ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Healing with Nature: An Application of Traditional Chinese Health-preserving Theories and Chinese Culture in Therapeutic Garden Design

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The importance of the natural environment and its relationship to health and physical and psychological well-being was once recognized and deeply rooted in Chinese traditional health-preserving philosophy. However, ancient awareness of restorative benefits of the natural environment is now ignored in China. In Chinese hospitals, there are increasing areas of buildings and parking lots, resulting in the loss of court yards and open space.

In some parts of China there is a trend of renewed interest in the role of designed natural environments, though little has been done to advance the idea of therapeutic gardens using ancient Eastern philosophies and approaches. In Western countries, however, the connection between therapeutic gardens and health care facilities has been underway for a longer period of time. This presents an opportunity to explore and study both approaches, combining the two to advance therapeutic garden methods and practice.

This creative project centers on incorporating traditional Chinese health-preserving theories along with Western approaches in hospital landscapes. General principles and guidelines are proposed and applied to the landscape design of a Chinese hospital (Wuhan Iron
& Steel Hospital). It is hoped that these findings contribute to the formulation of a model for the design of therapeutic gardens in Chinese hospitals.