

Ingredients vs. Formulas: for Sunriders.

In the Chinese system it is not the ingredients themselves that are of value but how each ingredient contributes to the total balance of the Five Elements and their position in Yin-Yang polarity. If the formulator has the skills and ability (and who better than Pharmacist/Herbalist Dr Chen!) to negate what we would call "negative" influences by neutralizing, compensating and circumventing the outcome with other, more positive influences - the sum total may be much different than when each item is taken at face ("scientific") value. The unknown, un-measurable factors of energy, flavor, property and action are not recognized in modern medicine but have been proven to be extremely practical and functional nevertheless.

I realize that this idea is difficult (if not illogical) for the "fractionated" Western mind to understand but in the traditional Chinese "wholistic" mode it is not uncommon to sometimes use minute doses of pure "poisons", often sublimated by other herbs or even other (opposite?) "poisons", to achieve a very specific purpose. Naturally Dr Chen does not use poisons, but knowing the energetic thrust of chocolate, sugar, sorbitol, corn syrup and other "questionable" ingredients (and their effect on the invisible Chi pathways known as "meridians") is much more important than their individual, isolated, fragmented action on rats - human or not! Perhaps we should measure a formulas' success by how long it is used - rather than by how much money can be squeezed from its use.

To second guess Dr Chen is both our privilege and right - and just as foolish as a white belt in the martial arts seriously challenging the black belt! Dr. Tei Fu Chen of Sunrider International has been dubbed both a maverick and a traditionalist. He is traditional enough to retain the medicinal principles laid out in ancient Chinese literature (as handed down by his forefathers) but, unlike any one else, he used these concepts and principles to formulate innovative, regenerative food formulas. How can these ancient philosophical and yet experimental food formulations be evaluated by modern laboratories? How can we measure the un-measurable? Unless and until we become nutritional, pharmaceutical, herbal and theoretical Chinese Einstein's - we have no choice but to trust Dr. Chen's judgment about the ingredients he chooses to use. Sometimes it's difficult to accept that the author is always greater than the book.

This is by no means a copout. Dr. Chen is one of the few contributors in the world who is continually being honored for managing to bridge the gap between traditional Chinese food knowledge and Western medicine. That Sunrider is the one and only company chosen by the Chinese government to sponsor and represent the country's athletes in the next Olympic competition - is not just an accidental fluke. And just as a common institutional dietitian cannot be compared to a bona-fide nutritional biochemist (!) - so a modern food "engineer" cannot stand long in the shadow of Dr. Chen.

We must keep in mind that the Chinese philosophy is not so much about health as it is about regeneration; not so much about work as it is about cooperation; not so much about ingredients as it is about the formula; not so much about information as about understanding; not so much about knowledge as about wisdom. All of these simple but broadening, encompassing notions are incorporated by Dr. Chen in designing food formulas that are both tasty, nutritious and get the job done - with a very specifically intended goal: organic alchemy that pulses with the rhythm of wholeness. The ancient Chinese concepts of combining energies, flavors and actions have stood the tests of time and are enjoyed by more people than their Western pharmaceutical counterparts.

Dr. Chen is not unreachable. He makes himself available to those individuals who honestly want to question his methods. Naturally, some things are private and proprietary and should remain so. Just remember that it is the phrasing of the question that is of more importance than the subsequent answer. Those who question must be willing to study the question long before the opportunity to studying the answer and more often than not they'll discover that every once in a while an idea has come along....that has been here forever. And who invented the rule that the burden of proof is on those who add to (regenerate) years to life? Let the burden rest on those who wish to subtract (degenerate) our lifestyle instead.

I hope this helps.

Warmly,
Dr. Van

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