Note: To be able to comprehend and perform this method, therapist must be in 10+ years of acupuncture clinical practice, and within optimal state of balance of his body, soul and mind. It is necessary to know well hourly metabolic changes and perform praying however.

The ancient Chinese spoke of possession by demons and ghosts. Some speculate that the Chinese were talking about the spirit word and others think this was their way of speaking of addictions, mental illness and epilepsy.

The 13 Ghost Points come from Sun Si-Miao, an acupuncturist and herbalist in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) who has also been called “The Medicine Buddha” and “The King of Medicine”. His most famous writings are the 30 volume Prescriptions Worth a Thousand Gold Ducats. His second book contained folk remedies and included references to mystical and magical practices and exorcisms, 32 drugs said be be successful against demons and the 13 Ghost Points.

Sun Si-Miao realized that as a culture advances psychological illness becomes more prevalent. The 13 Ghost points are a systematic approach to treat mental diseases and epilepsy. Sun Si-Miao explained the ghost (gui-鬼 in Chinese, meaning excess phlegm) and how it influenced the life of a person and it’s steps in taking over. The ghost points are grouped in the Four Trinities and one extra point (under the tongue or between the eyes). The Four Trinities represent the progression of mania from first not feeling quite like yourself to doing things out of character. Later the person becomes fixated, secretive and controlled by these feelings. As the ghost takes over the health of the person suffers and the spirit must depart.

These points may have been of Shamanic origin rooted in the practice of demonology and exorcism. Although still taught in in modern day schools of Acupuncture the correct use and protocol for these points is most often not taught to present day students.
This peculiar grouping of acupuncture points first appeared as “The Song of the 13 Ghost Points” written in the book “The Thousand Gold Prescriptions” (Essential Formulas for Emergencies [Worth] a Thousand Pieces of Gold) by Sun Simiao. This book, a fascinating study in itself, is considered a medical masterpiece and is believed to be a compilation of all the pre-tang dynasty medical texts. Within the book there are 5,300 recipes for medicines and 932 entries on acupuncture. The Thousand Gold Prescriptions also discusses Life Saving Remedies, Gynecology, Pediatrics, Mental Disorders, Pathology Mechanisms and Treatment Strategies. It is one of the earliest textbooks to discuss ethics in medicine and a moral code that should be followed by physicians. Modern research has found during Sun Simiao’s life around 618 A.D. the population in his area had decreased rapidly due to epidemic disease which may have also influenced how he organized the contents of this book.

Sun Simaio lived from 581-618 A.D. dying at 101 years old he was afterwards honored as “The King of Herbal Medicine.” It is reported that by the age of 20 he had mastered and memorized all the medical classics. Practiced emergency medicine with the military troops of Li Yuan who later became emperor and found great favor with him. When Sun Simaio died it was reported that his body did not decay for more than a month. It is speculated that he had been taking mercury and arsenic elixirs a practice described in his last book to preserve his body at death.

Sun Si Miao – developed (c. 7th century) method of 13 ghost points within concept of Phlegm... Phlegm as the cause of mental disorders, rather than “angry spirits”. Shortly, Sun Simiao:

- wrote about the importance of compassion in Medicine
- wrote 1,000 Ducat Formula
- 13 Ghost Points are about cultivating your sense of self over a lifetime
- It is said 13 Ghost Points Method transcend time & space

Method of needling includes: 4 Trinities (+ 3rd Eye Point – Yin Tang): each trinity relates to the progression of disease – in terms of mania

- mania = bipolar (i.e., manic depressive disorder)
- hallucinations – schizophrenia
- thoughts of suicide – epilepsy

These points should be done only on people receiving therapy, or who are inherently strong and have some kind of support system.
1st Trinity:

In the 1st Trinity, there’s the initial build-up of Phlegm, characterized by the beginnings of psychological dysfunction, disorientation towards world, and sore throat.

1) Du 26 (Ghost Palace) Gui Gong 鬼宮

Associated with inheritance – of ancestral genetics, as well as the human legacy:

Humanity

Used for inappropriate, spontaneous laughter or crying

Epilepsy

Fatigue

This point was listed for manic behavior, depression, suicidal tendencies, obsessions and fears originating in possession by malevolent spirits. It is also the point generally indicated for the treatment of spirits that cause night paralysis and demons that haunt you both in your sleep and waking. If the demons can be heard speaking in your ear then this point was particularly important.

2) Lu 11 (Ghost Faith) Gui Xin 鬼信

Associated with the World (worldly affairs & undertakings)

Epilepsy

Sore throat

Clears Heat in channel

Jing-well point

This point was for hysterical behaviour, disorientation and possessed walking during both the day and night. If the ghost was causing a distant draining of essence then this point was indicated.
3) Sp 1 (Eye of the Ghost) Gui Lei 鬼壘

Associated with Earth (one’s body)

Used for feelings of disorientation in the world

Epilepsy

Resuscitates

Jing-well point

– these points are used mainly for Heat and Wind conditions

This point was indicated for ghosts causing a person to shout and rave in the street as well as ghosts that stopped you sleeping and demons that caused manic thought patterns. Psychoses with anger and rage was also indicated here.

2nd Trinity:

At the level of the 2nd Trinity, life attitudes begin to become inflexible – people become set in their ways. Or there’s a

lot of running about “without a clue” – without decisive direction.

4) P 7 (Ghost Heart) Gui Xin 鬼心

Earth of Fire – deals with material desires

Earth of Fire – deals with Dampness and Phlegm harassing Heart, causing:

– alternating and frequent laughing/crying

– irritability

Ghost is in Pericardium, trying to get into Heart; this is characterized by intense cravings for
material objects. Ghosts that lead to madness, hysteria and random laughter and crying. If the laughter becomes insane and ‘distant’ then the ghost is deep within the system and must be cleared with this point.

5) Bl 62 (Ghost Path) Gui Lu 鬼路

Opening point for Yang Chiao Mai
Deals with how you walk into – deal – with the world (your constitution)
Here, you begin to believe the same thing and walk the same path as the Ghost
Epilepsy
Paralysis
Headache
Ghosts that lead to epileptic type behavior are treated with this point. These often come with feelings of heat and of random energies moving through the body that lead to sickness and depression.

6) Du 16 (Ghost Pillow) Gui Zhen 鬼枕
(a.k.a. Feng Fu – Warehouse of Change)

Deals with flexibility and ability to adapt to change
Ghost gains access into brain: Ghost Pillow = sleeping with Ghost
Ridged tongue
Lock Jaw
Loss of voice
Headache
– in the 2nd Trinity, Wind can be an issue... Wind can either cause excessive movement, or paralysis
This point is for ghosts that have ridden on the Wind to enter the body. In classical thought, strong winds carried evil spirits and the potential for possession was stronger. In these cases early treatment of invading spirits was carried out with Gui Zhen.

3rd Trinity:

This is the level at which alcoholics and addicts get stuck at. They use drugs to get their Fire going.

Remember the saying: “If you want to find ghosts, go to a BAR!”

7) St 6 (Ghost Bed) Gui Chuang 鬼床

Deals with being able to look at suffering and not ignore it

Located at the jaw – deals with ability to “chew” the world

Lockjaw; also neurological conditions like deviation of mouth and trigeminal neuralgia

At this point, the person is fully possessed by the Ghost

Ghosts that possess the mind and prevent clear thinking and speech are treated with this point. It is also a general point for ghosts that cause contrition of the face. It was classically thought that strong ghosts could make their own faces be known through the face of their victims and this was one such point for clearing these nasty critters!

8) Ren 24 (Ghost Market) Gui Shi 鬼市

Deals with one’s ability to appreciate one’s own resources – one’s Yin

At this point, the Ghost is absorbing one’s Yin

Negative outlook consuming one’s Yin

Deals with wasting diseases, where body begins to get thin and deteriorate

Body consuming most of its water

Dark urine
Nosebleeds (body trying to get Ghost out)

This point is for ghosts that cause depression, melancholic behavior and suicidal thoughts. If there is deviation of the face and in particular the mouth then this point is indicated.

9) P8 (Ghost Cave) Gui Ku 鬼窟

Fire of Fire – deals with acknowledging your true passion in life

At this point, because the person doesn’t know who they are and because they don’t embrace their Yin – their resources – they begin to get PARANOID

Here, Ghost makes one become self-destructive

Fevers

Sweating

Heat in nutritive Blood

If the ghost is causing convulsions and spasms that are with a full sense of awareness then this is the point to use. If there is no mental awareness during the convulsions then Gui Lu should be used instead.

4th Trinity:

10) Du 23 (Ghost Hall) Gui Tang 鬼堂

About embracing self

Here, Ghost has taken over

This point as access to the pituitary gland (master gland)

Severe nasal congestion

Poor vision

Dizzy spells

Alzheimer’s
Phlegm really begins to block internal pathways

Ghosts that cause headaches, splitting pain in the middle of the brain, watering of the eyes and strong mode swings are treated with this point.

11) Ren 1 (Ghost Store) Gui Cang 鬼藏

About embracing self
Ghost eats up all of Yin
Urinary/defecation blockage or incontinence
Menstrual issues
Prolapse
This point is also used for DROWNING

Ghosts that are sapping a person’s consciousness are treated with this point. It is also indicated for waking somebody up from coma. In the case of women there was a particularly awful kind of spirit that was said to come during the night and sexually assault their victims. This point was used (in conjunction with the Si Shen Cong) to disrupt these spirits connection to the victim.

12) LI 11 (Ghost Leg) Gui Chen 鬼臣

Earth of Metal – deals with the world as a reflection of the self (you are responsible for your own emotions, outlook, and over-all place in society)
High fever
Vomiting
At this point, there is no longer any communication with the outside world – COMA
This is the general point for ghosts that are causing the Shen to become disturbed and the personality to slowly begin shifting. It was also the point for ghosts coming from rituals and cult like groups actions.
The 13 Ghost Points are believed by acupuncture physicians of today to treat Mental Disorders or “Dian Cong.” The treatment of Mental Disorders with acupuncture are described as far back as the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Chinese Medicine a medical textbook composed over 2 thousand years ago (475-221 BC). Many scholars believe Epilepsy, Schizophrenia, Mania and other mental illnesses were originally considered to be caused by demonic possession. Research by Poney Chiang states, “By late Zhou Century (771 B.C.) illness causing spirits were no longer associated with ancestors but with those with demonic origins.” During this period shamanic healers practiced only spiritual healing in the form of exorcism. It is thought that by at least the fourth century, Daoists expanded their clinical speciality beyond demonology.

In modern day acupuncture textbooks and universities the 13 Ghost points are most commonly taught as a grouping of points used to treat mental disorders such as Mania, Epilepsy, Schizophrenia and so forth. The use of the points is based predominantly on a point function paradigm. Meaning the function of the point is taken into consideration in relationship to the patients diagnosis and then the point is used if deemed appropriated. For example P-7 has the traditional point function of clearing heat from the pericardium and calming the mind. Therefore if a patient comes into the clinic that’s restless or manic and after examination the doctor reaches a diagnosis of too much heat in the chest this point could be selected as part of the treatment because of it’s individual point function and it’s classical grouping as one of the 13 Ghost Points. While this idea may seem logical it is not how these points are used in the actual Song of the Thirteen Ghost Points!

The Song of the Thirteen Ghost points is a very ordered treatment protocol. Each point in the Song is needled in an order using a specific type of needling technique. The Song begins with instructions that it is usually not necessary to needle all 13 points and often a cure has been achieved after needling the first 2 points in the prescription. Should the patient not be cured after the first two needles the doctor should continue to proceed needling through the protocol.
The treatment should be stopped as soon as the patient is better even if all 13 points have not yet been needled. The song states that you will know if the treatment is working by the time you have needled 6 points. In modern schools of acupuncture students are most often not taught to needle the 13 Ghost Points in their prescribed order.

Many of the needling techniques used in the Song of the Thirteen Ghost Points are very painful. For example the first point in the prescription is Du 26 or Ghost Palace a point located just below the nose above the upper lip. (At the junction of the upper and middle third of the philtrum) The Song gives instructions to insert the needle until it can’t go any deeper. This would indicate needling all the way through and into the patient’s upper gum. The 6th insertion calls for a “fire needle” here it is debated among scholars whether an actual red hot needle should be inserted into the patient or if the term “fire needle” is merely referencing the needling technique of using 3 insertions and manipulating the needle 7 times during this step of the treatment protocol. By the time the 11th point is reached the doctor is instructed to burn moxa (artemisia vulgaris) on a point titled Ghost Treasure located on the crease between the gentials and the anus. The final point in the prescription is an extraordinary point named Ju Quan or Ghost Seal this point is located in the center of the tongue and is most often very painful to have needled. These are just a few examples of the acupuncture techniques rarely used today but called for in the Song of the Thirteen Ghost Points.

13 Ghost Points Method traditional instruction – poetry of 13 Ghost Points:

The way Sun Si-Miao describes his 13 Ghost Point treatment is as an Alchemical treatment. Alchemical Chinese Medicine is ritualistic. I recently had the good fortune to witness a ceremony of this type in China on Mao Shan, a Celestial Master mountain. The Celestial Master performed a “blessing” ritual. This included other monks playing music and chanting. According to Jeffrey Yuen, an 88th Generation Daoist priest of the Jade Purity tradition, it is likely that in Sun Si-Miao’s time, the 13 Ghost Points treatment was performed in a similar way, ritualistically with music as a key component.

Music itself is vibrational in nature. The 13 Ghost Points work on a vibrational level to break up cellular and emotional patterns. The music itself is part of the healing. In addition, the emotional component of having music played during the session acts as a catalyst to stirring up old stuck emotions and releasing these patterns.

男從左起針,女從右起針 When needling men start from the left and when needling women start from the right side of the body.
Our first point is Ren Zhong. It is also known as the Gui Gong. Approach the point from the left but insert and remove from the right.

Beside our thumbnail corner is the second point which we know as Gui Xin. Needle this point to a depth of three Fen (measurement in acupuncture – one Cun is ten Fen as a guide for acupuncturists!)

Our third meridian point is near to the nail of the large toe, it is known as the Gui Lei and we can needle it to a depth of two Fen.

Our fourth meridian point is on the line at the base of the palm (wrist crease). It is known as the Gui Xin and we can needle it to a depth of half a Cun.

The fifth meridian point is on the border of the white skin and it rests upon the foot Taiyang meridian (Bladder meridian). We should use a fire needle for seven quick pricks to a depth of 3 Fen.

The sixth meridian point is on the back above Da Zhui meridian point. It is one Cun into the hairline and is known as Gui Zhen. We should fire needle the point for seven quick pricks at a depth of three Fen,

The seventh meridian point is in front of the ear next to the hairline, 5 Fen below the ear lobe. It is known as Gui Chuang and we fire needle it seven times to a depth of 3 Fen. (Note that in modern times this point has been changed in location to the St6 point)

The eighth meridian point is known as the Gui Shi. We approach the point from the left but insert needle from the right.

The ninth meridian point is three Cun above the wrist crease between two tendons. It is known as Gui Ku

The tenth meridian point is directly upwards from the line of the nose 1 Cun into the hairline. It is known as Gui Tang and we should fire needle it quickly seven times.

Meridian point number 11 is on the join below the genitals. This point is near to the tip of the vagina for women and called Gui Cang. We should burn three lots of moxa here for treatment.
The twelfth meridian point is where the horizontal line of Chi Ze meets the line of the white skin. This point is called Gui Chen and we should fire needle it seven times quickly to a depth of 3 Fen.

The thirteenth meridian point is 1 Cun below the end of the tongue. It is situated in the centre of the seam beneath the tongue. Insert the needle upwards through the tinge until it sticks out of the top of the tongue body. This point is called Gui Feng. A second needle should be placed in the mouth to stop the tongue from moving.

In the case of points on both arms and legs, needle bilaterally. In the axe of single points simply needle the one point.

Selection of Ghost Points

Ghost points always had a very distinct way of being used. Firstly they were never used in conjunction with ‘non ghost points’ and secondly they were always coupled with the patients ‘inherent ghost point’ which is the meridian point which has the strongest resonance with the spirit world. We shall look at what this point is for individual patients shortly. Essentially this means any ghost point treatment should involve either two or three needles. Two needles if there is simply the ‘inherent’ point and a non-bilateral point and three needles in the case of bilaterally located points.

Locating the patients ‘inherent ghost point’ is dependant upon their year of birth. This is because the twelve Earthly branches of time-based energy dictate which point was open at the time of conception. Each year a different meridian point has a stronger connection to the spirit realm. The chart below shows the branches on the left column and the ten stems of Heaven on the top bar. In the case of selecting the ‘inherent ghost point’ of a patient we only need the Earthly branch from the left column. Find your patients year of birth (remembering that in Chinese calendrical sciences new year starts in February*) and the name of the branch will be shown in the left column.
Ghosts expelling treatment will include the ‘inherent ghost point’ which is needled neutrally (no tonifying nor reducing techniques) and the other point or points which you have selected for the treatment according to the symptoms presented by the patient.

We then stimulate the ghost points (but not the inherent point) by tonifying the needle during Yang hours of the day and reducing the needle during Yin hours of the day in order to harness the Yin and
Yang energies present at that particular time of the day. Below is a list of the hours of the day (actually split into two hour segments) along with its properties of either Yin or Yang:

- 23:00 – 01:00 = Yang
- 01:00 – 03:00 = Yin
- 03:00 – 05:00 = Yang
- 05:00 – 07:00 = Yin
- 07:00 – 09:00 = Yang
- 09:00 – 11:00 = Yin
- 11:00 – 13:00 = Yang
- 13:00 – 15:00 = Yin
- 15:00 – 17:00 = Yang
- 17:00 – 19:00 = Yin
- 19:00 – 21:00 = Yang
- 21:00 – 23:00 = Yin

The needles would generally be retained for a fair amount of time; long enough that you see change in the patients pulse and presentation.