

# Pioneer of Medical Model Reform

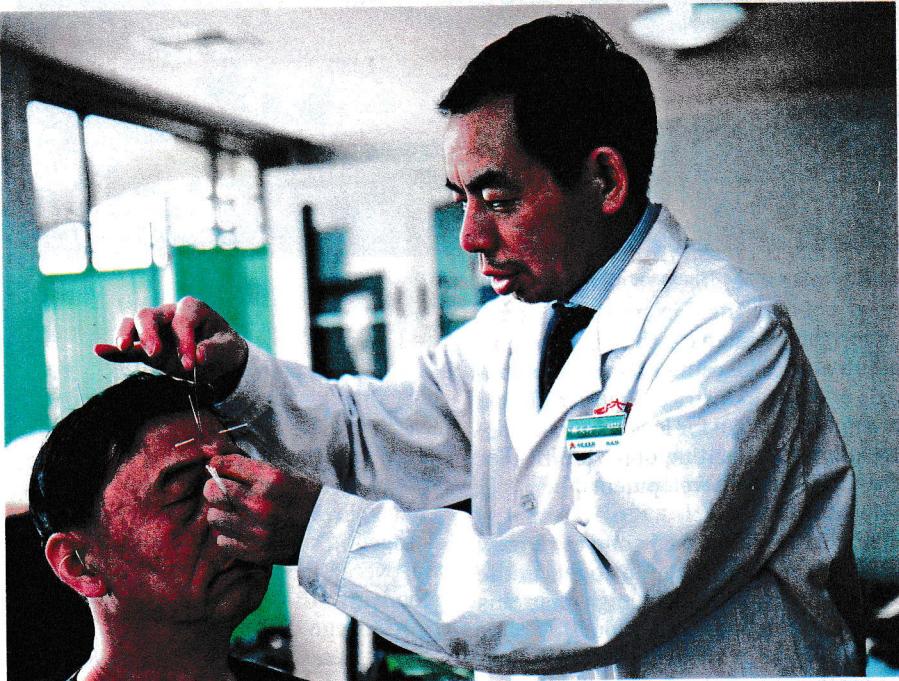
By special correspondents CHEN HEYING  
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SOCIAL development and technological progress, as well as changes in the natural environment and lifestyles, have spawned a host of hitherto unknown chronic maladies and illnesses that erode human health. As existing mainstream medical models cannot meet the demands of contemporary disease prevention and treatment, medical and healthcare reforms are now imperative.

Professor Jiang Geli, the first medical practitioner in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) with a PhD in Chinese acupuncture, has brought to bear his benevolent, sagacious and analytical reasoning in a thoroughgoing examination of current medical models. After years of research and practice, Professor Jiang has made a significant contribution to human medicine through his introduction of humanistic holistic medicine – the medical mode that meets the demands of 21st-century healthcare.

**China Today (CT):** As an expert practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) with doctorates in medical science and philosophy, you have opened up a new realm of medical science by virtue of a humanistic holistic medical model perfected on the basis of your vast knowledge of human science, philosophy, deep insight into Chinese and Western medicine, and decades of clinical experience. What was your original intention in creating this new model?

**Jiang Geli:** It was no sudden inspiration or epiphany. Rather, the humanistic holistic medical model evolved over the course of my life and three decades of experience as a medical practitioner. Diverse academic approaches, advances in



Jiang Geli treats a patient with acupuncture according to his philosophy of humanistic holistic medicine.

healthcare, theoretical medical innovations, and technological developments over the past decade all laid the foundations on which to establish my theory.

Hardships during childhood sharpened my tenacity. I grew accustomed to assuming responsibility for my family, and later society as a whole, having witnessed the suffering of acquaintances whose illnesses could not be treated, due either to poverty or ineffective therapies. This fired my resolve to become a doctor whose excellent skills could treat and cure the sick and infirm.

After obtaining my bachelor's degree in TCM, I studied under academician Shi Xuemin, a TCM and acupuncture master, and received my master's and doctoral degrees. In 1994, I enlisted in the PLA, and was the army's first physician with a PhD in acupuncture. Later, I developed

therapies that combine acupuncture, cupping, and psychotherapy to cure cardio-cerebrovascular, cervical spine, and lumbar vertebra diseases, as well as psychological conditions. As regards mental health, I have introduced new concepts such as "comprehensive overall thinking" and "humanistic medical science (green medical treatment)." My research on bulbar palsy caused by strokes and sick sinus syndrome – conditions that have challenged doctors throughout the world – have won more than 10 awards in the fields of science, technology, and health care. To formulate the humanistic holistic medical model theory, I embarked on a doctoral philosophy program at Nankai University. Under my supervisor, the eminent Professor Chen Yanqing, I completed my research on changes in medical concepts and approaches and the

establishment of a humanistic holistic medical model.

Dramatic transitions in human society that led to growing healthcare demands and notable changes in the spectrum of human diseases all contributed to the driving force that shaped this new medical model. Human health today is greatly influenced by science and technology, a changing natural environment, and modern lifestyle. Higher incidences of chronic diseases stemming from old age, emotional stress, metabolic disorders, and an unhealthy lifestyle demand radical reforms to medical approaches and models.

Based on medical practice, we seek integration of diverse schools, including those of philosophy, medical science, and life sciences, from the perspectives of human science and philosophy. Meanwhile, bold theoretical explorations and technical innovations have facilitated establishment of the humanistic holistic concept, the three-dimensional (body, mind, and spirit) precept of the human body, and the four-dimensional (body, mind, spirit, and environment) outlook on life. These have evolved into the humanistic holistic medical model that has polarized the attention of medical circles.

**CT:** What is the fundamental connotation of the humanistic holistic medical model? And what are the main features of this new model compared with its existing counterparts?

**Jiang:** The humanistic holistic medical model is based on the substantive characteristics and treatment principles of medical science. It complies with the development trend of medical science and contemporary demands for better physical and mental health. Human orientation is one of its fundamental connotations. Moreover, the model imbues the philosophy of life, the essence of Chinese and Western medicine, and modern life science and technology, so integrating biology (the human body, its activities and metabolism), ecology (the internal and external environment of human body), emotions (psychology, the spirit, and intelligence), and society (interpersonal family and social relationships). Characterized by green concepts, holistic adjustment, and humanistic science and technology, the emphasis of the new medical model is on treating and maintaining health on the four

dimensions of body, mind, spirit, and environment.

The current medical model was formulated by American psychiatrist George L. Engel in 1977. Different from traditional model, Engel's theory highlights biological, psychological, and social influences. This model, however, failed to function as expected due to several academic flaws. We are therefore calling for a more scientific, human-oriented, integrated and precise model that will meet the needs of this era.

Humanistic holistic medicine came into being against this backdrop. On one hand, it contributes to practicing and passing down TCM theories and techniques that underline the equilibrium between *yin* and *yang*, as well as an overall analysis of illnesses. On the other, it promotes integration of TCM and Western medicine, and better utilization of modern science and technology. The new model, through a more advanced system and greater perception, is better adjusted to contemporary human health conditions and their demands on health care. Its innovative four major medical scientific concepts are the model's main features.

First, compared with Engel's biopsychosocial model, the four-dimensional concept of medicine – biology, psychology, society, and ecology – have broadened our horizons by taking full consideration of the influence of environmental changes on human health.

Second, the four-dimensional concept of healthcare – the physical body, emotions, mentality, and environment – takes account of growing and worsening psychogenic pathogenic factors and their relevance to patients, the need for higher medical integrity and more specific medical treatment.

Third, the epochal strategy that makes TCM more human-oriented, technologically advanced, greener, and popular globally highlights the advantages of TCM, which is integrating into the world with confidence and expected to fulfill epoch-making revitalization and further achievements.

Fourth, the concept of "inclusive transcendence" blends the philosophies of TCM and Western medicine. The merging of Chinese and Western medicine – from theory to practice – is an inevitable requirement of this era, and a trend in world medical development.

**CT:** Could you specify the main factors of your four-dimensional life view?

**Jiang:** The human body is an assembly of our life forms, tissues, and organs in a physical presence. The mind refers to our emotions, intentions, self-aware conscious activities, and the representations of them all. The spirit, our temperament and mentality, is the least known aspect of human beings. The environment implies not only the internal and external human situation, but also includes the status of the body's specific function.

A complete "human body" is regarded as an integral whole, and at the same time as a system that connects with heaven, earth, and humankind. It can be summarized as the body, mind, spirit, and environment. Therefore, this perception through which to understand comprehensively human life is called the four-dimensional outlook on life, and is of great value for in-depth research into human science, philosophy, and medical science.

**CT:** What innovative theories have been proposed under the framework of humanistic holistic medical science?

**Jiang:** Innovative theories include the concept of "humanistic holism," medical philosophy, and new theories on medical treatment. Among them, the views of dialectical comprehension and medical ethics are the most outstanding and representative innovation theories of humanistic holistic medical science.

Based on the characteristic theory whereby the human being is a carrier of multi-culture and the body-mind-spirit-environment four-dimensional outlook on life, the dialectical comprehension theory whereby the heart reflects the object – the face is shaped by heart – and other innovative theories, as well as that of the human conscience and humanist concept of innate knowledge and instinctive ability, the humanistic holistic dialectical comprehension view is cognizant of the world and ourselves and also transforms the world and ourselves. This concept embodies the world view that "combines the material and spiritual." It is a medical scientific rationale that has a broad scope of utilization, covering the body-mind-spirit-environment four-dimensional outlook on life as a whole, and acts as a guide and reference through which to be cognizant of ourselves and

life, regenerate our physical and mental health, and fully comprehend human medical science, health and diseases and healthcare.

The "humanistic holistic medical ethics view" consciously fulfills Sun Simiao's spirit of sincerity and the Hippocratic oath to abide by the international rules of medical science, to persist in the study principle of "achieving an expertise in a wide range of learning and simultaneously promote natural and social science," so to build the concept of humanistic science and technology, practice human benevolence, righteousness, etiquette, and wisdom, and fulfill the concept of medical treatment that spares no efforts in "striving for more efficacious treatment through greater skill, more harmonious doctor-patient relationships, and maintenance of the body-mind-spirit-environment four-dimensional holistic approach to rehabilitation."

This new concept of medical ethics calls for the restoration and revitalization of the humanistic nature of medical science. It is beneficial to the construction of humanistic holistic medical ethics that demands both virtue and ability.

**CT:** In clinical practice, you advocate and practice the philosophy of humanistic holistic medical science and use humanistic holistic treatment methods to treat numerous patients' illnesses. Could you explain humanistic holistic treatment methods and their curative effects?

**Jiang:** The outstanding features are based on the advantages of the holistic approaches of acupuncture and moxibustion therapy. The humanistic acupuncture and moxibustion skills we have developed are based on disease entities, disease circumstances, and the personal situation of the patients. It combines the advantageous medical technologies of traditional Chinese and Western medicine and psychology to form the "three-dimensional holistic treatment of body, mind and spirit." It is a "four-dimensional clinical therapy thinking" model integrated with traditional Chinese therapy, Western therapy, a combination of traditional Chinese and Western medicine, and humanistic holistic medical science.

After years of clinical practice, the humanistic holistic method of treatment has been extraordinarily effective in cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, spine disease, psychological

diseases and diseases caused by modern life style.

Mr. Deng suffered from spinal cord necrotic paraplegia and limb muscle atrophy. All the domestic hospitals he went to suggested he undergo surgery. When he came to our hospital, his illness had progressed to the point where he was paralyzed from the neck down. We carefully formulated a program of humanistic holistic treatment and humanistic acupuncture and moxibustion therapy supplemented by traditional Chinese and Western medicine and rehabilitation therapy. After one year of treatment, Mr. Deng could stand unaided and tend to his own daily needs.

and literature. Your formulation of the humanistic holistic medical model will undoubtedly have significant impact on the development of human medical science. Could you tell us about the latest progress and prospects of the relevant studies?

**Jiang:** The latest research progress includes, firstly, systematically demonstrating the revitalization strategy of "holistic humanization, era technicalization, green ecologicalization and global popularization."

Second, I propose to achieve an inclusive and transcendent model that combines traditional Chinese and Western medicine.

Third, the *Theories and Practices of Humanistic Holistic Medical Science*, an iconic classical 500,000-Chinese-character work, is to be published by the People's Medical Publishing House. Meanwhile, a series of 10 books have been drafted for successive publication.

We intend to set up an extensive academic organization and gather medical experts to apply the original medical model in various fields of medical science to realize its wide application in global medicine. In line with its original scientific characteristics, we can confidently make the following forecasts as to its prospects:

- The humanistic holistic thinking concept will become a thinking pattern with universal values;

- The body-mind-spirit-environment outlook on life, health and medicine will become the universal consensus;

- The inclusive and transcendent medical development model will contribute to the ultimate meshing of traditional Chinese and Western medicine by gradually dispelling the barriers between them;

- Such an inclusive and transcendent medical development model, by combining medical essences at all times throughout the world and complying with the development strategy of a "healthy China" and the World Health Organization "health concept" will be widely accepted and globally applied in the health administration and education departments of all countries.

I firmly believe that the humanistic holistic medical model will guide the development of human medical science in the 21st century, and possibly hasten the wave of global medical revolution. C



Jiang Geli is the director of the PLA TCM and acupuncture center.

Due to domestic trauma and the breakdown of her marriage, Ms. Chen suffered from severe anxiety, worsened by neck and lumbar vertebra degenerative diseases for years. She tried all kinds of medical treatment but nothing worked. Eventually she had a nervous breakdown and seriously considered suicide. Through humanistic acupuncture and moxibustion therapy, body-mind-spirit analysis therapy and traditional Chinese medicine as well as accompanying psychological treatment, Ms. Chen totally recovered.

**CT:** As a versatile scholar, you have made valuable contributions in the fields of medical science, philosophy,