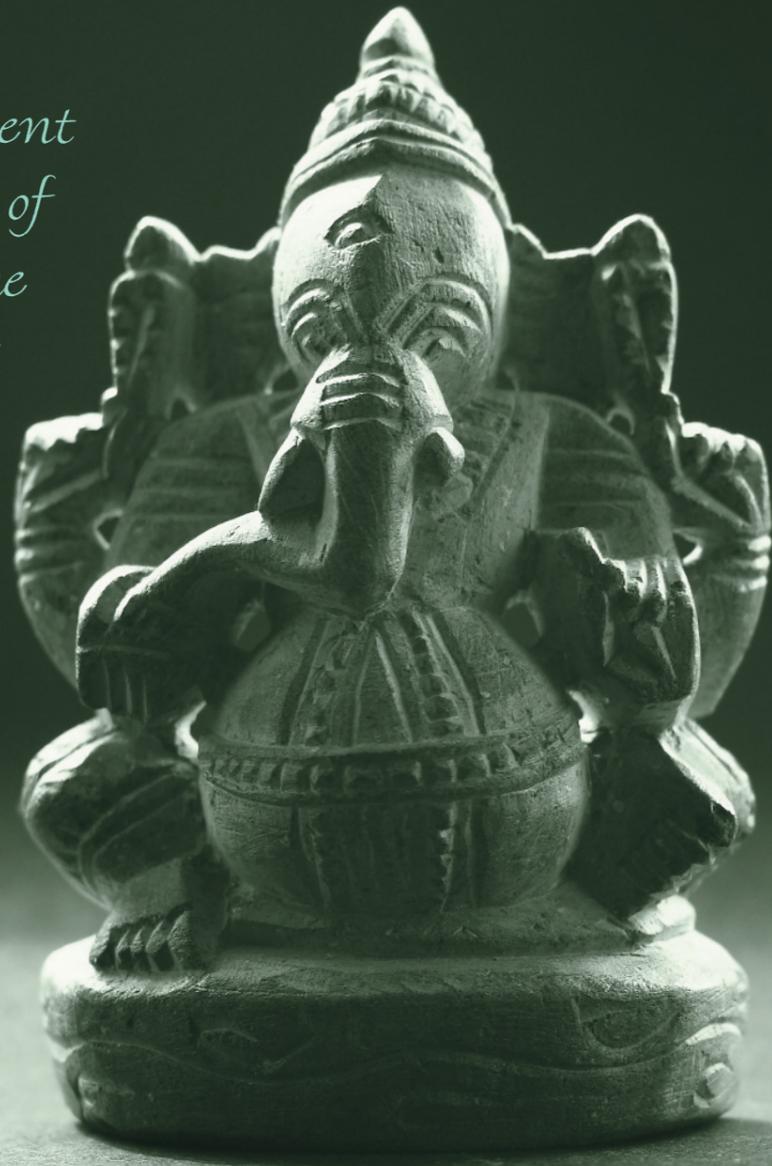


"What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday, and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow: our life is the creation of our mind"

Buddha



AYURVEDA

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the ancient, holistic system of medicine of Ayurveda in simple terms to those who may have heard of it but know very little about it and would like to learn more. There are those in the UK who have described this ancient healing system as 'the sleeping giant of complementary medicine'.

The objective is to offer an insight into this sophisticated and comprehensive health system, and hopefully support the ambitions of the skincare detective by offering a shorthand technique towards uncovering the unspoken aspects of a client's personality and uniqueness.

What is Ayurveda?

Ayurveda (pronounced eye-yer-vay-duh) is from the ancient Indian language, Sanskrit, and literally means 'Knowledge or Wisdom of Life'. Ayur means life and ved means knowledge. Inherent in Ayurvedic principles is the concept that we are capable of taking charge of our own life and healing. The purpose of Ayurvedic medicine is to avoid serious illness by having a thorough understanding of how we become ill. It has a strong interest in prevention. But when illness does strike, Ayurveda has a wide range of treatments that help the body to heal itself.

All Ayurvedic treatments are natural, herb-based remedies - a contrast to allopathic medicine's drugs, which are concocted in test tubes and subject to the whims of fashionable thought from the various drugs companies. Ayurveda's treatments

are ancient, have stood the test of time and have no harmful side-effects.

This traditional healing system of the Indian subcontinent covers all aspects of health, encouraging physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. It is the oldest and most complete medical system in the world, dating back to 3000 BC and has similarities with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Unlike orthodox medicine, it is not based on the frequently changing findings of specific research projects, but rather on permanent, wise, eternal principles of living.

Ayurveda may come from ancient texts, but the principles and approaches are just as applicable today in our fast-paced, high-pressure society as they were when originally recorded in India. In fact, along with Buddhism, it is the fastest growing belief system in the West. It complements orthodox Western medicine and, because it understands how and why we become ill, it can offer effective treatment for many conditions for which conventional medicine has not found a cure.

In the same way that aromatherapy was once seen as outmoded or archaic, the principal systems of Ayurvedic medicine were once in danger of being replaced altogether by Western medicine. Thankfully, in 1980 the National Congress of India decided that Ayurveda should enjoy equal status with Western medicine and so funded many new Ayurvedic institutions. It, too, has enjoyed something of a renaissance since the 1980s.