



A Science of Medicine  
The Art of Care

# The Four Law Rule: The interrelationship between the Elements, Qualities, Humours and Temperaments

Dr. Linda Mayer

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Have you ever thought about how things in life appear in sets of four, and each pair in the set may have a reverse polarity? This implies that for each pair there is an opposite reaction, response or function, enabling a balanced interaction of all its parts, example:

There are four seasons: spring is opposite to autumn and summer is opposite to winter; there are four categories of ages: childhood is opposite to adulthood and youth is opposite to maturity; there are four compass points: east opposite to west and north is opposite to south; hot is opposite to cold and moist is opposite to dry; there are four categories of primary matter in nature: gas is opposite to solid and liquid is opposite to plasma (fire); there are four elements: air is on top and earth is below, and water puts out fire; there are four Temperaments: Sanguinous is opposite to Melancholic and Phlegmatic to Biliary.

Opposite qualities cannot exist together, for example: nothing can be both hot and cold, or moist and dry, or positive and negative at the same time. There cannot be both winter and summer together, not spring and autumn.

These pairs discussed above must always exert an **opposite effect** in order to maintain the **equilibrium in nature** and in the human body, for example: Any major change in weather patterns and climate would cause major health problems and cosmic interference. If spring follows a dry winter, there is decay of the trees and foliage, which produce poor feed for the animals, and poor health for the people who eat the animals.

According to Newton's third law '**For every action there is an equal and opposite re-action**'. This means that for every force there is a reaction force that is equal in size, but opposite in direction. This implies that whenever an object pushes another object, it gets pushed back in the opposite direction equally hard. In Tibb, regimens, diet, pharmacology and other treatments, opposite qualities are prescribed to counteract the heat, moisture, coldness or dryness. The law of infinitesimals in homeopathy states that the more dilute the remedy, the stronger it will become.

Not all four parts and patterns have a reverse polarity with respect to their functioning, but most of them share the commonality of being linked to the four Temperaments and their respective qualities of heat, moisture, coldness and dryness. Please refer to the illustrated page for more examples of the four parts and patterns.

The **heart** has four chambers, the two atria and the two ventricles, which ensure that the body is adequately oxygenated. If the heart had only three chambers, both oxygenated and deoxygenated blood would be mixed in a single chamber, resulting in exhaustion.

Each person has a unique composition of the four qualities of **heat, moisture, coldness and dryness**. If there is an imbalance of these qualities, then symptoms of disease start to surface. If these qualities are not brought back into balance, this could result in more serious or chronic diseases.

## Significance of the Four Directions

"And there are Four Corners of the Earth that we talk about,  
the Four Colours of people, and the Four Winds.

You see, the Winds -- they are Spirits."

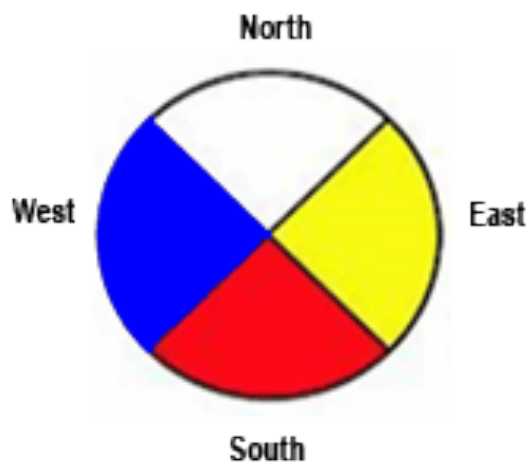
(Grandfather William Commanda, Algonquin)

The Elders teach us about the four directions. If we learn about direction, we also learn about attention, about focus, and about power. Each direction has spiritual power. In the morning, go outside, face the east and get still, then, listen to your thoughts. After you have done this for a while, turn and face the

west. Get quiet once again and listen to your thoughts. Did your thinking change when you changed directions?<sup>1</sup>

"See, I fill this sacred pipe with the bark of the red willow; but before we smoke it, you must see how it is made and what it means. These four ribbons hanging here on the stem are the **four quarters of the universe**. The **black** one is for the **west** where the thunder beings live to send us rain; the **white** one for the **north**, whence comes the great white cleansing wind; the **red** one for the **east**, whence springs the light and where the morning star lives to give men wisdom; the **yellow** for the **south**, whence come the summer and the power to grow". Black Elk (1863-1950) Oglala Sioux holy man.<sup>2</sup>

In Tibb the four quarters of the universe correlates with the direction of the compass points, the colours allocated to them, as well as some characteristics of their Temperaments.



The Medicine Wheel teachings are based on a circular pattern and cyclical set of four: the four Seasons, the four stages of Life, the four Bio-psychosocial and spiritual aspect of a person.<sup>3</sup>

### The Meaning of Number Four in the Bible

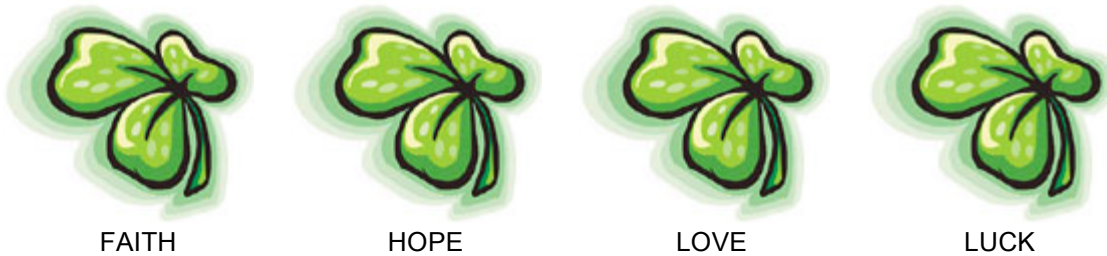
In Genesis 1:14-19 the bible refers to the number four represents creation, which marks God's creative works. The material creation was finished on the fourth day – with the sun, moon and stars ordained for four things: signs, seasons, days and years.<sup>4</sup>

In Revelations 4:6-7 as well as in the Old Testament under Ezekiel 1:10, reference is made to the four living creatures, or the four cherubim: As for the likeness of their faces, the cherubim, they had a face of a **man** (spring); and they four had the face of a **lion** (autumn); on the right side; and they four had the face of an **ox**, or bull (summer); on the left side; they four had also the face of an **eagle** (winter).

They are also pictured as the four minor Egyptian sphinxes on Trump Card VII (The Chariot). They are pulling the chariot with a man whose only function is to bear the Holy Grail. He is throned in the chariot rather than conducting it, because the whole system of progression is perfectly balanced and proceeding in a very natural flow.<sup>5</sup>

## Lucky for Some - The Four-Leaf-Clover

In the early days of Ireland, the Druids believed that they could see evil spirits coming when they carried a shamrock, or three-leaf clover, giving them a chance to get away in time! They thought four-leaf clovers offered magical protection, and warded off bad luck. It has become a Celtic charm that the leaves of four-leaf clovers as a lucky charm can stand for:



According to Christian legend, Eve is said to have carried a four-leaf clover with her when she left the Garden of Eden. That means that anyone who has one can claim to hold a bit of Paradise.

Later, St. Patrick, the Patron Saint of Ireland, used a Shamrock – which has three leaves – to explain the Holy Trinity – one each for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Christians also viewed the four-leaf clover as lucky for its resemblance to the cross. Some even believe that the fourth leaf symbolizes the Grace of God.<sup>6</sup>

## Four Major Phases of the Moon

The four major phases of the moon are: New, 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, full and last or 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. There are, however eight distinct stages in all. These phases have to do with the relative positions of the sun, the moon and the earth in the moon's 29 day monthly orbit of the earth. The ebb and flow of ocean tides is influenced by the moon.

The moon's cycle is a continual process that is in constant change. The moon never stays at any one phase for more than an instance at a time – starting with a new moon on day one and ending with a waning crescent moon on the 29<sup>th</sup> day, with the moon's light shape and intensity always changing.<sup>7</sup>

In Tibb, the ratio, or quantity, and quality of the Humours are also in constant motion, which are largely influenced by lifestyle factors.

### The effect of positive and negative ions

In Britain in 1974, Dr Hope-Simpson discovered that all major influenza outbreaks had coincided with sunspot maxima because of its magnetic energy fields. This causes distortions in the Earth's own magnetic field which can weaken our body's immunity levels, leaving us more vulnerable to infection.

Positive ions in the atmosphere have harmful effects on health, whilst negative ions are hugely beneficial. Whenever an atom loses electrons, it has more protons which result in an overall positive charge. If an atom gains electrons, it has *fewer* protons and so it becomes negatively charged.

At the time of the full moon, there are more **positive ions** at the Earth's surface, causing **heightened stress**. An influx of positive ions causes blood to flow more slowly and so oxygen in the blood is not carried to the muscles and brain as efficiently. During this time, there are many more murders, violence, mood swings etc. This is where the origins of the word 'lunatic' come from; 'luna' being Latin for 'moon'.

**Negative ions** at the Earth's surface at the time of the new moon, causes organic life to flourish and seedlings become stronger and they grow better. Negative ions create less stress, more feelings of calm and less health problems, resulting in **more balance** and **harmony** in the body.<sup>8</sup>

### What are the Most Powerful Forces on Earth?

Many of these phenomena depend on the four basic forces to function:

1. **Gravity** causes the tides, avalanches, snow, rain, leaves and many other natural occurrences to fall. Although gravity has a huge impact, it is the weakest in actual magnitude.
2. **Electromagnetism** is concerned with the forces that occur between electrically charged particles – magnetic and electrical force involves the exchange of photons. Electricity, magnetism and light are all produced by this force.
3. **Strong interaction** is a strong nuclear force, which holds the nucleus together against the enormous forces of repulsion of the protons.
4. **Weak interaction** is a weak nuclear force which is crucial to the structure of the universe, as it is responsible for the building up of heavy nuclei, as well as enabling the sun to burn.<sup>9</sup>

According to George Dvorsky, the four most powerful forces in the universe are: **supermassive black holes, gamma-ray bursts, self-replication** and **intelligence**.<sup>10</sup>

Another perspective is that the most powerful force on earth is **water**. Water will beat fire; it can cut through rock; it can move houses and trees as well as change the landscape through floods and landslides. Water cleanses the air, earth, body and spirit, and it sustains life, without which we would die.<sup>11</sup>

The **human will** directed towards a clear mission, is also argued as being the most powerful force on the planet. Winston Churchill said: "Never, Never, Never, Never Give Up!" That determination saved Great Britain from German Invasion in World War 2. <sup>12</sup>

In Tibb, there are four forces, or faculties, of the body:

1. The **Psychic Faculty** is linked to the **brain**;
2. The **Vital Faculty** is linked to the **heart**;
3. The **Natural/Metabolic Faculty** is linked to the **liver**, and
4. The **Generative Faculty** is linked to the **gonads**.

In conclusion there is substantial evidence to suggest that life revolves around a continuum of the interaction of the four Elements, Qualities, Humours and Temperaments, both in the universe and in the human body.

## The Interrelationship between the Elements, Qualities, Humours and Temperaments

The universe (macrocosm), human beings (microcosm), and the environment, are made up of many parts and patterns, many of which **have four components**, and which link up with the **philosophy of Tibb**, the '**Humoral Theory**' and the '**Four Organ Theory**'.

- **Seasons:** Spring, winter, autumn and summer.
- **Age and maturity:** Childhood, maturity, adulthood and youth.
- **Stages of existence:** Birth, growth, maturity and decay.
- **Compass points:** East, north, west and south.
- **Qualities:** Heat, moistness, coldness, and dryness.
- **Primary Matter:** Gas, liquid, solid and plasma.
- **Four fundamental forces:** Gravity, electromagnetism, strong and weak interactions.
- **Physical environment: Elements:** Air, water, earth and fire.
- **Earth's environment:** Lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere.
- **Major parts of the earth:** Crust, mantle, outer core and inner core.
- **Temperaments:** Sanguinous, Phlegmatic, Melancholic, and Biliary.
- **Humours:** Blood, Phlegm, Black Bile and Yellow Bile, which are derived from the **four stages of digestion**.
- **'Four main organ Theory':** Brain, heart, liver and gonads.
- **Basic functions of human beings:** Able to vitalise himself with basic life energy; have consciousness, cognition, perception and awareness; feed himself, and reproduce.
- **Metabolic functions:** Digestive, propulsive, retentive and attractive capabilities.
- **Body functions:** Metabolism, sensation/perception, body structure/integrity, and movement/transport.
- **Digestion:** Ingestion, digestion/metabolism, absorption/assimilation and elimination.
- **Main routes of elimination:** Colon, kidneys, lungs, and skin.
- **Embryonic development** (initial stages): Morula, blastula, gastrula and neurula.
- **Faculties and Forces:** Psychic, Vital, Natural/Metabolic, and Generative.
- **Tissues:** Nervous (brain), muscular (heart), epithelial (liver), connective (cartilage).
- **Parts of the Cherubim:** Man, lion, eagle and the bull.
- **Components of blood:** Red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets and plasma.
- **Key Carbon-based molecules:** proteins (building blocks), nucleic acids (genetic information), carbohydrates and lipids (both store energy).
- **Mass of the human body - elements (96%):** oxygen, carbon, hydrogen and nitrogen.
- **Pillars of Tibb philosophy:** Physical, emotional/mental, social and spiritual aspects.
- **Dimensions of wellness:** Lifestyle, body, mind and soul.
- **Lines of treatment:** Regimental therapies, dieto-therapy, pharmacology and surgery.
- **Four sets of the twelve zodiac signs:** Leo, Aries, Sagittarius (Sanguine), Cancer, Pisces, Scorpio (Phlegmatic), Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn (Melancholic), and Gemini, Aquarius, Libra (Biliary).

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