whole landscape changes. There is an imbalance; a stagnant excess upstream causes the trees to become waterlogged and die, and a restricted flow downstream alters the streambed because water is not flowing as it once did. Several thousand years ago, East Asian practitioners discovered that the body forms disharmonies as a result of the various physical and mental stresses of life, "beaver dams" if you will.

Another image comes from a great city like New York. Bridges and tunnels can be thought of as pathways and channels that provide for the passage of energetic nourishment to the city. When these "pathways" are obstructed the whole landscape changes and life is quickly altered.

An acupuncturist, through various diagnostic means, assesses the state of Ch'i and through the insertion of extremely fine needles at specific points on the body, can influence its flow. In this way, the practitioner removes the "beaver dam" in the stream. This restores balance and allows the Ch'i to flow smoothly throughout the body, mind, and spirit, facilitating the innate ability to heal oneself.

. he symptoms that manifest from the lack of free flow are often the motivating factors that compel people to seek treatment. These symptoms often have medical labels such as "arthritis," "tennis elbow," "chronic fatigue syndrome," "migraine," but often patients will speak of the "beaver dam" in their own words: "I don't feel like myself"; "something is off"; "Where is my spark?"; " I feel stuck"; "the stress is getting to me."



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About

Graham Marks L.Ac, M.Ac, BFA , MFA



A long standing chronic health problem led Graham to acupuncture treatment. “Western medical treatments up until that point were palliative at best. I was treated by the great English acupuncturist, Professor J.R.Worsley, and the results of Five-Element Acupuncture were astounding. After only a few treatments not only was I completely healed and in the more than twenty years since that initial treatment the problem has never reoccurred, but I also felt that the treatment shifted me at a profound and deep level of body, mind, and spirit. I said to myself, this is something that I have to learn.”

In 1992 Graham began studying Classical Five Element Acupuncture with Professor Worsley at the Worsley Institute of Classical Acupuncture in Florida and the College for Traditional Acupuncture, in England, earning his L.Ac degree. With continuing study at the Academy for Five Element Acupuncture in Florida, he received his M.Ac degree.

In 1995 Graham opened a rural private practice in Alfred, New York. Alfred is in an underserved section in the far western part of the state and to further make acupuncture available in 2000, he established the acupuncture clinic that is part of Rehabilitation Services and Pain Management at the Jones Memorial Hospital, a small community-based hospital in Wellsville, New York.

From 1995 - 2006, Graham served on the teaching faculty of the Academy for Five Element Acupuncture.



Aside from his private work with patients, Graham has worked extensively with Acupuncturists Without Borders to provide free treatment for citizens and first responders in post-Katrina New Orleans, post-earthquake Haiti and more recently set up a temporary clinic to treat residents of Red Hook, Brooklyn after Hurricane Sandy. “The AWB clinics offered treatment for trauma and post traumatic stress. What I witnessed was extraordinary and often beyond words. Communal acupuncture used in these post-disaster contexts clearly has a part to play in helping communities heal. Treatment provided a practical antidote to the frustration and exhaustion the residents felt as they struggled to cope with the overwhelming realities of loss. Once people settled into the treatment they could pause, find their breath, start to relax, and a visible calm would come over them. I have seen this moment on peoples’ faces in New Orleans, Haiti, and Brooklyn; it is the moment during a treatment that allows for an inner quiet and energetic renewal.”

Over the years Graham has studied many other styles and traditions of acupuncture and incorporates them into his work with patients when appropriate. “I have studied extensively with Richard Tan and Jeff Nagle in I-Ching based acupuncture, commonly known as “The Balance Method” which is an elegant and effective type of acupuncture that is particularly useful in treating pain and other conditions.”

Acupuncturists are required to undergo extensive education, including detailed study of human anatomy and training in Clean Needle Technique. Fully licensed by the State of New York, Graham is also nationally certified by the National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), having passed comprehensive national board examinations.

In 2013, after twenty years of practicing in Alfred, New York, Graham Marks moved his Five-Element acupuncture practice to New York City in a convenient location near Union Square.

Testimonials



It is a gift - the practice - yours -
which remembers poetry in the body -
and restores everything to its right relation.

I was depleted from an enormous project and the acupuncture restored and returned me to myself like nothing else could. After an initial treatment, the color returned to my lips immediately - I could feel the movement of strong energy - and perhaps most importantly - I felt like my heart was opened - that I could work again from a more kind and responsive center.

Ann Hamilton

When I came to acupuncture, I was in generally good health, had a great job, beautiful house and the promise of all good fortune. I was in therapy and despite this seemingly idyllic picture I knew that I needed to make some big, difficult, and what seemed to be terrifying changes in my life. As I tried to imagine making these changes, I could feel a deep resistant energy that kept pulling me back to the idyllic picture and the safe, comfortable life that inhabited it. I had not done acupuncture previously and didn't really understand just how it worked, but had always been interested in the relationship between mind, body, and spirit. Since I was already doing therapy, I wanted to see how acupuncture might work in conjunction with it to help me move into these uncharted waters with clarity and conviction rather than fear and ambivalence.

I worked with Graham consistently for the better part of a year. I came to understand that we were really working together in this process and that everything depended upon that. As an artist, I felt like this work was an extension of the creative process and each session brought its own revelation and understanding. Graham's skill, expertise, understanding, and insight inspired confidence from the beginning and did indeed help me make the leaps necessary to re-imagine my life and clear a path to renewed strength and awareness. Doing this work in conjunction with therapy was quite profound and I continue to build on awarenesses that developed during this period. When I look back, I see this time as a major turning point and one that helped change the trajectory of my life forever.

Name Withheld

My name is Dawn Hampton. I am a swing dancer. In 2012 I was struck with a severe case of sciatica. Being a dancer himself, Graham was very aware of the importance of my getting well so he invited me to come from New York City to Alfred so he could treat me. He also came all the way to New York and did a house call to follow up. Oh yes, I have been blessed to have been under the healing hands (and needles) of Graham Marks. Oh yes, I'm dancing again. God bless you Graham.

The Light is on, always

Dawn Hampton

I began my acupuncture experience in 2000. I was interested in achieving balance in my life. As a first grade teacher, my professional life could be chaotic at times. I had no specific issues with pain or chronic problems. I was, however, a "worrier", and I wanted to let go of all that. My experience from the very first appointment was, and has always been, one of subtle and amazing changes in my emotional well being. Over the years there have been issues in my life centered around grief, anxiety, and worry. Acupuncture allowed me to address these issues from a more balanced perspective, with a subtle shift in perspective and energy.

I live two hours from Graham and I'm often asked why I travel so far for my appointments. Graham's calm and gentle presence is one of the reasons. Graham shares his knowledge and wisdom from a human perspective, and always with compassion. Having his professional expertise in my life is like having a secret rabbit's foot in my pocket. Acupuncture allows me to experience more joy, peace and happiness.

Stephanie B.



Over 15 years ago, I had a career as a social worker, specifically as an investigator of adult and child abuse which I had been doing for 17 years. It was a "good" job, with "benefits" but it also came with lots of emotional and spiritual challenges that eventually leveled me. I found no good answers in western medicine. Luckily, I found Graham Marks. I am not being dramatic when I say that my first visit changed my life. From the moment I entered his practice, I was made to feel at ease, the treatments de-mystified, and his skill, compassion and attentiveness created such a healing atmosphere! From that first treatment, when we talked about change, and making "leaps of faith" I felt supported, encouraged and just plain better! So good, in fact, that I took a deep breath, stepped off the edge of my cliff, and quit the "good" job that had been so very bad for me. Over the course of the last 15 years, Graham Marks has been there for me, helping me through things as simple as tendonitis, as serious as cancer, and as emotional as death of a loved one. Graham's wisdom, humor, professionalism and kindness have added more to my life than I can ever express. Thank you, for all you do.

Pam E.

Our youngest daughter had many health issues and spent too much time in and out of hospitals and doctors offices. At one point the medical profession sent her home with a very short time to live. She started seeing Graham for treatment and she lived another year with very good quality of life. We are grateful for the extra time we had together. It is sometimes very hard to express your heartfelt appreciation for someone who has given a loved one an extended period of time in which to enjoy life.

Andrea Reisen

I recommend Graham Marks for acupuncture wholeheartedly and without reservation for anyone interested in this marvelous modality. Though information about acupuncture for physical ailments is widely available, less publicized is its value for personal growth, expansion of consciousness and energetic clearing, which was my goal. As a mature professional, I wanted to keep healthy and continue to grow.

My experience of Graham was of an impeccable practitioner; as a healer he far surpassed my expectations. His warmth, listening skills, true intent to be of service to others is of the highest caliber. Add to that his passion for his craft and you have all the elements of the same rewarding outcomes I enjoyed.

Mary Kathryn Saville, RN, BSN. MBA, Naturopathic Doctor

Five years ago I was struggling to get pregnant with my first daughter after a sad miscarriage. On month 8 of trying to conceive, I went to see a fertility doctor who recommended that I start trying fertility treatments because I was already 37 years old. My husband had some reservations and I had heard that people who were trying to conceive sought acupuncture treatments. So I called Graham and asked for an appointment. When I explained that I was in the first week of my ovulation cycle he made room for me for the next day. At that first appointment I felt immediately at ease, in good hands, and hopeful. Not only was his interview thorough, but Graham was kind and a good listener. I went to see him once a week, was able to conceive my daughter Mia that same month, and have been raving about the miracle ever since. And this would have been enough for me to continue to talk about how wonderful Graham is, yet, there's more, the miracle happened twice. And the second time was even more amazing. This time I had been trying to conceive another baby for 2 years, and had been undergoing extensive fertility treatments for 8 months when I found myself driving back home to Alfred, as I do every summer since I had to move to Philadelphia four years ago. I was getting ready to give up the treatments since by now I was close to turning 43 years old and I wasn't responding to the drugs. I decided to try one more time with acupuncture and I called Graham. Again I was on my first week of ovulation and he found a spot for me the next day. I continued acupuncture once a week, started responding to the drugs, made it to IVF, and am now almost 7 months pregnant with another baby girl. I cannot endorse Graham enough for his skill, warmth and kindness. I will forever be grateful to him for helping me become a mom.

Ariana H.

I came to seek treatment through acupuncture for depression after the death of my 4 year-old daughter. At the time, I was seeing a psychologist for many months and he recommended medication as part of his treatment. I was uncomfortable with this thought and continued my search of how to move forward. Amongst my reading about dealing with grief, I came across the use of acupuncture with the idea of getting my mind, body and spirit to work together. It seemed much less invasive to me than drugs and I was compelled to give acupuncture a try. At the very first session, Graham was extremely compassionate as I shared my story and my wishes to heal. I was moved by his ability to understand me from day one. He explained how acupuncture can help with depression and was very hopeful that he could assist me. The treatments were very powerful to me and brought out many emotions that I had a hard time letting go of. I was feeling more benefit from my sessions with Graham than I did with my counselor, and decided to continue. Every session released more and more grief I had suppressed deeply. The "needles" were a comfort to me, as I realized it was a way to "let go" of my pain. I also shared with him, another problem I was having - infertility. He shared with me that this was another area he felt acupuncture could be helpful. I proceeded to see him on a regular basis. My husband and I also pursued fertility treatments and upon our first attempt my husband and I became pregnant! I continued to receive acupuncture throughout my pregnancy and delivered a very healthy baby girl. I truly believe that acupuncture aligned my mind, body and spirit to get me through the most difficult time of my life as well as achieve my dreams of building my family. I am forever grateful to Graham Marks! Graham's warm manner, professionalism, knowledge of acupuncture and skill allowed me to live a life of my dreams. With much gratitude,

Linda



As the due date for my second child came and passed, my doctor told me that I had a few more days until she would perform a caesarian section if my baby wasn't born naturally. I remembered hearing great things about Graham Marks and the same day I called him, I received a call back, and an appointment that very evening!

The acupuncture treatment that Graham performed was surprisingly calm and relaxing, and not painful as I had thought it might be. Graham is extremely understanding and compassionate, and he explained everything very clearly and answered all of my questions, which made me feel immediately at ease. Following the treatment, I went home hoping for the best. I can attest to Graham's skill and the treatment's effectiveness, because 6 hours later I went into labor, and 8 hours later my water broke! The following afternoon my healthy baby boy was born! Following the birth of my son, I have continued seeing Graham for help recovering from labor.

Graham is a rare peaceful soul. I only wish I had sought his wisdom and effective treatments sooner! I will be forever thankful for the gift of laboring naturally, a quicker recovery, and the care I received from Graham!

Laura M.

Thank you so much for your wonderful acupuncture practice. With God leading me to you I was able to have a healthy baby girl. She is a blessing and we enjoy her everyday. Thanks for being part of our great miracle.

Christine S.

In the deep winter of December of 2010, I fell and severely broke my ankle leading to a complicated surgery with eight screws and a plate to hold my ankle bone together. The whole thing was traumatic. Graham came to my house before and after surgery to give me acupuncture to ease the intense pain, to speed healing, and to regulate all my other systems. Graham was wonderfully empathetic and flexible to make an old fashioned house call and was a calming presence for my husband also. Two years later, I walk and go to the gym and have scheduled surgery this summer to take out the hardware. I have moved to Oregon, but if I could fly Graham out to aid in the process, I would in a NY minute!

Kymerli C.

I want to thank you for helping relieve the pain that I have endured for several years. I suffered from severe back pain and tried to find help through medication, exercise, and chiropractic support. All of these efforts helped to some extent, but I still hurt and needed something more. About 18 months ago, I came to your office inquiring about acupuncture. I'm so glad that I did. You were able to give me the help I needed to alleviate my pain. I found the treatments to be painless and relaxing. My back pain was relieved and with continued treatments I also found that your help brought pain-relief for my shoulder and breathing difficulties. I highly recommend your treatments to anyone who wants to find pain relief.

Kevin O.

I'm sorry I didn't meet Graham years earlier for my longstanding neck and lower back problems. Of course I had tried everything short of surgery to relieve chronic pain that ranged from somewhat tolerable to occasionally severe, which included ultrasounds, chiropractic, massage, and prescription pain medication. They all helped some, but their effects were always short-lived. I was a bit skeptical of acupuncture, but open-minded about its effectiveness. After all, nothing else had given me the relief that I had hoped for.

That all changed after I met Graham. He put me at ease quickly, listened carefully to my list of symptoms, and told me what to expect. I found the environment in his office to be very relaxing and therapeutic. After the actual treatment which lasted a total of thirty minutes, he scheduled a couple more visits, thinking they might be necessary because of the severity of the discomfort I was feeling at the time. The next morning my neck felt slightly improved, but not dramatically so. After the second visit, however, the results for me were stunning. I really couldn't believe the relief that I felt, and my neck pain has never been severe since. After I returned another time for my back issues, I got equally impressive results. He did say that I may need occasional "tune-ups" in the future, and I look forward to seeing him again.

I can't say why Graham's treatments have worked so well for me, but I can say that I think that there is something to traditional acupuncture, and that Graham is a talented and knowledgeable practitioner.

Tim Gibbs



Thank you so very much for helping me - not only with the acupuncture, but with the compassion you showed me with accepting what I could pay at the time. The past five years I have received very little compassion and financial help with my injury and you can't possibly know how much you helped to increase my hope. The pain is the most controlled that it's been. Thank you for restoring my faith in caring human beings. **Donna B.**

WOW! No more migraine headaches! Perhaps it was eight or more years ago that I was introduced to Graham Marks, with the suggestion I explore acupuncture as a source of relief not found in any other attempts to alleviate migraines in all the years I had experienced them. Search for triggers had disclosed no clues. At the time of my first appointment with Graham, I had suffered six three-day long incapacitating migraines, bed ridden and vomiting, in a period of about nine weeks, which was much more frequent than usual. After our first appointment, of nearly two hours, the migraines were gone. No headaches remained and I have experienced no further problems in all the years since then. On rare occasions, with the initial threat of another, one OTC migraine headache tablet stops it in its tracks, something that was never possible before Graham's ministrations. When Graham then asked if there was anything else I wanted to address, I said "Yes! Sleep deprivation!" describing many long years of sleeping in snatches night after night. Results of that one treatment had me sleeping like a baby. It was wonderful! I then knew where to go for a tune-up in that regard if ever I felt the need. In the years since then, I have made sporadic appointments based on other particular needs and for "seasonal tune ups".

Graham presents a gentle, calming spirit in an office setting where art, and music provide restful ambience appropriate to the healing environment. I have always felt ministered to when seen. I sleep in the recliner chair with needles in place. The experience is so relaxing that even reading a favorite book would be an intrusion. His is a healing nature, which encompasses understanding of the wholeness of the human condition. I felt respected as a physical, mental, emotional, spiritual being. In a gentle, non-invasive way, Graham explores what might be helpful to consider in terms of dietary preferences, stress reduction, herbs, vitamins, rest, fresh air exercise, etc. Graham has a special gift. As a former RN, I count myself extremely fortunate to have experienced his healing gifts and personable qualities. It is a pleasure to recommend him to others who are struggling with their own sufferings. Graham is a truly a blessing in this field.

Sue F.

I highly recommend acupuncture treatments with Graham Marks for pain as well as a multitude of other problems. He successfully treated me for headaches and he has been very helpful in treating many of my pain patients.

Dr. William Carstens, D.O., Medical Director of Pain Clinic at Jones Memorial Hospital, Wellsville, NY

I was referred to Graham Marks by my VA doctor who felt that the muscle spasms in my neck were serious and not responding to traditional approaches. I had read about acupuncture but was skeptical that it could relieve my chronic issue. At my first appointment, Mr. Marks quickly put me at ease by openly encouraging questions and explaining the procedure. The treatments themselves are virtually painless and within just a couple sessions I began to notice substantial improvement. With continued treatments, the length of pain-free time kept increasing, and as it did, the appointments were spaced farther and farther apart. Eventually, the spasms in my neck (which also had generated severe headaches) became so minimal that all I needed were periodic sessions.

Needless to say, I am very impressed with Mr. Marks' knowledge, easy going mannerisms, and flexibility in scheduling. I was also thrilled that the chronic and painful situation that I had suffered from has been all but eliminated. I would readily recommend that anyone with chronic pain issues discuss them with Mr. Marks for an honest appraisal.

Charlie W.

Somewhere in my 40's I started getting headaches, lots of them. I tried to figure out where they were coming from. Were they hormonal, they did come around my menstrual cycle? Were they from tension? My job was stressful and my mom had just died. Were they injury related? I had taken some bad falls from my horse. I tried over the counter pain relievers, heat, cold, massage, chiropractic, and yoga with some relief. My doctor tried migraine medicine which took the edge off but left me feeling off and not myself.

Finally, a friend and counselor suggested Graham. It was an hour's drive to his office, but so worth it. Graham was kind, informative, gentle, caring and his treatments are the only thing that worked. My headaches are pretty much gone and my overall well being improved. Graham seems to have the "gift" within him. I have and would continue to highly recommend him.

Lisa B.



I first came to Graham for help with my headaches, at a time when they were both chronic and frequently very severe. I was also going to a headache specialist at that time, who prescribed many drugs at a time, many of them very strong, and none of them seeming to be of any help. I did not want all those drugs and I wanted to get my pain under control. One huge mistake that I had made, was to take too much over the counter pain medication in an effort to avoid stronger medications. This caused rebound and therefore more pain. My pain management doctor wanted me to address this problem. I tried on my own, and failed. I asked Graham for help. Through acupuncture and Graham's positive attitude and encouragement to help me, I was able to conquer this. Acupuncture has made a huge difference in the frequency and level of pain. It has also helped me take less prescription medication for my headaches. Now, the headaches are under much better control. Although I will always be "a work in progress," I am learning to make simple but meaningful lifestyle changes that support my acupuncture treatments and help my body between treatments.

Graham is an excellent acupuncturist. He is highly skilled in his techniques and combines this with being compassionate and listening to one's needs. He is perceptive as well. Graham is able to determine the treatment one needs for each particular visit. He also gives excellent practical suggestions for things to do at home to enhance treatments. Graham is gentle and encouraging. He does not give up, even in tough situations, which treating headaches can be.

I feel that I have benefited greatly from coming to Graham and he has been literally life changing for me. I highly recommend him.

Dorothy U.

After a serious car accident I contacted Graham for treatment and he has helped me recover when no one else could help me.

Christopher J.

I was very stressed and not sleeping well. A friend recommended Graham Marks to me. I was a bit hesitant about acupuncture but I had reached a point where I was willing to try it. Graham thoroughly explained the treatment and made me feel completely comfortable. I could not believe how amazing I felt after the first treatment, not only did I feel like myself again, but I started sleeping better. Thank you, Graham!

Ion R.

I have been saying for the last nine years; where has all my energy gone? I don't know where it went and I do know that it has come back! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you. I know you have wrought a miracle in my life.

Dorothy F.

I first went for acupuncture treatment for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. I was apprehensive about needles being stuck into my body but I was willing to explore the potential of receiving help using this alternative method of treatment for my very limited level of energy that was so debilitating. I was told due to the severity of my condition I might not experience immediate results, that it might take several visits before I would see any noticeable improvement. It did take about eight treatments. But then there was a definite shift in my energy. At last I had found a therapy that was of benefit to me. I was so relieved. For me, finding Graham was a God send. I know I would not be functioning at the level I am today if it were not for him and the help he has provided for me in dealing with my illness. I have continued to receive treatment over the years as it is a chronic disease. The acupuncture also helps with my emotional health and wellbeing. I'm so grateful to have ongoing support and care.

Graham's main priority is to HELP people. He wants your visit to be totally about you and for you. He provides a place to rest and escape the stress of daily life that enables your treatment to be even more effective. Graham is very trustworthy, caring, kind, sympathetic, empathic and supportive. Just being in his presence is very comforting and calming.

Sandy G.

I saw Graham for treatment of my hyperthyroid condition. Graham spent time describing the treatment, and what I should expect. He was very professional and thorough. After several treatments and changes to my diet, my hyperthyroid condition began to resolve. I would recommend Graham for his acupuncture expertise.

Brenda Szabo, PT, DPT, Vice President of Diagnostics and Rehabilitation Services, Jones Memorial Hospital, Wellsville, NY

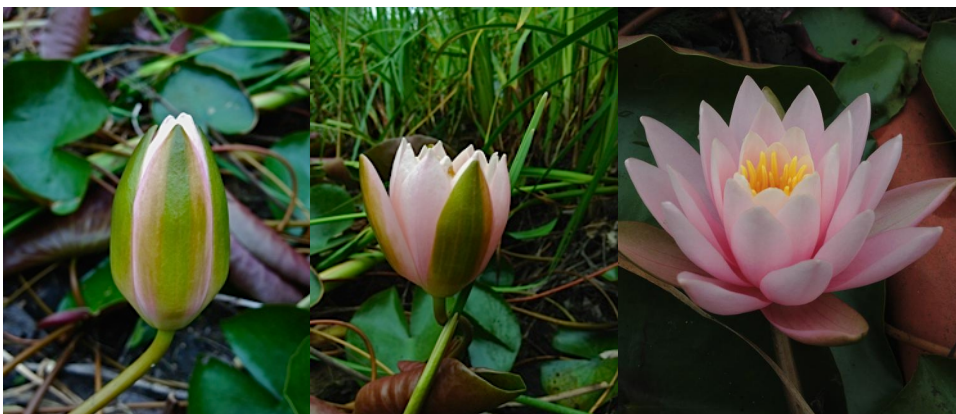
My son fell on our front steps and ruptured discs in his lower back. He was in terrible pain and stayed in bed all the time. I took him to every doctor we could find and the only solution was surgery and nerve blocks. I felt we had to find another way. With acupuncture my son started to get better - at first just pain at night, then no pain. The acupuncture is amazing, just amazing. Praise the Lord, acupuncture is really a good treatment. Graham is a kind and knowledgeable man. Recently we found my son has hypothyroidism and after Graham started working on him for that his levels are up and normal....without drugs. Praise the Lord, this is good treatment.

Barbara J.

Graham Marks treated me with acupuncture when I contracted Bell's palsy a few years ago. The right side of my face was affected by this condition and I was unable to make the muscles move on that side of my face. My face was droopy, My smile was crooked, my eye would not close completely and I couldn't pucker. After I was diagnosed by my doctor, I went to Graham for an acupuncture treatment. (I had never before experienced acupuncture.) Graham took me into the cozy treatment room, asked me some questions about my symptoms, described the process he would use and made sure I was completely comfortable. He placed the acupuncture hairs (the use of the word "needles" implies something sharp and painful, so I prefer to refer to them as hairs) into my ankle, wrist and earlobe. There was a slight itching sensation, but it was not really painful. He then left me in a very comfortable recliner to relax for about an hour. Okay, now for coolest part....the results! During the first part of the appointment, when he was taking notes about my condition, Graham asked me to whistle. Normally, I can whistle a tune better than Andy of Mayberry, but, much to my dismay and try as I could, I was unable to pucker enough to whistle. Well, after the treatment, he again asked me to whistle and much to my surprise and delight, I was able to get a whistle out! I was very impressed and pleased. The palsy wasn't completely gone and wouldn't be for another couple of weeks, but it had improved enough in an hour's time to allow whistling.

Graham creates a relaxed and warm atmosphere with his calm, gentle, and compassionate personality. He has wonderful knowledge about this "Art" of healing. I will use his service again and will continue to recommend him to anyone needing this kind of help.

Wendy W.



Personal Narrative



My path to becoming an acupuncturist has been circuitous - maybe more like a bloodhound on the scent of something, or perhaps something seeking me out, rather than a clear, illuminated, straightforward path. After attending The Philadelphia College of Art (1974 BFA) and The New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University (1976 MFA). I became a successful ceramic artist and teacher, exhibiting and lecturing internationally, and from 1986 to 1992 I was the head of the ceramics department at the Cranbrook Academy of Art. At that point I assumed that I would spend the rest of my career and life working with clay.

The choice before me was becoming clear. Tread water in the same place and let life become a kind of wax museum version of itself, or pay attention to the voice that was making itself known, and take it seriously.

[Interview with Graham Marks on his transition from Ceramic Artist to Acupuncturist](#)

While at Cranbrook change began to assert itself. The ceramic sculpture I was making at the time was quite large and my method of working involved control and deliberateness. For instance, I went through elaborate strategies to prevent the clay from cracking by slow drying it under plastic for three to four months. Much of my time in the studio became about subduing and controlling many of the innate qualities of the material. But anyone who has worked with clay knows that it has a mind of its own. Cracks happen, things fall apart, preconceptions go unmet. What I had habitually thought of as defects were becoming quite insistent - to the point where they finally got my attention. Listening to them, I started to ask, could I enlist these forces and collaborate with them? I went back into the studio and proceeded in a manner opposite to my established practice.... I made a form and

left it uncovered by the open window to dry, allowing the forces of rapid shrinkage to produce geologic cracks... I fired the work in such a way so that the evidence of flame and heat played an active role in the life of the piece. Literal forces of nature - heat, expansion, contraction, oxidation, and reduction - were all asserting themselves and creating a literal rupture in the work. Little did I know that these changes in my studio practice were "coming attractions" for the rupture that was to come in my life. About a year later a surprising malaise overtook me in a way that I had never experienced. I felt totally "out of gas." I managed to maintain my teaching obligations, but psychically I felt as though my present was dying within me and that my future was totally unknown. During the months that I felt stuck in this place, I discovered a word for what I was feeling: "liminality." It comes from the image of a doorway or threshold, and describes a kind of "in-betweenness." There I was, metaphorically standing between two rooms, but not in either, not in the room of the past, so to speak, where I came from, and not yet in the room of the future, where I had not yet taken a step. I knew that something had to change but could not see what that meant or what form it would take.



During this time I developed a chronic eye inflammation commonly known as “blepharitis.” Being forced to think about my eyes was certainly fertile ground for a metaphor about seeing and perceiving the need for change. At the same time, a long standing, chronic problem with ulcerative colitis resurfaced. Many years later in my acupuncture work, I came across an essay titled, “*Self Discovery and Self Healing*,” by John Upledger, the founder of cranial-sacral therapy, that spoke directly to the importance of listening to symptoms and what they have to say:

“A friend and general surgeon with more than thirty years experience once confided in me that, in retrospect, he felt the majority of surgical procedures he had performed might be classified as excisions of the “vocal apparatuses” of the inner selves of his patients. He meant that by removing certain organs or tissues, he was eliminating the bodily voices that were attempting to communicate the presence of deeper emotional and spiritual problems in need of attention.” (1)

I stood in the doorway for many months, unable to move forward. One day something surprising came out of my mouth: “I want to be a doctor.” It felt like a first step, but the disruptive implications of such a statement were enormous. It felt impossible to become a doctor at age 40. What about my family? Cranbrook? My students? Money? My upcoming exhibitions? My resumé?” But once the words were spoken it felt like there was no going back. The choice before me was becoming clear. Tread water in the same place and let life become a kind of wax museum version of itself, or pay attention to the voice that was making itself known, and take it seriously.



I think the impulse that was making itself known was an impulse to help people in a way I did not feel my ceramic work was capable of doing. I actually had no interest in being a doctor in the western-medical sense, and as fate would have it, as I was researching treatment for my own health problems, some good friends directed me to a master acupuncturist, Professor J.R. Worsley, from England. I arranged to get treated by J.R. who had recently started an acupuncture school in the U.S. The results were profound. My long standing ulcerative colitis, which was quite serious by the time I received treatment from Professor Worsley, was gone and has never returned. I arranged to observe others being treated and talked to other acupuncturists and began to feel that I had found what I was looking for. Acupuncture was calling me to step through the door and to create a new life.

As I write this I have now been practicing acupuncture for nearly 20 years. I am aware of the danger of writing such a narrative: events can be made to sound tidy and logical. They weren't, and it is only through hindsight that I can start to find connections between some aspects of my life that at the time felt quite disparate, and at times frightening. The more I learned about acupuncture many things started to fall into place. The natural forces that are so much a part of ceramics and that had come to the foreground of my studio work in such an insistent and active way, are the foundation of

acupuncture, a system of healing that is based on the universal patterns of nature. What I have learned as a practitioner of this ancient art is that acupuncture involves a collaboration with these forces, not unlike the one in the studio. In looking back I can also say that the process of being an artist is not that different from the process one experiences as an acupuncture patient or as a practitioner of acupuncture. There are clearly forces at work that are larger than us. We have the choice to ignore them or listen to them. The best moments in the studio were when something would manifest that led me to ask, where did that come from? It was not foreseen and beyond calculation. These are also the profound moments in the treatment room. Something manifests that is clearly beyond the individual. Energy moves, balance is restored, and the patient may ask, "where did that come from?"

In 1992 I made the leap and left my teaching position and started my formal three year course of study of Five-Element Acupuncture with Professor Worsley. At the time it felt like a radical and abrupt shift. But it was one that I couldn't ignore and had to trust. In retrospect I can say that the shift really wasn't radical at all, but rather a direct evolution. My work needed to change; I just never imagined that the change meant that my studio and the objects I made would totally disincorporate and re-appear transformed, as corporeal beings called patients.

In a poem entitled "*Prospective Immigrants Please Note*" Adrienne Rich speaks to the first step through the door.

*Either you will
go through this door
or you will not go through.*

*If you go through
there is always the risk
of remembering your name.*

*Things look at you doubly
and you must look back
and let them happen.*

*If you do not go through
it is possible
to live worthily*

*to maintain your attitudes
to hold your position
to die bravely*

*But much will blind you,
much will evade you,
at what cost who knows?*

*The door itself
makes no promises.
It is only a door. (2)*

1. John Upledger, "Self Discovery and Self Healing," In *Healers On Healing*, Richard Carlson and Benjamin Shield, eds. (New York: St. Martins, 1989 p.68)

2. Adrienne Rich, "Prospective Immigrants Please Note," In *Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967)