

Cultivate Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

# Yang-Sheng

## Nurturing Life

INTEGRATING MIND & BODY WITH TAIJI  
COOL QI HEALS

THE ANTI-INFLAMMATORY LIFESTYLE:

A FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH?

ILLNESS & WELLNESS:

THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY

AYURVEDA & THE 3 PILLARS

OF MIND-BODY WELLNESS

SEASONAL HARMONY

TAKING DAN-TIAN BREATHING A STEP FURTHER

...AND MORE!

養生



Volume 1, No. 3  
April, 2011  
[www.Yang-Sheng.com](http://www.Yang-Sheng.com)





Volume 1, No. 3

<http://Yang-Sheng.com>

April 2011

**Yang-Sheng Editorial Board****Publisher/Editor:** Kevin W Chen, Ph.D.**Editor-in-Chief:** Solala Towler**Associate Editors:**

Master Mantak Chia  
 Christina J. Barea  
 Roger Jahnke, OMD, L.Ac.  
 Joy E. Staller, B.A.  
 Michelle Wood

**Medical Editor:** Sharon Montes, MD.**Columnists:**

Ken Andes, L.Ac. D.Ac.  
 Cindy Borgonzi-Areglado  
 Eric Borreson  
 Sal Casano, R.N. Ph.D.  
 Cindy Cicero  
 Chris D'Adamo, Ph.D.  
 Felice Dunas, Ph.D.  
 Marty Eisen, Ph.D.  
 Ginger Garner, MPT  
 Shiuan Gee  
 Nadia Linda Hole, M.D.  
 Ellasara Kling  
 Linda Lazarus, L.D.  
 Lilly Lei, M.D.  
 Violet Li  
 Elizabeth Mackenzie, Ph.D.  
 Pamela Miles  
 Sharon Montes, M.D.  
 Steffany Moonas, Ph.D.  
 Jacob Newell, (Daoshi)  
 Rebekah F. Owens  
 Rena Reese, M.S.  
 Michael Rinaldini  
 Andy Rosenfarb, L.Ac.  
 Chun Man Sit  
 Guan-Cheng Sun, Ph.D.  
 Yuan Wang, OMD  
 Yang Yang, Ph.D.  
 Tina Chunna Zhang,

**Consulting Editors:**

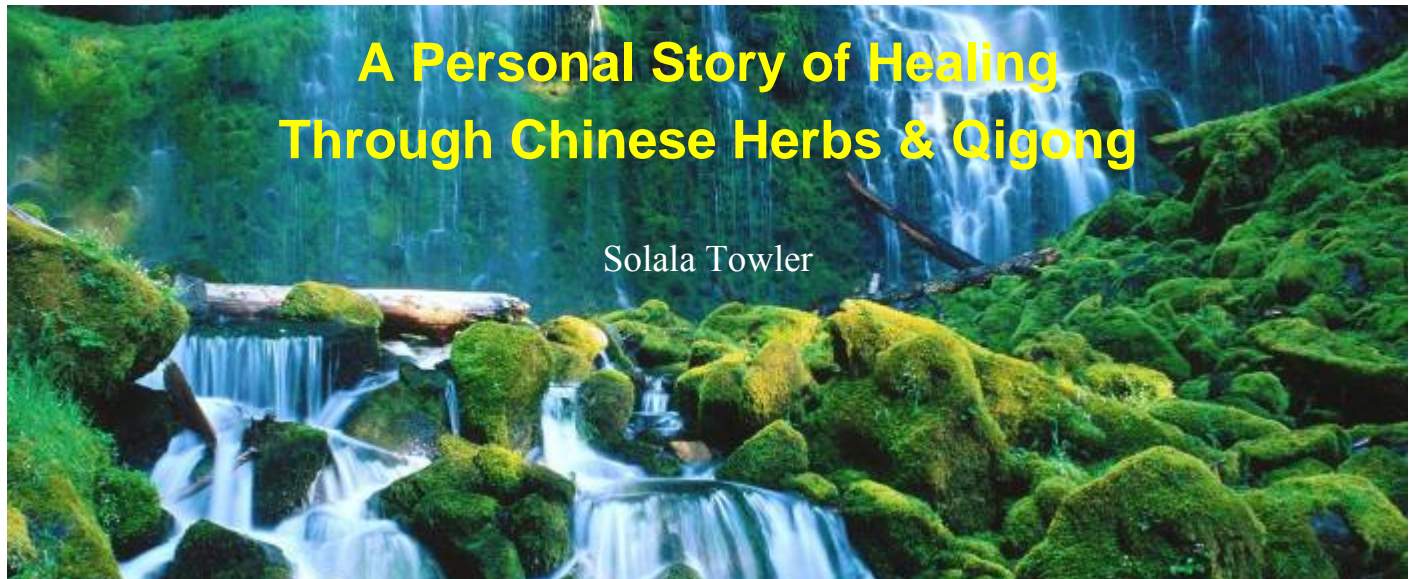
Effie Chow, L.Ac, Ph.D.  
 Master Kenneth Cohen  
 Tianjun Liu, OMD  
 Lama Somananda Tantrapa  
 Master Zhongxian Wu  
 Lei Zhong, Ph.D.  
 Tony Zhuo, OMD

**Table of Contents**

[Featured Article] <b>A Personal Story of Healing Through Chinese Herbs and Qigong</b>	by Solala Towler	2
[Mind Body Research Update]		6
[Illuminating the Dao] <b>Illness and Wellness: There Are Two Sides to Every Story</b>	by Michelle Wood	11
[From the Master] <b>How to Maintain Energy</b>	by Yang Yang	16
[Meditation in Motion] <b>Integrating Mind and Body with Taiji</b>	by Eric Borreson	18
[Topics in Research] <b>Are you really studying Taiji and Is it effective for stress?</b>	by Marty Eisen	21
<b>A Comedy Moment</b>		28
[The Tai Chi Examiner] <b>The 13th World Congress on Qigong and TCM</b>	by Violet Li	29
[Echoes of Emptiness] <b>Selected Poetry</b>	by Jacob Newell (Daoshi)	31
[Ayurvedic Wisdom] <b>Ayurveda and The 3 Pillars of Mind-Body Wellness</b>	by John Russell	32
[Method to Improve Meditation] <b>Taking Dan-Tian Breathing a Step Further -Hui-yin breathing</b>	by Ken Andes, L.Ac.	36
[Experience Exchange] <b>An Introduction to Music TaiChi Class in Montgomery County &amp; University of Maryland</b>	By Phoenix Liu, Ph.D.	38
[Breathing in This Life] <b>The Anti-Inflammatory Lifestyle: A Fountain of Youth?</b>	By Gengr Garner	41
[Tips of Yang Sheng] <b>Medicated Syrups and the Nourishing Life Tradition</b>	by Henry McCann, DAOM	45
[Ancient Wisdom & Modern Kitchen] <b>East's Shoots and Leaves Springtime Soup</b>	By Yuan Wang, Warren Sheir & Mika Ono	47
[Soul Salon] <b>Respond to the "Dow" with the "Dao"</b>	Rena M. Reese	48
[Energy Healing through Science & Spirit] <b>Cool Qi Heals</b>	by Cindy Cicero	50
[Food as Medicine] <b>Seasonal Harmony</b>	by Ellasara Kling	53
[Book Reviews]	reviewed by S. Casano and Solala Towler	56

**Yang-Sheng (Nurturing Life)** is an E-magazine for all practitioners of mind-body exercises, spiritual cultivators and health seekers. It promotes philosophy and methods of self healing and positive mind power, and shares knowledge and experience in daily healthy practice. Yang Sheng merge ancient wisdoms and knowledge with scientific research evidence and clinic applications, and combines traditional mind-body practice with modern living experience. Your participation, contribution, sharing and feedback are truly appreciated.

[Featured Article]



Around 35 years ago I had a bad bout with infectious hepatitis, giardia, and amoeba histolytic—all at the same time! Needless to say, it was a long recovery process. The only problem was that I never fully recovered. For the next ten years I suffered with a variety of symptoms—including digestive upset, dizziness, cognitive impairment, emotional roller coasting, insomnia and a level of fatigue that is hard to understand if you have not been through it.

Finally, after years of suffering, I was diagnosed with CFIDS, commonly known as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. This is a little understood disease in Western medicine. Western docs think it may be some kind of autoimmune disease. Needless to say, there is no cure or even much treatment for this insidious condition. The most they can come up with is “take a lot of rest and maybe some vitamins.” At that time there were many docs who didn’t even believe such a syndrome existed. More than one doc told me that it was probably “all in my head” and if I just calmed down it would go away! It was bad enough to be so sick but to be dismissed by doctors just made things worse.

I tried acupuncture but there was so little qi in my system there was barely anything for the acupuncturist to work with and often I would be wiped out by the treatment. I tried various naturopathic treatments but none of them worked. Finally, I ended up completely bedridden. At the time I had three young children as well and my wife often had to pull double duty.

Through the local CFIDS support group I met a woman who told me of the great benefit she had gotten from Chinese herbs. I had tried Chinese herbs already and had limited success with them. Sometimes I would feel a little better only to fall back into the disease again. But the herbs she was recommending were food-grade herbs. (In Chinese medicine there are three levels of herbs—medicinal, food grade and toxic.) The company I bought the herbs from was a multi level marketing company, which made me hesitate a little but since she had so much relief from them I decided I was desperate enough to try them!

I felt nothing for a while but gradually I began to feel better and better and after a few months on them I was able to leave my bed and resume my life again. You can only guess how happy that made me! I was able to become a parent again and I even felt good enough to resume my taiji classes with a wonderful “old school” Chinese master.

I hadn’t reached full recovery yet but was able to function so much better that when I heard about a qigong class taught by a Chinese woman who had cured her breast cancer, I jumped at the chance. I drove a few

hours to where she was teaching and, in one weekend, learned Soaring Crane qigong. The teacher, Chen Huixian, was a wonderful, loving person who felt a calling to help other people heal the way she had. We have remained friends for years since then.

The qigong that I practiced bounced my healing up a whole new level. At first I would be very tired after practicing but, with time and diligent practice, I began to feel a stronger and more settled energy after practice. When I decided to look into the philosophy behind Chinese healing modalities I discovered Daoism, which was the final piece of my healing journey.

Now, twenty-three years later, I find my practice still shifting and opening up to new levels. Qigong can effect and heal on so many levels—physical, emotional as well as spiritual. It is a priceless tool that has handed down to us by the ancient masters. Not only that but new forms and practices are being created all the time, both in China and in the West.

Now 23 years later, I have very good health, travel each year to China, leading tours to the sacred mountains, make my living publishing a Daoist journal and writing books on qigong and Dao and teaching qigong! It is true, as the Old Boy says; the longest journey begins with the first step. I am so grateful for the help I got along the way to my healing and to the wonderful modality of Chinese medicine and qigong.

For anyone suffering from CFIDS, with its many seemingly unconnected symptoms, please know that there is light at the end of the tunnel! Chinese herbs and qigong are a large part of the recovery process. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about this.



The following is a piece I wrote some years ago which, I think, captures the real feeling of qigong practice.

## What Is Qigong?

"What is this thing you do?"  
he asks, hesitantly,  
over the phone,  
"this quee gung?"  
"Is it a martial art?"  
he asks,  
or is it some kind of health practice?"  
"Well," I answer,  
it is a health practice,  
it's also a meditation practice,  
as well as a spiritual practice."  
"Wow," he says,  
"all in one package huh?"  
What a deal!"

I suppose qigong  
could be called  
a sort of

psycho-spiritual-  
energetic-meditation-  
movement/exercise/routine.  
Then again,  
there's no need  
to get so technical.  
Qigong is really  
just something that I do,  
like breathing,  
like eating,  
like dancing,  
like making love.  
Making love  
with the universe,  
you might call it.  
An amorous, attentive,  
articulated, attitude  
of openness and grace—



an exchange  
on a deep and basic level  
of my inner being  
with that of the great  
undivided, unending,  
undissolved Dao.  
And with that exchange  
comes balance, harmony,  
a composure of spirit,  
a deepening of character,  
a relaxing of mind muscles,  
a feel of safety,  
of being at home,  
of being empty  
and full at the same time,  
of being attentive to detail,  
clear of vision,  
open of heart,  
soft yet strong  
like water, like wind,  
sensitive to changes  
in the energetic atmosphere,  
simple joy in beingness,  
compassion for the sufferings  
of those around me,  
a sense of proportion,  
of objectivity,  
of openness to change,  
transformation and miracles,  
a greater sense of  
who I am myself  
and how I fit into  
the grand scheme of things,  
a deeper understanding  
of how I fit into nature  
and how nature fits  
in to me.

Of course sometimes  
it's just too hard,  
too tedious, too boring,  
too hot, too little sleep,  
not in the mood,  
no time, no quiet,  
too much to do,  
too much to understand,  
too much to remember,  
too hard to stretch,  
to stop my madly  
running mind.

I'm too off center,  
too sad,  
too anxious,  
too impatient.  
too spaced out,  
too distracted,  
too distraught,  
too confused,  
feeling hopeless,  
out of whack,  
deflated, defeated,  
dissolved in my own  
sense of importance  
or no-importance.

But still, the practice,  
the form,  
the breathing,  
the focusing,  
the exchange  
of light and darkness,  
of form and formlessness,  
or yin and yang,  
in and out—  
all sustains me,  
uplifts me  
out of my limited  
sense of being,  
my old tired patterns,  
my old empty  
emotional, mental,  
physical and spiritual states—  
those oh so familiar faces  
of doubt, worry, fear  
that we all carry  
from childhood,  
those past life  
karmic hauntings  
that hold so much power  
over us  
until we learn  
to let them go,  
release them  
gently but firmly  
into the great healing  
eternal Dao.

Yes, I say,  
this mysterious qigong practice  
that practices me,

is sometimes a struggle,  
 sometimes a dance,  
 but always a wise  
 and nurturing teacher.  
 Yes, it is something  
 that I hold dear and precious  
 like a light in my life,  
 like a treasure in my heart,  
 like a gift of the universe  
 which humbles me  
 and fells me  
 with the sense of awe.  
 This qigong,  
 as dear to me  
 as the smile  
 on the face


of my beloved,  
 the firm yet loving  
 words of my teachers,  
 the clear eyed vision  
 of my children,  
 the very centermost  
 core of my being—  
 eternal, vast  
 formless yet solid,  
 eternally present  
 while I drift aimlessly  
 through the wu wei  
 of my exultant, hopeful,  
 endlessly unfolding life.

[**Solala** has been involved with Daoist practices such as taiji, qigong and meditation for almost 23 years now. He has been publishing *The Empty Vessel: The Journal of Daoist Thought and Practice*, for almost 18 years. He has written a number of books on Daoist thought and practice (including *Cha Dao: The Way of Tea* and the *Inner Chapters of Chuang Tzu*) and has been leading tours to China to study qigong and other Daoist practices in the sacred mountains of China since 1997. In addition, he has recorded four CDs on meditation/relaxation/movement music using Tibetan singing bowls, both Chinese and Native flute and harmonic overtone singing. He can be reached at [solala@abodetao.com](mailto:solala@abodetao.com) or at his website at [www.abodetao.com](http://www.abodetao.com) ]



**Editor's Note:** We have decided to use the modern pinyin system for spelling Chinese words. This is the system used in China and by most scholars in the West as well and, for the most part, makes it much easier to sound out Chinese words (as in Dao, taiji, yi jing, etc.) With that in mind, we will be editing all articles that use the older Wade Giles system to pinyin.

[Graphic Designer: Rebecca kali]



*The Empty Vessel*  
*The Journal of Daoist*  
*Philosophy and Practice*

published quarterly  
 since 1993

[www.abodetao.com](http://www.abodetao.com)

## [Mind-body Research Update]

**Functional and Psychosocial Effects of Health Qigong in Patients with COPD: A Randomized Controlled Trial.** *J Altern Complement Med.* 2011 Mar;17(3):243-51. by Ng BH, Tsang HW, Jones AY, So CT, Mok TY. From Centre for East-Meets-West, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong. **Abstract:** Context: The initial gain from a Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program (PRP) among patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) begins to fade away 6 months after the completion of a rehabilitation program. One possible reason may be due to the poor compliance of the patients to the existing forms of home exercise program (e.g., walking, weight training activities, etc.). Objectives: This study tested the efficacy of health qigong (HQG), a traditional Chinese exercise, as an adjunct home exercise program in optimizing the gains obtained from PRP until 6 months after discharge. Design: This was a randomized controlled trial (RCT) on a mind-body exercise intervention. Participants: Eighty (80) patients with COPD receiving conventional PRP pulmonary rehabilitation program were randomized to the HQG intervention group (n=40) and control group (n=40). Outcome measures: Assessments were undertaken by blinded assessors at baseline, discharge from training, and follow-up (FU) at 3 and 6 months. Primary outcomes involved functional capacity scales and secondary outcomes involved quality-of-life scales. Results: Intention-to-treat analysis identified trends of improvement in all outcome measures in the HQG group, whereas lesser improvement and trends of deteriorations were identified in the control group. Ancillary analysis using a per-protocol method, however, identified significantly better improvements in functional capacity measures among the HQG at the 6-month FU. Conclusions: This RCT provided some evidence to support the positive effect of HQG as an adjunct home exercise for rehabilitation among people with COPD and to support further related research.

**Effect of meditation on stress-induced changes in cognitive functions.** *J Altern Complement Med.* 2011 Mar;17(3):207-12. by Mohan A, Sharma R, Bijlani RL. From Department of Physiology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India. **Abstract:** Objectives: The objective of this study was to study the effects of meditation on stress-induced changes in cognitive functions. Methods: The study was conducted on 32 healthy adult male student volunteers who had never practiced meditation before the study. The study consisted of practicing 20 minutes of guided medita-

tion and administration of psychologic stress to the subjects. The

psycho-logic stress was administered to the subjects by asking them to play a (preselected) stressful computer game. The subjects were asked to meditate either

before or after the administration of psychologic stress. For the control group measurements, the subjects were asked to wait quietly for an equivalent period of meditation time. Outcome measures: The outcome measures were galvanic skin response (GSR), heart rate (HR), electromyography (EMG), sympathetic reactivity (QTc/QS2 ratio), cortisol, and acute psychologic stress scores. The central nervous system functions were assessed using Wechsler memory scale and visual-choice reaction time (VCRT). These parameters were measured both at the beginning and at the end of the intervention, using a pre-post experimental test design. Results: Computer game stress was associated with a significant increase in physiologic (GSR, EMG, HR, QTc/QS2) and psychologic (acute stress questionnaire scores) markers of stress. Meditation was associated with relaxation (significant decrease in GSR, EMG, QTc/QS2, and acute stress questionnaire scores). Meditation, if practiced before the stressful event, reduced the adverse effects of stress. Memory quotient significantly increased, whereas cortisol level decreased after both stress and meditation. VCRT showed no significant change. Conclusions: Practice of meditation produced a relaxation response even in the young adult subjects who had never practiced meditation before. The practice of meditation reduced the physiologic stress responses without taking away the beneficial effect of stress, namely, improved memory scores.



**New insights on therapeutic touch: a discussion of experimental methodology and design that resulted in significant effects on normal human cells and osteosarcoma.** *Explore (NY).* 2011 Jan-Feb;7(1):44-51. by Monzillo E, Gronowicz G. from Hunter College, CUNY Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, New York, NY 10010, USA. **Abstract:** Our purpose is to discuss the study design and innovative approaches that led to finding significant effects of one energy

medicine therapy, Therapeutic Touch (TT), on cells. In the original published studies, TT was shown to significantly increase human osteoblast DNA synthesis, differentiation, and mineralization; increase in a dose-dependent manner the growth of other human cell types; and decrease the differentiation and mineralization of a human osteosarcoma-derived cell line. A unique feature of the study's methodology and design that contributed to the success of the findings was that a basic level of skill and maturity of the TT practitioner was quantified for producing observable and replicable outcomes in a test administered to all TT practitioners. Only those practitioners that passed the test were selected for the study. (2) The practitioners were required to keep a journal, which appeared to promote their ability to stay centered and replicate their treatments over months of cell experimentation. (3) The origin of the cells that the practitioners were treating was explained to them, although they were blinded to cell type during the experiments. (4) Only early passage cells were used to maintain a stable cell phenotype. (5) Standard protocols for performing TT in the room were followed to ensure reproducible conditions. (6) Placebo controls and untreated controls were used for each experiment. (7) The principal investigator and technicians performing the assays were blinded as to the experimental groups, and all assays and procedures were well established in the laboratory prior to the start of the TT experiments. The absence of studies on the human biofield from mainstream scientific literature is also discussed by describing the difficulties encountered in publishing. These roadblocks contribute to our lack of understanding of the human biofield and energy medicine modalities in science. In conclusion, this report seeks to encourage well-designed, evidence-based studies on the human biofield and the therapeutic potential of the human biofield.

**Effects of Qigong in Promoting Health of the Wheelchair-Bound Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities.** *Biol Res Nurs.* 2011 Mar 8. [Epub ahead of print] by Kuan SC, Chen KM, Wang C. **Abstract:** Institutional wheelchair-bound older adults often do not get regular exercise and are prone to health problems. The aim of this study was to test the effects of a 12-week qigong exercise program on the physiological and psychological health of wheelchair-bound older adults in long-term care facilities. Study design was quasi-experimental, pre-post test, nonequivalent control group. Participants comprised a convenience sample of 72 wheelchair-bound older adults (qigong = 34; control = 38). The qigong group exercised 35 min/day, 5 days/week for 12 weeks. Measures for physical health (blood pressure, heart rate variability,

and distal skin temperature) and psychological health (Brief Symptom Rating Scale-5) were collected before and during study Weeks 4, 8, and 12. The qigong group participants' blood pressure, distal skin temperature, and psychological health were significantly improved (all  $p < .001$ ). These findings suggest that qigong exercise is a suitable daily activity for elderly residents in long-term care facilities and may help in the control of blood pressure among older adults.

**An evaluation of pulmonary parameters in two groups of subjects during Yoga practice.** *Nepal Med Coll J.* 2010 Sep;12(3):180-2. by Ahmed QR, Sau SK, Kar SK. From Department of Physiology, Rohilkhand Medical College and Hospital, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India. **Abstract:** The purpose of the present study was to investigate how far the short term practice of yoga (30 and 60 days) for an hour daily can improve the respiratory function. Male subjects ( $n=50$ , age 30-50 years) were randomly selected. Respiratory parameters (FVC, FEV1, PEFr, FEF(25-75%) and MVV) were determined by using a multifunctional computerized spirometer. Yoga (posture and pranayamas) practice for a month produced no significant improvement in pulmonary parameters. Nevertheless, when the subjects continued it for next 30 days, i.e., after 60 days significant changes were noted in FVC ( $p<0.001$ ), FEV1 ( $p<0.01$ ) and PEFr ( $p<0.05$ ). The result also revealed that amongst them 30 days yoga training resulted in a significant increase in FVC in elder group of people (age 41-50 yrs) where as in younger group (age 30-40 yrs) the changes were not so prominent. Result indicated that short term (30 days) yoga practice quickly improves respiratory functions in relatively elder people (age 41-50 yrs), when many of them in our tropical country suffer from primary level of respiratory problem. Regular practice of Yoga (posture and pranayamas) can prevent it by increasing the efficacy of respiratory muscles.

**Effects of yoga on psychological health, quality of life, and physical health of patients with cancer: a meta-analysis.** *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med.* 2011;2011:659876. Epub 2011 Mar 9 by Lin KY, Hu YT, Chang KJ, Lin HF, Tsao JY. From School and Graduate Institute of Physical Therapy, College of Medicine, National Taiwan University, 3F, No.17 Xuzhou Road, Taipei 100, Taiwan. **Abstract:** Yoga is one of the most widely used complementary and alternative medicine therapies to manage illness. This meta-analysis aimed to determine the effects of yoga on psychological health, quality of life, and physical health of patients with cancer. Studies were identified through a systematic search of seven



electronic databases and were selected if they used a randomized controlled trial design to examine the effects of yoga in patients with cancer. The quality of each article was rated by two of the authors using the PEDro Scale. Ten articles were selected; their PEDro scores ranged from 4 to 7. The yoga groups compared to waitlist control groups or supportive therapy groups showed significantly greater improvements in psychological health: anxiety ( $P = .009$ ), depression ( $P = .002$ ), distress ( $P = .003$ ), and stress ( $P = .006$ ). However, due to the mixed and low to fair quality and small number of studies conducted, the findings are preliminary and limited and should be confirmed through higher-quality, randomized controlled trials. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3062158>



**Evaluation of a biofeedback-assisted meditation program as a stress management tool for hospital nurses: a pilot study.** Explore (NY). 2011 Mar-Apr;7(2):110-2. By bCutshall SM, Wentworth LJ, Wahner-Roedler DL, Vincent A, Schmidt JE, Loehrer LL, Cha SS, Bauer BA. Department of Surgery, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN.

**OBJECTIVE:** To assess whether a self-directed, computer-guided meditation training program is useful for stress reduction in hospital nurses. **DESIGN:** We prospectively evaluated participants before and after a month-long meditation program. The meditation program consisted of 15 computer sessions that used biofeedback to reinforce training. Participants were instructed to practice the intervention for 30 minutes per session, four times a week, for four weeks. Visual analogue scales were used to measure stress,

anxiety, and quality of life (assessments were performed using Linear Analogue Self-Assessment [LASA], State Trait Anxiety Inventory [STAI], and Short-Form 36 [SF-36] questionnaires). Differences in scores from baseline to the study's end were compared using the paired  $t$  test. **RESULTS:** Eleven registered nurses not previously engaged in meditation were enrolled; eight completed the study. Intent-to-treat analysis showed significant improvement in stress management, as measured by SF-36 vitality subscale ( $P = .04$ ), STAI ( $P = .03$ ), LASA stress ( $P = .01$ ), and LASA anxiety ( $P = .01$ ). Nurses were highly satisfied with the meditation program, rating it 8.6 out of 10. **CONCLUSIONS:** The results of this pilot study suggest the feasibility and efficacy of a biofeedback-assisted, self-directed, meditation training program to help hospital nurses reduce their stress and anxiety. Optimal frequency of use of the program, as well as the duration of effects, should be addressed in future studies.

**Mindfulness-based stress reduction versus pharmacotherapy for chronic primary insomnia: a randomized controlled clinical trial.** Explore (NY). 2011 Mar-Apr;7(2):76-87. By Gross CR, Kreitzer MJ, Reilly-Spong M, Wall M, Winbush NY, Patterson R, Mahowald M, Cramer-Bornemann M. from College of Pharmacy, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; School of Nursing, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

**OBJECTIVE:** The aim of this study was to investigate the potential of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) as a treatment for chronic primary insomnia. **DESIGN:** A randomized controlled trial was conducted. **SETTING:** The study was conducted at a university health center. **PATIENTS:** Thirty adults with primary chronic insomnia based on criteria of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Text Revision, 4th Edition were randomized 2:1 to MBSR or pharmacotherapy (PCT). **INTERVENTIONS:** Mindfulness-based stress reduction, a program of mindfulness meditation training consisting of eight weekly 2.5 hour classes and a daylong retreat, was provided, with ongoing home meditation practice expectations during three-month follow-up; PCT, consisting of three milligrams of eszopiclone (LUNESTA) nightly for eight weeks, followed by three months of use as needed. A 10-minute sleep hygiene presentation was included in both interventions. **MAIN OUTCOMES:** The Insomnia Severity Index (ISI), Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), sleep diaries, and wrist actigraphy were collected pretreatment, posttreatment (eight weeks), and at five months (self-reports only). **RESULTS:** Between baseline and eight weeks, sleep onset latency (SOL) measured by actigraphy decreased 8.9

minutes in the MBSR arm ( $P < .05$ ). Large, significant improvements were found on the ISI, PSQI, and diary-measured total sleep time, SOL, and sleep efficiency ( $P < .01$ , all) from baseline to five-month follow-up in the MBSR arm. Changes of comparable magnitude were found in the PCT arm. Twenty-seven of 30 patients completed their assigned treatment. This study provides initial evidence for the efficacy of MBSR as a viable treatment for chronic insomnia as measured by sleep diary, actigraphy, well-validated sleep scales, and measures of remission and clinical recovery.

**A mathematical model of effects on specific joints during practice of the Sun Salutation - A sequence of yoga postures.** J Bodyw Mov Ther. 2011 Apr;15(2):201-8. By Omkar SN, Mour M, Das D. from Department of Aerospace Engineering, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore 560012, India.

The 'Sun Salutation' consists of a sequence of ten yoga postures, each posture counteracting the preceding one producing a balance between flexion and extension, performed with synchronized breathing and aerobic activity. As this sequence is often performed and recommended by many yoga practitioners, there is a need for the development of a biomechanical model to support its reported clinical benefits. This requires a detailed knowledge of the nature of the forces and moments at the various joints involved. A simple mathematical model based on rigid body mechanics is developed for each of the Sun Salutation postures. Dynamic moments with high magnitudes and rates, applied with unusual distribution patterns, optimal for osteogenesis, are found to occur. Also, the joints are subjected to submaximal loadings thus ensuring that none of the joints are overstressed.

**The Effect of Add-On Yogic Prana Energization Technique (YPET) on Healing of Fresh Fractures: A Randomized Control Study.** J Altern Complement Med. 2011 Mar;17(3):253-8. Epub 2011 Mar 9. By Oswal P, Nagarathna R, Ebnezar J, Nagendra HR. from 1 Division of Yoga and Life-Sciences, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Research Foundation (SVYASA), Bengaluru, India. **Abstract:** Objectives: The objective was to study the effect of the add-on yogic prana energization technique (YPET) on healing of fresh fractures. Materials and methods: Thirty (30) patients (22 men and 8 women) between 18 and 55 years with simple extra-articular fractures of long and short bones were selected from the outpatient department of Ebnezar Orthopaedic Centre and Parimala Speciality Hospital, Bengaluru. They were randomized into yoga ( $n=15$ ) and control ( $n=15$ ) groups. Compound, complicated, pathologic fractures, old fractures, and those

associated with dislocations were excluded. Both groups received the conventional plaster of paris immobilization of the fracture site as the primary treatment. The yoga group, in addition, practiced YPET twice a day (30 minutes/session) for 2 weeks using taped audio instructions after learning under supervision for 1 week. YPET is an advanced yoga relaxation practice that involves breath regulation, chanting, and visualization, which according to yogic science revitalizes the tissues by activating the subtle energies (prana) within the body. Both the groups were assessed on the 1st and 21st day by the Numerical Pain Rating Scale for pain (NRS), tenderness (0-4), swelling (0-4), fracture line density (1-4), and the bridging of cortices (1-4). Results: Two (2) groups were matched on all variables. The Wilcoxon test showed significant improvement in both groups on all variables. Pain reduction (NRS) was better ( $p=0.001$  Mann-Whitney test) in the YPET group (94.5%) than in the control group (58.6%); Tenderness reduced ( $p=0.001$ ) better in the YPET group (94.4 %) than in the control group (69.12%); Swelling reduced by 93% in the YPET group and by 69.4% in controls (between-groups  $p=0.093$ , i.e., nonsignificant); increase in fracture line density was better ( $p=0.001$ ) in the YPET group (48%) than in the control group (18.25%). The number of cortices united was significantly better ( $p=0.001$ ) in the YPET group (81.4%) than in controls (39.7 %). Conclusions: Add-on yoga-based YPET accelerates fracture healing.

**Using silver yoga exercises to promote physical and mental health of elders with dementia in long-term care facilities.** Int Psychogeriatr. 2011 Mar 9:1-9. By Fan JT, Chen KM. from Department of Nursing, Fooyin University; Kaohsiung, Taiwan. **ABSTRACT:** Background: This study aimed to test the effects of yoga exercises on the physical and mental health of elderly people with dementia living in long-term care facilities. Methods: A quasi-experimental, pretest-posttest design was used. A convenience sample of 68 residents in long-term care facilities in southern Taiwan, aged 60 years and above with mild to moderate dementia, was selected. An experimental group of 33 elders participated in a 12-week yoga training program of three 55-minute sessions a week; a control group of 35 elders maintained their usual daily activities. Data were collected before and after completing the 12-week study. Measurements included body composition, cardiopulmonary functions, body flexibility, muscle strength and endurance, balance, joints motion, depression, and problem behaviors. Results: The yoga-trained participants had better physical and mental health than those who did not participate, including lowered blood pressure, reduced respiration rate, strengthened cardio-

pulmonary fitness, enhanced body flexibility, improved muscle strength and endurance, improved balance, and increased joints motion (all  $p$  values  $< 0.05$ ). In addition, the depression state ( $p < 0.001$ ) and problem behaviors ( $p < 0.001$ ) of these demented elders were significantly reduced. Conclusion: Yoga exercise has positive benefits for both the physical and mental health of elders with dementia living in long-term care facilities. It is recommended that yoga be included as one of the routine activities in these long-term care facilities.

**Effects of two modes of exercise on physical fitness and endothelial function in the elderly: exercise with a flexible stick versus Tai Chi.** J Med Assoc Thai. 2011 Jan;94(1):123-32. by Suksom D, Siripatt A, Lapo P, Patumraj S. from Faculty of Sports Science, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand. daroon-wanc@hotmail.com

**OBJECTIVE:** Determine the effects of exercise with flexible stick training on physical fitness and endothelial function and compare it with Tai Chi training. **MATERIAL AND METHOD:** Thirty older women volunteered for the present study and were divided into EF group (EF:  $n=16$ ;  $70.3 \pm 2.5$  yr) and TC group (TC:  $n=14$ ;  $69.5 \pm 4.5$  yr). Both training groups performed training assigned protocol that consisted of 70% of maximal heart rate, 40 minutes per day, four days per week for 12 weeks. Health related physical fitness and biochemical data were assessed in all participants. Post-Occlusive Reactive Hyperemia (PORH) was used to monitor endothelial function by using a Laser-Doppler fluxmeter. **RESULT:** The health related physical fitness was significantly higher in the EF group ( $p < 0.05$ ). Plasma malondialdehyde and von Willebrand factor, an indicator of free radical damage and endothelial dysfunction, respectively as well as cholesterol level were significantly lower ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the EF group. The peak Laser-Doppler flux (LDF)/baseline LDE and recovery time were significantly improved after 12 weeks of EF training ( $p < 0.05$ ). This was not observed after 12 weeks of TC

training. **CONCLUSION:** EF, a Thai novel exercise that combined endurance and strength training was a more effective exercise modality than TC for improving physical fitness and endothelial function. It improved reactive oxygen species in the elderly.Th

(Compiled by Kevin W Chen, Ph.D.)


**SINGING DRAGON**  
 is proud to sponsor Yang Sheng



**NEW!**

**Wan's Clinical Application of Chinese Medicine**  
 Giorgio Repeti, LAc  
 Paperback • \$29.95



**NEW!**

**Vital Healing**  
 Energy, Mind and Spirit in Traditional Medicines of India, Tibet and the Middle East – Middle Asia  
 Marc S. Micozzi, MD, PhD, et al.  
 Hardback • \$24.95



**NEW!**

**The Secret of Everlasting Life**  
 The First Translation of the Ancient Chinese Text of Immortality  
 Richard Bertschinger  
 Paperback • \$29.95



**Due April 2011**

**Tuina/ Massage Manipulations**  
 Basic Principles and Techniques  
 Chief Editor: Li Jiangshan  
 Paperback • \$22.95

To order, call toll free — (866) 416-1078  
 For online ordering or more information visit:  
[www.singingdragon.com](http://www.singingdragon.com)

- You are welcome to share *Yang-Sheng* with your friends in its original form.
- To subscribe to *Yang-Sheng*, send an email to [Yang\\_Sheng-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Yang_Sheng-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)
- To contribute to *Yang-Sheng* or contact us, please email to [editor@yang-sheng.com](mailto:editor@yang-sheng.com)
- Find us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/YangSheng.net>
- Follow us on Twitter: [http://twitter.com/#!/YangSheng\\_net](http://twitter.com/#!/YangSheng_net)



[Illuminating the Dao 悟道]

## Illness and Wellness: There Are Two Sides to Every Story

By Michelle Wood

I'm sure I'm not telling you something you don't already know by pointing out that, like yin and yang, illness and wellness are two endings to the same story.

When my son was young, we bought him books in which he was able to choose the progress of the story. As he read along, if he made one choice, he was directed to a particular page and read on, and if he made another choice, he was to go to a different particular page and read on. He was able to follow a seemingly infinite number of different stories within the same book. If he didn't like the ending, he went back, made a different choice, and read to a different ending.



It was similar to the workings of the universe in that there were stories within stories that depended upon choices and went in opposite directions that reflected each other like a pair of mirrors on opposite walls, those arrangements that seem to lead your gaze into infinity.

One mirror could be labeled Wellness. Look into this mirror and see what your body reflects when your mind is calm and your beliefs are in harmony with your thoughts and feelings. The other mirror could be labeled Illness, and in this mirror you can see in your body the reflection of stress, worry, and the physical result of conflicts in thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

In view of the changing nature of the universe, including the mini-universe housed within the human body, it is impossible to maintain one particular level of wellness, or even illness. Wellness gets worse and illness gets better, one hopes, but if you live "in the middle," you may avoid many of the extremes of bad health.

Consider this "living in the middle" advice from the writing "Pair" from Everyday Tao by Deng Ming-Dao:

"Dui. *Pair, opposites, parallel sentences or couplets on scrolls hung opposite one another, to face on another, to correspond with, to suit, to match, to agree.* Opposites are really pairs. We cannot have one side without the other."

"The ancients believed that all things are divided into opposites, and that it is the interrelationships of these opposites that cause all phenomena in the world.

"We have a male side and a female side. We have a left and a right. There is up and down. Without opposites, we literally would not exist.

"The trouble comes when we are unable to view things with moderation. We all want to be rich, but we don't want to be poor. We all want happiness, but we shun disappointment.

"That is why the word *dui* is so important. It reminds us that opposites are not mutually exclusive but are actually pairs. If we have sadness, then happiness will come, too. If we have love, we will also have to deal

with conflict. For all our learning, we will have days where our philosophical outlook will be tried to its breaking point. For all the peace of meditation, we will still have to face work, illness, and stress. There is no path in life that only stands on one side of a pair and never and never ventures into the other. The sooner we accept – and work with that – the better off we will be.

"That is why the way of Tao is the middle way. We cannot have one side without the other in life: it is wisdom to strike a balance between them both."

Applied to wellness, the aim then is to know how to negotiate the extremes you will encounter as a matter of daily life. Encourage wellness while accepting illness, is an integral part of being in the Dao.

One of the ways to change illness into wellness is to rewrite your story. In the world of energy and consciousness practices, this is called "writing your own script." Everyday we are being scientifically shown that our thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are the building blocks behind every physical manifestation that appears in our body. You have the power to create illness out of the natural order that is health, or to create health out of the manifestation of disorder that is disease.

And, by the way, you cannot use genetic risk as an excuse. You are in complete control over whether those "at risk" genetic traits manifest – or not! Illness is your body's way of sending you a message. The more chronic and severe your illness, the greater urgency of the message you need to hear about how to take care of yourself!

You may have a genetic marker for, say, heart disease. If you live a stressed out life, you don't take care of yourself mentally and emotionally and spiritually, you don't pay enough attention to your nutrition to avoid junk foods and chemical additives, you neglect to participate in healthy exercise, you will probably manifest heart disease at some time during your life.

However, if you have the same genetic marker that puts you at risk for heart disease, but you live a relaxed and happy life doing work that nourishes your soul as well as your wallet, you remain mentally active in pursuits that you enjoy, you read labels and care enough to eat organic foods, and practice qigong or some other fun and healthy mind-body-spirit exercise, you will not experience heart disease.

It is that simple. It really is.

The problem is that we have not believed this nor been educated in it for very long. Most of us grew to adulthood following the old paradigm that taught the separation of mind from body, and we are now looking in that mirror and seeing the result of our beliefs and practices: premature aging and chronic health problems.

However, it's not too late. It is never too late to turn it around. It can be as simple as ceasing to do destructive practices. Without the challenges of unhealthy interference from stress, poor nutrition, and lack of positive thoughts and attention, the body will naturally heal itself and develop wellness.

You can get there sooner if you become proactive. Listen to your body, pay attention to the messages it's sending. Once you receive these messages, rewrite your script, taking positive steps mentally, emotionally, and physically, unifying yourself into one positive Whole to actually create health and wellness.

Today I quote from John C. H. Wu's translation of the Daodejing, verse 27 to show how you can use the teachings of the Dao to create wellness. I especially liked this translation of this verse because it makes mention of Inner Light. This is the title of The Beatles musical rendition of Daodejing verse 47 to which I included a link in my last column. If you would like to check it out again, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhHm-5IKkZ0> in which they sing about "knowing without knowing" and "doing without doing."

Verse 27:

*GOOD walking leaves no track behind it;  
Good speech leaves no mark to be picked at;  
Good calculation makes no use of counting-slips;  
Good shutting makes no use of bolt and bar,  
And yet nobody can undo it;  
Good tying makes no use of rope and knot,  
And yet nobody can untie it.*

*Hence, the Sage is always good at saving men,  
And therefore nobody is abandoned;  
Always good at saving things,  
And therefore nothing is wasted.  
This is called "following the guidance of the Inner Light."*

*Hence, good men are teachers of bad men,  
While bad men are the charge of good men.  
Not to revere one's teacher,  
Not to cherish one's charge,  
Is to be on the wrong road, however intelligent one may be.*

*This is an essential tenet of the Tao.*

Here's one way to put this into practice:

*GOOD walking leaves no track behind it;*

Do not interfere with nor disrupt the workings of Nature. If you are walking through the forest and leave some sort of footprint or trace of your passing, chances are there is something broken – a branch or twig, scuffed ground cover, or some other disruption in nature to show that you were there. In terms of wellness, if you "walk well," you will make choices that include positive habits and practices to initiate healing and wellness.

*Good speech leaves no mark to be picked at;*

Good speech is your outward expression. It's when you find fault with your body, harbor conflicting beliefs, think negative thoughts or have negative expectations, that you manifest illness. If you diligently and consistently monitor your actions and expressions, finding only positive outlets and activities, you can only generate wellness.

*Good calculation makes no use of counting-slips;*

Good calculation means the use of your innate Wisdom and Intuition. Certainly you don't need counting slips or other devices to know that negative feelings beget disease and positive feelings create wellness. Calculate by listening to your early symptoms and taking right actions so they do not manifest into chronic disease.

善行无辙迹，善言无瑕谪；善数不用筹策；善闭无关键而不可开，善结无绳约而不可解。是以圣人常善救人，故无弃人；常善救物，故无弃物。是谓袭明。故善人者，不善人之师；不善人者，善人之资。不贵其师，不爱其资，虽智大迷，是谓要妙。



Carefully guard your thoughts and ideas, and resolve conflicts in beliefs so that you will create only wellness.

*Good shutting makes no use of bolt and bar,  
And yet nobody can undo it;  
Good tying makes no use of rope and knot,  
And yet nobody can untie it.*

Closure of the mind is by far the strongest closure there is. If you are bound to negative belief, emotion, and disregard for your physical being, then that is what you have locked and tied yourself into and there is nothing that anyone can say or do to change that. Only you have the power to open your mind; open the door and untie the knot, open your mind and let yourself experience the amazing and nearly endless possibilities offered by mind-body-spirit practices to bring balance and wellness back into your life.

*Hence, the Sage is always good at saving men,  
And therefore nobody is abandoned;  
Always good at saving things,  
And therefore nothing is wasted.*

In the realm of wellness, I believe this means that there is always hope. Many people have been told by a healthcare professional that their disease is untreatable, that they should make preparations to depart from this physical existence, but they secure such personal power and belief that they can and will get well again that they defy all odds and explanations. Then, they rewrite their script, they just do it! I believe that many "miracle cures" and "spontaneous healings" are simply the result of a powerful surge of personal energy backed by unwavering belief that "I can do it! I can be well again!"

You can do it, too.

*This is called "following the guidance of the Inner Light."*

Inner Wisdom, Intuition, Belief, Consciousness, Energy, call it whatever you like, but it is your source of connection to the Universe, and the source of your knowing what you need to do to bring about your health and wellness. Follow it!

*Hence, good men are teachers of bad men,  
While bad men are the charge of good men.*

Let's consider "good men" the power of your beliefs to create change and "bad men" as the physical illness that may have manifested. Without those "bad men" (ill bodies) that need to be taught, the "good men" don't have the opportunity to discover and exercise their skills at teaching the body how to be well again.

*Not to revere one's teacher,  
Not to cherish one's charge,  
Is to be on the wrong road, however intelligent one may be.*



To continue with the "good teacher" and "bad student" analogy; without an illness that needs to be overcome (the bad student), your intention and intelligence (the good teacher) does not get exercised in such a way that you are able to appreciate the mind-body-spirit creative powers you possess to manifest a health body. Hid-

den in every disease is a pearl of wellness that can be discovered and polished by the use of mindful intention.

It is a waste of the journey of Life if you do not appreciate your illness and are grateful for the opportunity to use your creative powers to reverse the disease and manifest wellness. Rewrite your story; you get to make it an "I lived happily ever after" ending.

*This is an essential tenet of the Tao.*

Being in the Dao is being in harmony with change, and that certainly includes the ups and downs of health and wellness. Don't let a transition to disease be your only change; take the opportunity to explore the power you possess with the unity of mind, body, and spirit practices to manifest the changes to wellness that you want to see.

[**Michelle Wood** holds a degree in Holistic Relaxation Therapy from Natural Health Institutes, has been a student of the Yijing since the early 1990s, and embraced the philosophy and shamanic roots of Daoism at the beginning of the 21st Century. In addition to being a counselor for a weekly grief-recovery and transitions group, she offers meditation and qigong classes and workshops both privately and through Central Oregon Community College. Participation in kirtan, Indian devotional singing, for many months led Michelle to study the archetypal vibrations found in Sanskrit mantras and chants which activates your cells, stimulates the energy of the inner self, and unites your consciousness with your un-consciousness. So excited by the prospect of sharing this technique to achieve joy and health through vocalization and vibration, she is developing a wellness program utilizing the phrases, tones and vibrations found in Sanskrit bhajans (devotional songs). Michelle now operates her new business "Everyday Enlightenment, Transforming emotion and attitude into positive, life-enhancing lessons!" She helps you do this through Consciousness and Awareness Development techniques such as qigong and meditation. Find her online at "Everyday Enlightenment" <http://www.everyday-enlightenment.com> , "Everyday Enlightenment" blog at <http://enlightenmenteveryday.blogspot.com/> and Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/EverydayEnlightenment> ]



[From the Master]

## How to Maintain Energy

Yang Yang, Ph.D.

People often ask me: "How do I improve my Gong," or "How do I improve my pushhands by improving my Gong?" How do we improve our martial arts skills? And I like this long-term question: How can we have the vitality and happiness most accomplished grand masters have when they reach the age of seniors?

I can't answer all these questions from personal experience. But I can share my observations of older masters and also my perspective from my own healing experience. One way to look at these questions is to focus on energy as related to practice. And further, look at two sides of energy: input and output. Usually, cultivating Gong, we think of increasing energy. However, we also need to maintain the energy we develop. Sometimes that means decreasing output. This is my focus below.

### To decrease energy output

The first thing to work on is our emotions. Humans all have feelings: sometimes good, sometimes bad. Negative feelings consume a big chunk of our energy. They can bring about insomnia, decreased appetite, poor digestion, and, if continued too long, can lead to more serious health conditions.

Developing our Gong, we expect to be different from our family members, our colleagues, and people on the street. Not necessarily more right, or better, just relevantly different. Remembering this alone, can short circuit the negative feelings that decrease energy retention.

Another thing to contemplate is that not everything is personal. We too often take things personally that don't need to be seen as personal at all. This happened to me when I went to a lecture recently. The teacher has a strong personality which turns most of the students off at the beginning of the class, including myself. I heard quite a few of the students say they didn't want to come back to this teacher for further training. I noticed my own negative feeling fairly quickly and said to myself:

"Nothing personal. This is not about me. It's just this teacher's personality. He treats his family, colleagues, and himself the same way. He doesn't even learn the names of each student in the class. I need to look at the quality of the content instead of just his way of presenting."

Once I dropped the thinking behind my negative feelings, my study got more efficient and I learned quite a few things in his class.





It helps to remember that most human beings are seeking their own best interest. The difference is that people vary in terms of their values, their boundaries, what are acceptable behaviors, and what is the meaning of their lives. If we want to interpret the world in our own terms, hopefully our world view is sound.

## **Yin and Yang**

In our tradition we believe an effective way to deal with negative feelings is to meditate on a particular awareness of reality: that the world is Yin and Yang. One can adapt this world view in order to make lemonade when the world seems all lemons. Or use this view to cultivate a habitual mental pattern of positive thinking and turn most, if not every incident into an opportunity.

One way look at the Yin and Yang symbol, is that at the extreme of Yin is Yang and vice versa. If we have an intention to train our brain, we can always see that positive things turn out of every incident. In my case, to an extent, I am grateful for the congenital heart condition I had. I would not have practiced so hard otherwise. And I would not be able to experience the healing power of this ancient art if I had been a normal healthy kid.

Another example is how the hardship of the Chinese Cultural Revolution cultivated my resilience. My family happened to be on the wrong side of the political spectrum from 1949 to the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution in 1976. On the wrong side of the political dynamics, some people were destroyed by fear, oppression, injustice, and even torture. Some other families survived and came out even stronger and better.

I was lucky to be in the second category, mainly due to my strong father. He kept reminding the family to be patient, to be hopeful and prepare ourselves for change and opportunities. The difficult part was knowing if and when the country was going to change.

In time, the change did happen, but it took a long time. Going through this difficult time cultivated resilience for some of us in the 'bad category.' I am fortunate that because of my father's direction I am one of them. The resilience cultivated during those hard times has helped me stay centered and positive, even through adversity, and to keep moving forward.

My father's world view included the inevitability of change, and the possibility of adverse change turning to positive--like the helpful western orientation that when life brings lemons, make lemonade.

In summary, you can use the ways I have mentioned, and any others you can think of, not to have your hard-earned energy decrease and dissipate. Then you can carefully control your output.

[Yang Yang was born in 1960s in Henan province near the Chen Village in China. At the age of 12, he began studying Taiji because of a congenital heart defect. He credits his practice of Chen Style Taiji with curing his heart condition and allowing him to pass the physical exam required in China to enter the universities. Master Yang's Taiji studies now span 30 years. With both Law and Engineering degrees earned in China, Master Yang practiced business law for several years before coming to the United States to study for a Master's Degree in Economics at Illinois State University. He is currently the Director of the Center for Taiji Studies in Champaign, Illinois, and has recently completed a Doctorate Degree in Kinesiology at the University of Illinois. His [research](#) focuses on the benefits and mechanisms of Taiji practice.]

## [Meditation in Motion]

## Integrating Mind and Body with Taiji

by Eric Borreson

Mind-body integration means to be aware of your movements, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In order to develop a mind-body connection, we need to learn how to continuously adjust our movements, posture, breathing, thoughts, and emotions. Taiji is the perfect vehicle to do this. Taiji helps develop clarity of mind, awareness of body and qi, and strength of spirit.

A basic principle of taiji is that the yi (mind) directs the qi (internal energy) and the qi drives the jing (internal power.)

This makes it sound like yi, qi, and jing are separable and can be developed independently. However, in practice they are inseparable.



It takes a lot of practice to develop your internal power. You need to rewire your nervous system so that your mind can properly understand your body. With extensive practice, you can begin to understand the connection between yi, qi, and jing. There is a saying, "The first 10,000 times don't count," referring to the amount of practice needed to understand taiji. It doesn't really take that long to make progress, but growth continues to happen with more practice.

The taiji classics often make statements that mind is more important than the body. I don't think that this means to separate mind and body. It means that mind directs the body. Mind and body are inseparable but they must be properly integrated. There are three steps, or parts, of the process of integrating mind and body. They are not independent of each other. The three steps are 1) clarity of mind, 2) awareness of body and qi, and 3) strengthening your spirit (unconscious mind).

### 1. Clarity of Mind

Clarity of mind comes from focusing your mind on your taiji form. Be aware of each of the movements. Know where your muscles and joints are moving. Be aware of the intention. The mind must be engaged in every part of every movement. There are three parts to developing clarity of mind.

**Clarity Part 1 - Jing - Mental Quietness.** Quiet your monkey mind.

Mental quietness happens as you breathe deeply and rhythmically during performance of the forms. During the close part of a form, you exhale and sink your qi, which also helps to calm your mind. It also can help to develop jing if you imagine that you are practicing in a peaceful, tranquil place.

**Clarity Part 2 - Song - Relax and Loosen.** Loosen your muscles and joints.

Song does not mean to allow your body to go limp. It means to get rid of any unnecessary tension in your body. Your qi flows freely when your body is loosened and stretched out. Imagine your qi sinking to your dan tian. Thinking of your dan tian helps you focus and pay attention to your body.

**Clarity Part 3 - Mental Focus.** Focus your mind on one thing at a time.

Mental focus is the ability to concentrate on one thing and ignore the monkey mind that constantly distracts us. The three parts to developing focus are to focus on your body, the martial meaning of each form, and your internal emotional balance.

First, focus on your body. Be aware of what is happening and where your qi is moving. Try to get to know a little bit about the acupuncture meridians because that's where your qi moves. Focus on your muscles and joints. The shorter forms develop our understanding of the movements and develop our understanding of qi. The longer forms develop our focus by requiring us to concentrate for several minutes at a time in order to do the form correctly. The longer concentration develops our ability to use and move our qi.

Second, focus on the martial meaning of each form. It is important to understand the open and close of each form. Know how and where power is developed and delivered. This helps you to understand the correct posture and movement. Then your mind can direct your body into the right movements. Focus on the movements and their intention.

Third, focus on cultivating your internal emotional balance. This gives you a controlled and relaxed personality to match the controlled, slow, and relaxed taiji form.

## **2. Awareness of Body and Qi**

Taiji is a martial art. You need to concentrate to develop clarity of mind, but you also need to be aware of what is happening around you. Closing your eyes during the form helps build awareness of your body, but it doesn't help you become aware of the environment around you. Once again, there are three parts to this.

**Awareness Part 1** - Develop the correct posture and tempo.

Without practice and feedback, our mind may not know exactly what the body is doing. For example, you may think that you are keeping an upright body during your forms, but you may actually be bending forward a little bit. You need feedback during your training so that you can develop this integration. Use another person, a video camera, or a mirror to test your posture.

**Awareness Part 2** - Learn how to direct your force.

Even the simplest forms have several (many) parts to learn and master. It is a big oversimplification, but we can say that the six things to focus on at this point are 1) what your feet are doing, 2) what your hands are doing, 3) what your waist (body) is doing, 4) what your eyes are doing, 5) opening, and 6) closing.

**Awareness Part 3** - Focus on moving your qi.

When you are practicing taiji, move slowly and continuously and use intent to move beyond the physical part of the form. This helps to develop a strong mind-body connection. Qi gets stronger as it continues to flow, just like the force of water gets stronger as it flows downhill. If you stop moving during the forms, your qi also stops moving.

## **3. Strengthening Your Spirit (Unconscious Mind)**

The word "spirit" needs a little explanation. It has nothing to do with the Christian idea of the Holy Spirit. It is attitude, in the sense of "Being in high spirits." Spirit is mostly controlled by your unconscious mind. You can be aware of your spirit and make temporary changes, but long-term change requires long-term practice. Taiji can be a path to control your unconscious mind.



**Spirit Part 1 - Use guided imagery.**

A key component of managing your spirit is using guided imagery. The imagery may have a short-term goal, such as mastering a difficult part of a form or keeping upright during a form, or it may have a long-term goal, such as improving your control of your speed during the entire set.

The classics of taiji clearly recognized the use of imagery. Many of the names of the individual forms reflect this idea. Taiji sets have descriptive names like "playing the lute" and "white crane spreads its wings" that bring the images to mind.

Mental imagery works on the unconscious mind and can be effective in ways that standard practice alone cannot be. It can help guide you to a higher level of taiji. As a suggestion, set aside 5 or 10 minutes every day for mental imagery before practicing your forms. Use this time to work on your goal. Visualize that you do your forms perfectly. Imagine the smallest details. Your unconscious mind doesn't know the difference between visualization and actual movement. The visualization influences your following practice.

**Spirit Part 2 - Get your flow going.**

Flow is the feeling you get when you get lost in the moment. This is when you don't even notice anything going on around you. This is sometimes called being in the zone. People perform their best at everything and have the most enjoyment when they are "in the flow." When someone is in flow, their emotions become energized and aligned with the task at hand. Agitation and anxiety prevent you from getting in the flow.

There are three main factors that improve your flow. First, have a clear short-term goal for each practice. Second, it is important to receive immediate and relevant feedback. Third, match your goals to your skills. You want an achievable challenge.

When you are beginning to learn taiji, your goal may be to remember how to remember the movement. Your feedback comes from knowing that you completed the movement correctly. For a more advanced movement, your goal may be to focus on the substantial and insubstantial weight shifts during the form. In this case, your feedback, comes from you knowing that you completed the form or set and were aware of your weight at all times. In both cases, you are selecting an appropriate goal for your skill level.

**Spirit Part 3 - Practice, practice, practice.**

It is not possible to learn all of these things at once. During your daily practice, pick one thing to work on for that day. Work on that topic for several days or weeks and then move on to something new. Eventually, come back to the first topic and work on that one again. You can continue to learn something new about yourself as you continue to work.



**Eric Borreson** - a student and teacher, finds teaching tai chi, qigong, and meditation to be a path to a more meaningful life. Eric is the founder and director of Meditation in Motion, specializing in teaching about living healthier and happier lives. He is a Master Instructor in the Therapeutic Tai Chi system. He teaches tai chi and qigong at the prestigious Heartland Spa, a top 10 destination spa, in Gilman, IL. In addition, he teaches tai chi (Therapeutic Tai Chi, Yang 24, Dr. Lam's Tai Chi for Arthritis, and Dr. Lam's Tai Chi for Diabetes) at other venues. He teaches private lessons on request. He writes a weekly wellness column at <http://eric-taichi.blogspot.com>.

## Are You Really Studying Tai Chi and Is It Effective for Stress?

**Marty Eisen, Ph.D.**

### 1. What is Classical Taiji?

Only the Yang style will be discussed. However, similar types of training were used in other classical styles (Chen, Wu and Sun), since these were also internal forms of Kung Fu for health and self defense. These styles have also been altered and shortened.

The original (old) Yang Taiji form was devised by Yang Lu-Chan (1799 – 1872) and consisted of about 128 postures, not counting repetitions. It had both fast and slow movements in it. One of the purposes of the fast movements was to teach fa-jing, small, explosive movements to generate tremendous power in punches, kicks, etc., for self defense. The (new) long form, practiced by most Yang stylists today, was derived from the Yang Lo – Sim form by Yang Cheng – Fu (1883 – 1936). He removed the fast fa-jing moves, all leaping kicks and made slightly different moves the same. It has about 108 postures. To learn the original form properly took about 5 or 6 years.



Each move in the old form not only showed how to strike acupoints, but the proper direction for striking them, with devastating results. This could result in death of an adversary and was known as Dim Mak.

However, learning the form was not enough for combat and so the following two-person exercises are practiced to learn how to attack and counter. Martial Push Hands (Toi Sau), consisting of countering punches, strikes, kicks, locks and throws (Chin Na). This is not the same as the modern, popular push hands, whose purpose is to push the opponent off-balance. Chi Sau (sticky hands) are also practiced, as well as Pushing Feet, in which only the feet are used to attack and defend. These exercises are mainly to train the student to combat single attacks.

More complex exercises are used for continuous attacks, such as Da Lu (the Great Repulse) and Small San Sau (Free Hands). These exercises only use a small number of the techniques from the old form.

Students then learn Pauchui (Cannon Fist), the remaining movements from the old form, done powerfully rapidly. Puchui consists of two different formulas, a fixed sequence of moves, which are practiced alone. Later, one student does one formula, while his opponent does the other so that they can practice a sequence of attacks and counters (Large San Sau) without stopping between techniques. At first, they practice slowly and then, gradually faster, with full power. Later, the techniques are applied randomly, leading to free sparring. Usually the Large San Sau is not taught until a student has practiced for at least four years.

Weapons, such as the sword, spear, are also taught as solo forms and then, two-person sparring exercises.

There are several associated medical and health aspects in Taiji connected with the old solo form associated martial training exercises. There is a natural, biorhythmic Qi flow in the body every 24 hours, known as the Horary Cycle. In the Horary Cycle, the Qi makes its way through the meridians with its associated organ so that there is a two-hour period during which it is at maximum energy. The order of flow and the maximum energy time periods are:

Lung (3-5 AM) → Large Intestines (5-7 AM) → Stomach (7-9 AM) → Spleen (9-11 AM) → Heart (11AM - 1PM) → Small Intestines (1-3 PM) → Bladder (3-5 PM) → Kidney (5-7 PM) → Pericardium (7-9 PM) → Triple Energizer (9-11 PM) → Gallbladder (11PM - 1AM) → Liver (1 – 3 AM) → Lung .....

Performing the old Yang form causes your Qi to flow through the Horary Cycle 3 times, energizing the body and helping balance your Qi flow. In addition, each posture in the Yang form can be practiced alone as a Qigong exercise to treat various conditions in the body –for example, holding the single whip posture is beneficial to the joints. In addition, greater difficulty than normal in doing a certain posture can be used to diagnose diseases.

Most people cannot learn to relax sufficiently by only doing the solo form. Practicing the two-person exercises is required. In addition, practicing the San Sau form can energize the practitioners if the acupoints are struck lightly.

In classical Taiji, the goal was not to just to make students warriors, but also healers. Dim Mak is not studied just for self defense to injure people. Techniques for resuscitating attackers and treating accidental practice injuries must also be learned. Moreover, the same Dim Mak technique, when done gently and with a healing mind –set can be used to treat diseases.

Auxiliary Qigong training, which includes holding postures, is also an integral part of training. This helps students increase their internal energy, learn to feel Qi, helps relaxation, rooting, and projecting Qi. External Qi healing is also taught.

Classical Taiji takes years of dedicated study. It is very difficult to learn in modern times because of many distractions. To teach Taiji to the masses, several different shorter versions of the new, long, Yang Ching – Po have been devised such as: the Beijing 24 movement version, Chen Man-ching 37 movement form, the 42 movement competition form developed by the Chinese National Wushu Association, and a 48 movement Yang style version by the Chinese National Athletic Association. There is even a fast set version developed by Master Dong Ying-jie.

Practicing the old Yang style probably has more health benefits than practicing a modern, shorter version simply because there are more varied movements in the old form. It is unlikely that the short form causes the Qi to flow 3 times through the Horary Cycle, because different movements influence the Qi flow in different ways and many movements are omitted. There are also many principals for doing the postures correctly. In some modern, shorter versions, these principals are not obeyed. Even if the student is taught the principals and has them memorized, it takes years before they can be performed correctly.

Taiji research is usually not done on all parts classical Taiji as described above, but only some shortened version or even a few postures from some solo form. The results should really be entitled the effects of trying to learn Taiji, since the research is usually carried out for months and not years. Beginning students are not doing real Taiji and so using a control group that danced or walked might give similar results as doing Taiji (9). Further studies, using a walking control group as in (21), should be done.

The Chinese medical health benefits, such as the Horary Cycle effect and postures used as Qigong, have been passed on from Master to student without explanation or justification in terms of traditional Chinese medical theory. Clinical trials have not been carried out to justify all of these claims.

## **2. Is Taiji a Form of Qigong?**

The movements in the solo Taiji form cause the Qi to circulate. A Taiji expert can feel the Qi circulate and after years of practice the circulation of Qi produces the movements. Thus, Taiji can be considered to be a form of Qigong according to the Qi definition of Qigong (1).

Even some beginners claim to feel Qi or some of its manifestations. However, often this is just the result of muscle tension restricting blood flow and brainwashing by the instructor. Initially, because beginners must concentrate





on the postures and principals, their minds are too preoccupied to feel Qi. Electrical sensations in the back, legs and arms, may be an indication of multiple sclerosis (MS) and not an indication of Qi flow in vital energy channels (2). "The common form of Lhermitte's sign, which occurs in about a third of multiple sclerosis (MS) patients, consists of a feeling of an electric current moving down the back to the legs on flexion of the neck. The spread of the sensation is usually downwards, terminating either at the lower end of the spine or passing down both legs. However, all four limbs may be affected or less frequently the arms alone. Even in the absence of any other symptoms or signs, Lhermitte's sign is a strong indication of MS. In our patient electrical sensation compatible with Lhermitte's sign occurred during bow stance (cervical extension) and push hand practicing (flexion). These positions represent the classical postures of flexion or extension that are associated with Lhermitte's sign. They evoke, due to mechanical deformation of the cord impulses in demyelinated, sensory fibers."

The first definition of Qigong is not suitable for research, since the exact nature of Qi is unknown. However, Taiji is a self-training technique or process that integrates the body posture, breathing, and mentality into oneness to achieve the optimal state for both body and mind. Thus, Taiji is a form of Qigong according to the second definition in (1).

### 3. Taiji for Relieving Stress

Sandlund and Norlander (3) reviewed more than 20 studies published from 1996 to 1999 on the effects of Taiji on stress response and well-being and concluded that, although the slow-movement Taiji may not achieve aerobic fitness, it could enhance flexibility and overall psychological well-being. Taiji exercises led to an improvement of mood. The researchers concluded that all studies on the benefits of Taiji have revealed positive results and that Taiji was an effective way to reduce stress.

Wang, Collet, and Lau (4) reviewed general health outcomes of Taiji. Among the six studies they reviewed with psychological measures, five reported positive or significant effects of Taiji on reducing stress and anxiety. However, biases existed in some of the studies, and it was difficult to draw firm conclusions about the benefits reported. Therefore, more well-designed studies are needed in the future.

The review (5) states that the majority of studies on Taiji conducted between 1996 and 2004 had focused on health and well being of Taiji exercise for senior adults. The results show that Taiji may lead to improved balance, reduced fear of falling, increased strength, increased functional mobility, greater flexibility, and increased psychological well-being, sleep enhancement for sleep disturbed elderly individuals, and increased cardio functioning.

Jin (7) conducted one of the first studies to examine the effects of Taiji (new long Yang and Wu forms) on the endocrine system. Changes in psychological and physiological functioning following participation in Taiji were assessed for 33 beginners (8 months or less experience) and 33 practitioners (more than a year's experience). The variables in the three-way factorial design were experience (beginners vs. practitioners), time (morning vs. afternoon vs. evening), and phase (before Taiji vs. during Taiji vs. after Taiji). Phase was a repeated measures variable. Relative to measures taken beforehand, practice of Taiji raised heart rate, increased noradrenaline excretion in urine, and decreased salivary cortisol concentration. Relative to baseline levels, subjects reported less tension, depression, anger, fatigue, confusion and state-anxiety, they felt more vigorous, and in general they had less total mood disturbance.

Heart rate for practitioners was higher than that for beginners. Jin attributes this effect to the lower stance and more controlled form of experienced practitioners.

The data suggest that Taiji results in gains that are comparable to those found with moderate exercise. There is need for research concerned with whether participation in Taiji has effects over and above those associated with physical exercise. A later paper by Jin (9) investigated this query.

The study (9) compares the stress-reducing attributes of Taiji to those of brisk walking, meditation, and sitting and reading. There was no difference in the magnitude of cortisol reduction between the Taiji group and

the other three groups. Hence, an additive effect of the physical exercise component and the cognitive exercise component in the practice of Taiji is not evident.

#### 4. Taiji for Stress-related Symptoms

##### *Control of Hypertension*

In Wang et al.'s recent review (4) of Taiji, four studies (two with randomized control) were discussed in terms of its effects on hypertension, and all of them reported that it significantly decreased blood pressure among hypertensive patients.

The results in (11) suggest that light activity and moderate intensity aerobic exercise have similar effects on BP in previously sedentary elderly individuals. If future trials with large sample size and a no-exercise control group confirm these results, promoting light intensity activity could have substantial public health benefits as a means to reduce BP.

This study (13) examined the effects of Taiji vs. aerobic exercise for victims of heart attacks, comparing them to a cardiac support group as control. Resting heart rate declined in the Taiji group, but curiously, not in the aerobics group in this study. Both the Taiji and aerobics groups showed a drop on systolic blood pressure, but only the Taiji group showed a drop in diastolic blood pressure.

##### *Improvement of Cardiovascular Conditions*

Wang et al. (4) reviewed 16 studies of Taiji in patients with cardiorespiratory conditions and reported that its regular practice will delay the decline of cardiorespiratory function in older adults and might be prescribed as a suitable exercise.

One of the few studies to focus on serious Taiji practitioners, mostly people in their 60's, who had been practicing the new Yang Long form for 3-10 years, appears in (10). They practiced 3-7 times a week, with an average frequency of 5 times a week. A fairly rigorous practice: 20 minutes of warm-up exercises, 24 minutes of practicing the form paced by the Master, and 10 minutes of cool-down. This study compares these Taiji practitioners to a group of sedentary peers matched for age and body size, and looks at cardiorespiratory declines over a two-year period. It has some heart rate profiles that seem to indicate moderate aerobic benefit in older practitioners (this benefit has not been demonstrated in younger subjects).

In (12), changes in heart rate and electrocardiogram were recorded by telemetry in 100 volunteers who were regularly doing a Yang simplified (short) form. During the exercise, the change in heart rate was not very marked and no important electrocardiographic changes were recorded. Thus, it was speculated that the possible beneficial effect of Taiji on the cardiovascular system cannot be attributed solely to the amount of exercise provided by Taiji and additional mechanisms must be sought. The author notes that "16 male and 10 female hypertensives reported a gradual normalization in blood pressure cutting the need for medication entirely or reducing the doses."

The study (18) concluded that Taiji was a culturally appropriate mind-body exercise for older adults with cardiovascular risk disease factors. Statistically significant psychosocial benefits were observed over 12-weeks. Further research examining Taiji exercise using a randomized clinical trial design with an attention-control group may reduce potential confounding effects, while exploring potential mechanisms underlying the relaxation response associated with mind-body exercise. In addition, future studies with people with other chronic illnesses in all ethnic groups are recommended to determine if similar benefits can be achieved. The authors were unaware of an earlier study (19) on the beneficial effects of Taiji for dialysis



patients.

This research (21) compared the effects of a short style of Taiji versus a brisk walking training program on aerobic capacity, heart rate variability (HRV), strength, flexibility, balance. They found Taiji to be an effective way to improve many fitness measures in elderly women over a 3-month period. It was also significantly better than brisk walking in enhancing certain measures of fitness, including lower extremity strength, balance and flexibility, psychological status, and quality of life.

Twenty patients with coronary heart disease were recruited for the study (28). Ten patients practiced supervised Taiji training once a week and home-based Taiji training three times a week, together with conventional cardiac rehabilitation for one year. The control group only received the conventional cardiac rehabilitation. The patients in the Taiji group showed statistically significant improvement in baroreflex sensitivity. The researchers concluded that Taiji training is beneficial in the treatment of coronary heart disease.

### ***Reduction of Chronic Pain Syndrome and Arthritis Symptoms***

Pain and fatigue significantly decreased in the experimental group in (14). However, the improvement in daily life performance of the rheumatoid arthritis patients was not statistically significant but their sense of balance was enhanced significantly.

Sun-style Taiji exercise (6) was found as beneficial for women with osteoarthritis to reduce their perceived arthritic symptoms and to healthier behavior.

In the short term study (15), the beneficial outcomes for Taiji group and aquatic group were significantly better than the self-help group. Taiji may be more suitable than aquatic exercise for osteoarthritis. Further longitudinal studies are necessary to confirm these results. Similar conclusions were reached in another study (16) comparing Taiji and an aquatic group for rheumatoid arthritis.

The results (17) suggest Taiji does not exacerbate symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. In addition, Taiji has statistically significant benefits on lower extremity range of motion, in particular ankle range of motion, for people with RA. The included studies did not assess the effects on patient-reported pain.

The objective of this systematic review (25) is to evaluate data from controlled clinical trials testing the effectiveness of Taiji for treating rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Systematic searches were conducted on Medline, Pubmed, AMED, British Nursing Index, CINAHL, EMBASE, PsycInfo, The Cochrane Library 2007, Issue 1, the UK National Research Register and ClinicalTrials.gov, Korean medical databases, Qigong and Energy Medicine Database and Chinese databases up to January 2007.

Collectively this evidence is not convincing enough to suggest that Taiji is an effective treatment for RA. The value of Taiji for this indication therefore remains unproven.

### ***Reduction of Anxiety and Depression***

In (20), significant improvements in trait anxiety, pain perception, mood, flexibility, and balance were obtained. These may have a profound effect on the incidence of falls, injuries, resulting disability, and overall quality of life.

The study (22) aimed to assess the usefulness of two interventions in a group rehabilitation medicine setting and to determine strategies and exercise guidelines for long-term care of the HIV/AIDS population with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and/or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). It concluded that that Taiji and exercise improve physiologic parameters, functional outcomes, and quality of life. Group intervention provides a socialization context for management of chronic HIV disease. Further long and short term studies are required.

The effects on blood pressure, lipid profile, and anxiety status on subjects in a 12-week Taiji Chuan exercise program were studied (23). It concluded that Taiji exercise training could decrease blood pressure and results in favorable lipid profile changes and improve subjects' anxiety status. Therefore, Taiji could be used as



an alternative modality in treating patients with mild hypertension, with a promising economic effect.

Another paper on the beneficial effect of Taiji on depression in older individuals appears in (26).

## Immunity

At rest the total number of T-lymphocytes and the number of active T-lymphocytes were increased significantly in the exercise group compared with the controls (8). Immediately after a bout of Taiji (88 style), a marked increase of active T-lymphocytes occurred. In conclusion, the results indicate that frequent Taiji exercise causes an increase of T-lymphocytes in the blood.

According to a new study (24), Taiji may help older adults avoid getting shingles by increasing immunity to varicella-zoster virus (VZV) and boosting the immune response to varicella vaccine in older adults. Taiji alone was found to increase participants' immunity to varicella as much as the vaccine typically produces in 30- to 40-year-old adults, and Taiji combined with the vaccine produced a significantly higher level of immunity, about a 40 percent increase, over that produced by the vaccine alone. The study further showed that the Taiji group's rate of increase in immunity over the course of the 25-week study was double that of the health education (control) group. The Taiji and health education groups' VCV immunity had been similar when the study began. In addition, the Taiji group reported significant improvements in physical functioning, bodily pain, vitality and mental health. Both groups showed significant declines in the severity of depressive symptoms.

Previous studies have suggested that Taiji may improve immune function. This study (27) was intended to examine whether 5 months of moderate Taiji and Qigong (TQ) practice could improve the immune response to influenza vaccine in older adults. It concluded that traditional TQ practice improves the antibody response to influenza vaccine in older adults. However, further study is needed to determine whether the enhanced response is sufficient to provide definitive protection from influenza infection.

## References

1. Eisen M. Qigong and Taiji application in stress management. Part 2: Qigong for stress, Qi Dao, Jan – Feb. 2008.
2. Achiron, A., Barak, Y., Stern, Y., Noy, S. Electrical sensation during Tai-Chi practice as the first manifestation of multiple sclerosis," *Clinical Neurology and Neurosurgery*, 99, 280-281, 1997.
3. Sandlund, E. S., & Norlander, T. The effects of Taiji Chuan relaxation and exercise on stress responses and well-being: An overview of research. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 7(2), 139–149, April 2000.
4. Wang, C. C., Collet, J. P., & Lau, J. The effect of Taiji on health outcomes in patients with chronic conditions. *Archive of Internal Medicine*, 164, 493–501, 2004.
5. Kuramoto, A. M. Therapeutic benefits of Taiji exercise: research review. *WMI*, 6, 105(7), 42-6, Oct. 2006.
6. Song, R., Lee, E.O., Lam. P. Bae, S.C. Effects of a Sun-style Taiji exercise on arthritic symptoms, motivation and the performance of health behaviors in women with osteoarthritis. *Taehan Kanho Hakhoe Chi*, 37(2), 249-56, March 2007.
7. Jin, P.. *Changes in heart rate, noradrenaline, cortisol and mood during Taiji. Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 197-206, 1989.
8. Sun, X., Xu Y., Xia Y. Determination of E-rosette-forming lymphocytes in aged subjects with Taichiquan exercise. *Int J Sports med*, Vol.10, No 3, 217-219, 1989.
9. Jin, P. Efficacy of Taiji, brisk walking, meditation, and reading in reducing mental and emotional stress. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 361-370, 1992.
10. Lai, J., Lan, C., Wong, M., and Teng, S. Two-year trends in cardiorespiratory function among older Taiji Chuan practitioners and sedentary subjects. *Journal of the American Geriatric Society*, Vol. 43: 1222-1227, 1995.
11. Young, D.R., Appel, L.J., Jee, S. The effects of aerobic exercise and Tai Chi on blood pressure in the elderly," *Circulation* v. 97(#8), 54-P54, March 3, 1998.
12. Gong, L, Qian J., Zhang J., Yang Q., Jiang J., and Tao Q. Changes in heart rate and electrocardiogram during Taijiquan exercise; analysis by telemetry in 100 subjects. *Chinese Medical Journal* 94(9), 589-592, 1981.

13. Channer, K.S., Barrow, D., Barrow, R., Osborne, M., and Ives, G. Changes in haemodynamic parameters following Taiji Chuan and aerobic exercise in patients recovering from acute myocardial infarction. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, 349-351, 1990.
14. Lee, K.Y. and Jeong, O. Y. The effect of Taiji movement in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Taehan Kanho Hakhoe Chi*, 36(2), 278-85, 2006.
15. Lee, H.Y. Comparison of effects among Tai-Chi exercise, aquatic exercise, and a self-help program for patients with knee osteoarthritis. *Taehan Kanho Hakhoe Chi*, 36(3), 571-80, 2006.
16. Kirsteins, A.E.; Dietz, F.; Hwang, S.M. Evaluating the safety and potential use of a weight-bearing exercise, Tai-Chi Chuan, for rheumatoid arthritis patients. *Am. J. Phys. Med. Rehabil.*, 70(3), 136-41, 1991.
17. Han, A., Robinson, V., Judd, M., Taixiang, W., Wells G.; Tugwell, P. Taiji for treating rheumatoid arthritis. *Cochrane Database Syst. Rev.*, (3), CD004859, 2004.
18. Taylor-Piliae, R.E., Haskell, W.L., Waters, C.M.; Froelicher, E.S. *J. Adv. Nurs.*, 54(3), 313-29, 2006.
19. Mustata, S., Cooper, L., Langrick, N., Simon, N., Jassal, S.V.; Oreopoulos, D.G. The effect of a Taiji exercise program on quality of life in patients on peritoneal dialysis: a pilot study. *Perit. Dial. Int.*, 25(3), 291 – 4, 2005.
20. Ross, M.C., Bohannon, A.S., Davis, D.C.; Gurchiek, L. The effects of a short-term exercise program on movement, pain, and mood in the elderly. Results of a pilot study. *J. Holist. Nurs.*, Jun;17(2):139-47, 1999.
21. Audette, J.F., Jin, Y.S. , Newcomer, R., Stein, L. Duncan G., Duncan, G.; frontera, W.R. Taiji versus brisk walking in elderly women. *Age Aging*. Jul;35(4), 388-93, 2006.
22. [Galantino, M.L.](#), [Shepard, K.](#), [Krafft, L.](#), [Laperriere, A.](#), [Ducette, J.](#), [Sorbello, A.](#), [Barnish, M.](#), [Condoluci, D.](#); [Farrar JT](#). The effect of group aerobic exercise and t'ai chi on functional outcomes and quality of life for persons living with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. *J. Altern. Complement. Med.* Dec;11(6), 1085-9, 2005.
23. [Tsai JC](#), [Wang WH](#), [Chan P](#), [Lin LJ](#), [Wang CH](#), [Tomlinson B](#), [Hsieh MH](#), [Yang HY](#), [Liu JC](#). The beneficial effects of Taiji Chuan on blood pressure and lipid profile and anxiety status in a randomized controlled trial. *J Altern Complement Med.* Oct;9(5):747-54, 2003.
24. Irwin, M.R., et al. Augmenting immune responses to varicella-zoster virus in older adults: A randomized, controlled trial of Taiji. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, Volume 55,4, 511–517, April 2007.
25. Lee et al. Taiji for rheumatoid arthritis: systematic review. *Rheumatology (Oxford)*, Nov., 46(11), 1648-51, 2007..
26. [Chou, K.L.](#), [Lee, P.W.](#), [Yu, E.C.](#), [Macfarlane, D.](#), [Cheng, Y.H.](#), [Chan, S.S.](#); [Chi, I](#). Effect of Taiji on depressive symptoms amongst Chinese older patients with depressive disorders: a randomized clinical trial. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry*, Nov;19(11):1105-7, 2004.
27. Yang Y, et al. Effects of a Taiji and Qigong intervention on the antibody response to influenza vaccine in older adults. *Am J Chin Med.* 35(4), 597-607, 2007.
28. Sato, S., et al., Effect of Taiji training on baroreflex sensitivity and heart rate variability in patients with coronary heart disease. *Int. Heart J.*, 51(4): 238-41, July 2010.

[Dr. Eisen is a retired scientist, who constructed mathematical models in medicine. He has studied and taught Judo, Shotokan Karate, Aikido, Qigong, Praying Mantis Kung Fu, and Taiji in different places. He took correspondence courses in Chinese herbology and studied other branches of Chinese medicine with a traditional Chinese medical doctor. He was the Director of Education of the Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Institute in Upper Darby, PA. You can get more information about Dr. Eisen from <http://home.comcast.net/~carolezak/>]



[A Comedy Moment]

## If a Daoist had composed the error messages that appear on a computer screen....

Anonymous

Windows NT crashed.  
I am the Blue Screen of Death.  
No one hears your screams.

Stay the patient course  
Of little worth is your ire  
The network is down.

A crash reduces  
your expensive computer  
to a simple stone.

Yesterday it worked  
Today it is not working  
Windows is like that.

You step in the stream,  
but the water has moved on.  
This page is not here.





[The Tai Chi Examiner]

## Save the Day for the 13<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Qigong and TCM

Violet Li

[Dr. Effie Chow](#), founder of [World Congress of Qigong & Traditional Chinese Medicine \(TCM\)](#), has been extremely busy with a faculty of esteemed Qigong, TCM, and Mind-body exercise experts planning the Thirteenth World Congress. Now [the agenda](#) has been decided and the program looks stronger than ever. Many masters and experts have committed to participate in it and you can mark your calendar or book a trip for this event which will be held in San Francisco from **April 29-May 2, 2011**.

This year's presenters include a few celebrities. And the list is growing as more invitees are confirming their participation.

- [Dr. Sharyn Wynters](#), a movie star and a doctor of Naturopathic Medicine after her cancer was healed with only natural medicine. She was the original CAT Girl in the original Batman series.
- Dr. Effie Chow, founder of [East West Academy of Healing Arts](#). Dr. Chow will present Chow Medical Qigong's instant relief of pain and other health problems.
- [Cary-Hiroiyuki Tagawa](#), a movie star and a Martial Artist, starred in The Planet of the Apes, The Last Emperor, Hawaii Five O, Mortal Kombat, and others. Teaching his own breath Qigong to children as well as adults in Honolulu.
- [Master Ting-Jue Zhou](#), an 80-year "young" Qigong healer who can walk on elevated paper, put paper on fire, withstand 1000 degrees of heat, and many other feats. Master Zhou will also host special workshops on Friday (April 29) and Monday (May 2).
- Michael Mohoric, a Qigong Master who will present free distance healing.
- [Grandmaster A. Lowe](#) from UK who has the medical intuitive and can "see" into the body and also break a board with one finger.
- [Master Mingtong Gu](#), founder of Wisdom Qigong Sound Healing Circle.
- [Jeremy Bennett](#), author of [The Power of the Mind: How I Beat OCD](#), international motivational speaker, professional magician, and television personality.
- Dr. Sandra Rose Michael, founder/developer of the Energy Enhancement System
- [Terry Shintani](#), MD, JD, MPH, KSJ is a physician, attorney, nutritionist, author, lecturer, radio show host and community advocate. He is formally designated a "Living Treasure of Hawaii".
- Dr. Kevin Chen, Associate Professor at University of Maryland School of Medicine, a veteran Chi Gong practitioner and science researcher, and Associate Editor of [Chinese Medical Qigong](#).



The World Congress is an official fundraiser for Japan Disaster Fund. Part of proceeds will be donated to the Japanese victims.

Based on the popular demand, the Scientific Symposium, chaired by [Dr. Shin Lin](#), will be extended from half a day to a full day on Sunday May 1. Researchers from major institutes will present the medical research results. There will be demonstrations and Qigong workshops held by masters in all four days. Additionally, personal consultations with healing masters can be scheduled on May 3.

Marisa Vocca, founder of [Nei Dao](#) of Italy and other internationally renowned Tai Chi, Qigong, and TCM experts will also attend the Congress. The World Congress has been one of the most important events in the global Tai Chi, Qigong, and TCM community and it is a non-profit organization supported mainly by East West Academy of Healing Arts along with World Qigong Federation, Osher Center of University of California, San Francisco, CA, Kung Fun Magazine, University of Hawaii Center for Integrative, American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, American Qigong Association, Energy Enhancement System/Dr. Sandra Rose Michael, TC Media/Martial Arts Mart, Chinese Medical Institute & Register/Profession Man Fang Mei of the United Kingdom, Tiger Claw Foundation, The Wellness and Selfcare Center, State University of New York, Stony Brook University, School of Social Welfare, University of Alberta, College of Integrative Medicine, World Natural Medicine Foundation, National Certification Commission on Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM), California State Oriental Medicine Association (CSOMA), Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine at University of California, Irvine, PGSG International Research Institute, World Tai Chi and Qigong Day, The Nine Star University of Health Sciences, Shaolin Temple San Francisco, Pacific Wushu – Sifu Philip and Mei Wong, Academy of Qi Dao, RAMA, Ohlone College, and Club Sport. You can support this worthy event in the following ways.

- Exhibit your Qigong/TCM related business to a targeted audience. Contact [eastwestqi@aol.com](mailto:eastwestqi@aol.com).
- Sponsor the Congress and be highlighted in the Congress Program Book and recognized at the Gala. Contact [eastwestqi@aol.com](mailto:eastwestqi@aol.com)
- Nominate someone for the awards for Qigong Master of the Year, Tai Chi Master of the Year, or Martial Artist of the Year. <http://www.eastwestqi.com/wcq/wcq.html>
- Buy a table for 10 for the dinner and Gala event on Saturday night, April 30.
- Volunteer in advance of the Congress to engage in the planning as well as the execution of the event for a reduced registration fee – call for information.
- Reserve your place as an attendee of this event.
- Make a donation to Japan Relief fund.
- **Join Chow Qigong meditation for Japan:** At 12 noon , the time of the heart in Traditional Chinese Medicine, breathe deeply and properly with the diaphragm, feel connected to the entire universe, image Japan, the people (and the planet) in total pristine beauty whatever you envision that to be. Do not think of the ugliness and destruction at all; only keep beautiful images and thoughts for the land, humans and animals.

Click [here](#) for a full program.



[Violet Li is an award winning journalist, certified Taiji (Tai Chi) instructor, and certified Heart Zone Trainer. She has studied Tai Chi, Qigong and heart fitness with many grandmasters and experts. She has taught Tai Chi, Qigong and other fitness programs to different demographic groups. NBC of St. Louis featured one of her classes in “[100 Year Old Tai Chi Artist](#)”. Her passion for Tai Chi, Qigong and fitness motivates her to write articles on the related events, people, theories, techniques, practices, and health benefits for you. Violet writes regularly for [St. Louis Tai Chi Examiner](#) and [National Tai Chi Examiner](#) with readership from over 18 different countries. Do you have a story or comment to share? Please contact her at [violet.li@tadi.com](mailto:violet.li@tadi.com).]

## [Echoes of Emptiness 虛之響]

*Selected Poetry by Jacob Newell*

Since ancient times, Daoists have used poetry and other art forms to express mystical experience, convey teaching, and transmit energy. A Daoist poem arises naturally out of the stillness of an empty mind, like fresh grasses in the springtime. Embracing both wuji and taiji, Daoist poetry can clear the mind and reveal the Dao.

I started experiencing poetic inspirations during my priest training in the American Dragon Gate Lineage from 2007-2010. They were born out of my qi-cultivation practice and were particularly influenced by the combined practice of studying the Daozang

(Daoist Canon) and practicing Zuowang meditation (Sitting & Forgetting).

Discovering the poetic process has exposed me to the creative process that many artists experience – without any deliberate intention to create something, we spontaneously find ourselves channeling inspiration from mysterious places. I consider this to be an example of the spontaneous arising (ziran) which appears out of wuwei practice.

*Relaxing everything into a stable base  
A powerful geyser wells up from deep inside  
Lifting me beyond my senses  
Without excitement, I ride the rising mists*

*Letting go of all my concerns  
I settle deeply into the serenity of nature  
It's already there  
I don't have to do a darn thing  
Greater than anything  
Anyone could ever contrive*

*Compressing essence  
Elixir rises on its own  
Penetrating the passes  
Golden spout in full bloom*

*Sitting in stillness  
I feel the current of my ancestors pouring  
into me  
Absorbing their essence  
I peer back into the beginningless origin*

*Relaxing my effort  
Nothing is wrong  
Now I can breathe easy  
Abiding in the Middle Kingdom*

*Chamber empty  
Fire burning hot  
Purple smoke rising  
Sweet dew seeping  
Wild birds riding on the wind*



[Jacob Newell (Daoshi Gu Shen Yu) is an ordained Daoist Priest in the American Dragon Gate Lineage. He has been practicing Daoist cultivation since the early 1990's and presently lives and practices in Sonoma County, California, with his wife, Emily. He also enjoys practicing Chinese calligraphy, acupressure, and the way of tea. Jacob is the founder of Old Oak Daoist Center ([www.oldoakdao.org](http://www.oldoakdao.org)) and can be reached at [oldoakdao@yahoo.com](mailto:oldoakdao@yahoo.com). His book of poetry, *These Daoist Bones*, is available through his website.



## Ayurvedic Wisdom Series

**Ayurveda and The 3 Pillars of Mind-Body Wellness**

by John Russell

**What is Ayurveda?**

Ayurveda is an ancient wholistic healing system that dates back more than 5000 years. The term *Ayurveda* is a Sanskrit word that means: ‘The Knowledge and Science of Life’. Although Ayurveda stems out of the ancient land of the Vedas, its applications are universal, with healing modalities that can benefit the whole of humanity within our modern era. The approach of Ayurvedic healing is based upon the constitutional model that utilizes the three Doshas (the three primary life-forces) to describe the various psycho-biological conditions that determine our well-being or dis-ease. These three primary life-forces manifest as the three biological humors and are called *Tridosha*. Each Dosha is termed *Vata*, *Pitta* or *Kapha*. Vata means Air/Wind; Pitta means Fire; and Kapha means Earth/Water. It is understood within Ayurveda that each individual is born with their own particular constitution (Dosha) - this is what's called the *Prakriti* (*Primordial Nature*). The *Prakriti* will manifest as a combination of each Dosha; generally, there might be a combination of two Doshas that predominate over the remainder and in some cases, one will have all three Doshas in perfect balance as their *Prakriti*. Dis-ease illness is the result when the Doshas are out of balance within the mind, heart and the physical body. This is what Ayurveda calls the *Vikriti*; the manifest state of health as the unnatural/imbalanced state. The aim of the Ayurvedic practitioner is to assist in the restoration of the Doshas to their proper state of harmony, so as to promote joyous health and longevity. This is achieved through wisely adjusting certain factors in life-style, diet and through various natural healing modalities, which may include herbal remedies, yoga therapy, meditation, mantra therapy, purification, tonification and rejuvenation therapies, etc.

**The 3 pillars of Mind-Body Wellness**

Ayurveda recognizes that in order for our mind-body make-up to be firmly established in a state of energetic well-being, we need to maintain a well balanced maintenance of the food we eat, the proper regulation of rest with meditation, and a healthy expression and management of our sexual energy. This is what Ayurveda calls the 3 Pillars of Life, as presented within the *Charaka Samhita*, known as one of the greatest resources of Ayurvedic Wisdom.

Let us examine how these 3 Pillars function and how they offer everything that we need to enjoy a life full of wellness.

**Proper Food/Nourishment**

It has been established as a well-known fact that “we are what we eat.” The food that we nourish ourselves with is what makes up our physical bodies in all of its layers. It is important for us to understand that food not only comes to us in the form of matter. The impression that we receive through the five senses are also a

type of food that we hunger for. Ayurveda goes a little deeper with this by stating that the food that we partake of also makes up our mental and emotional bodies as well. We can sense how our mind and heart is affected by certain meals that we partake of when we allow ourselves to be present and mindful in the moments of eating. Therefore it is crucial that we become more conscious of what we partake of as food, as Ayurveda has advocated for millennia.

As much as it is important for us to know the nutritional value of food, we must also know the energetic value as well. In Ayurveda, instead of focusing so much on the protein, carbohydrates, vitamin, mineral, fat, constituents of food, we pay more attention to the tastes and the Mahabhutas (The 5 Great Elements) that they represent. This gives us a clue into the energetic potency of the food we partake of. When we are aware of the energetic principle of food, then we can determine how and what will be nourished by a particular food choice. This is further elaborated upon in Ayurveda through the teachings of the 5 Great Elements and 6 Tastes (see below).

The foundation of the proper absorption of nutrients is based on our digestive fire, which in Ayurveda is termed Agni. When our Agni is robust in its action, most foods are easily digested with the proper absorption of nutrients; when our Agni is low, then we experience all of the symptoms of indigestion, and mal-absorption. So in Ayurveda, the Agni is always monitored, maintained and adjusted according to the level of its strength or weakness, so as to insure healthy nourishment.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Pillar of Mind-Body Wellness consists of consuming proper food, which will lead to proper digestion and vice-versa, in maintaining one's Agni. With good digestion the body is able to extract the nutrients and energy needed from the food. This includes such things as taking food appropriate to the Dosha, appropriate to the season, manner in which the food is consumed, and food combinations.

### The 5 Elements and 6 Tastes

There are 5 Great Elements that make up our material universe: Ether, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth. These 5 Great Elements crystallize from their most subtle forms to give us the tangible material world and even our bodies. Each one of these 5 Elements has their own particular tastes. There are 6 fundamental tastes that are recognized in Ayurveda.

Ether has the taste of Sweetness and Bitterness; Air has a pungent taste; Fire is Pungent, Salty and Sour; Water is known for its Sweet and Salty Taste; and Earth is noted for being Sweet, Sour and Astringent.

As we can see, the taste is what gives us the energetic signature in relation to the element that's in our food. Knowing this, we could get a clear picture on how our day dietary intake is going to influence our Dosha, and also insight into why we might be experiencing imbalance.

Knowing the attributes of the 3 Doshas, and how they are the condensation of the 5 Great Elements, we can better choose the appropriate diet that's right for us.

Let's say that we're working with a Vikriti Dosha that's Vata predominant. The attributes of Vata is well known for its etheric and airy characteristics. This could manifest as excessive worry and anxiety with feelings of being ungrounded. We see that foods that are sweet, bitter and pungent in taste would tend to aggravate Vata Dosha if taken in excess. So in Ayurveda, the method would be to pacify



Vata Dosha by taking foods that are opposite in taste.

### Good Rest and Meditation

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Pillar of Mind-Body Wellness is that of proper rest. This implies observing the natural rhythms of our nightly sleep cycles and refraining from the extremities of too much sleep and being over active.

Generally we take for granted the energy we have after a night's rest, not taking into account what it takes to have regenerated and sustained energy to perform our daily tasks. Naturally we assume that energy is something that just comes with life, and it does, yet at a cost.

From every little thing that we do with our physical bodies, from blinking our eyes to scratching an itch, we are constantly using a tremendous amount of energy. Some people who aren't involved in any daily activities that require strenuous physical output will still find that at the end of the day, they are in need of a good night's sleep. Even our mental and emotional energy get taxed on a daily basis.

With all of this energy output going on daily, it is vital that we observe good and well-balanced cycles of rest, so that we don't burn out (which most of us are doing). It has been proven through extensive studies that good rest serves as a foundation for building up resistance to so many illnesses and imbalances. When we are well rested and rejuvenated, we are more likely to have a robust immune system that serves as, in Chinese Medicine this is called the Jade Screen.

In Ayurveda, Meditation practice is also considered a type of rest. Studies have been conducted to observe the benefits of meditation where they have discovered in long-time practitioners a totally different brain-wave and bio-rhythmic pattern. It has been noted that during sitting practice, and in post-meditation (off-the-cushion), meditation masters are able to maintain a more restful and calm state of being, even in "stressful" circumstances.

In meditation practice, the physical, emotional and mental bodies are brought to a state of conscious relaxation, so that all that's experienced by the meditator is serenity and tranquility. With daily practice, these states deepen and begin to permeate throughout every aspect of life.

Ayurvedic Wisdom teaches us that when proper rest and relaxation are allowed, then detoxification, the restoration of lost vitality and rejuvenation can take place more effectively.

### Healthy Sexual Energy

Our Sexual Energy is the foundation of who we are; it is our very Essence. Everything that we partake of, our food, air and impressions are all coagulated into the Shukra Dhatu, which is the reproductive tissue of the sperm and ovum and the hormones they produce. It is stated in Ayurveda that when we maintain healthy reproductive tissue, then our over-all state of well-being is duly affected in a positive way. In fact, out of the Shukra Dhatu, comes the very protective 'life-sap', called Ojas that is the refined essence of the reproductive tissue.

For the nourishment and cultivation of healthy Shukra Dhatu, we have The Science of Aphrodisiacs, which is one of the 7 Branches of Ayurvedic Medicine. It is commonly understood that aphrodisiacs are supposed to enhance the sex drive as in the famous 'Spanish-fly', and they do indeed, yet when we refer to aphrodisiacs in Ayurveda, we are speaking of certain herbs ( like Ashwagandha and Shatavari) that can be combined into formulas to nourish the Shukra Dhatu. There are also yogic techniques that can be employed to achieve the same means.

By employing the proper regulatory methods of maintaining our sexual energy, we are granted with an over-

all increase of vitality, enhanced consciousness and intelligence, better memory, good health and longevity. It is well known in many the fields that require physical stamina and endurance that when the vital fluids are released from the body, the physical body becomes weak and unstable. Ayurveda has known this for ages and has long advised Scientific Chastity (Brahmacharya) in order to maintain vitality on not only a physical level, but spiritually as well.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Pillar of Mind-Body Wellness advises that while enjoying sex, we should avoid the extremes being overly sexually active or under-active, and to maintain a moderate and healthy approach that nourishes our vitality energy. The Wisdom of Ayurveda states that the transmuted sexual energy can be used as fuel for our spiritual practices, which ultimately leads to the Self-Realization of the Being.

As we could now see and understand, instead of turning to, and relying on medications, tabloid diets, and strenuous exercise routines, we could observe the 3 Pillars of Ayurveda to discover that our own bodies are capable of using energy for rejuvenation and revitalization, in order to reach our full potential of health on every level.



This is the benefit of observing the 3 Pillars of Mind-Body Wellness. May all beings be happy and free of the causes of suffering!

[John Russell is a Certified Ayurvedic Life-Style Counselor and Pancha-Karma Technician; (Pancha-Karma is The Science of Purification and Rejuvenation).

John has practiced herbal therapy alongside other healing modalities of the wholistic healing arts for well over a decade. He is also co-visionary of Sacred Tea-Chings: ~The Taste of Timelessness~ and ~Mind-Body Wellness~. He and his family currently abide within the Pacific Northwest.

You can contact John at: [chadao@sacredtea-chings.com](mailto:chadao@sacredtea-chings.com), [www.sacredtea-chings.com](http://www.sacredtea-chings.com) ]

---

## [Interesting Links]

**I.** New research from The University of Western Ontario has discovered a flavonoid, **Nobiletin**, in tangerines that not only helps to prevent obesity, but also offers protection against type 2 diabetes, and even atherosclerosis, the underlying disease responsible for most heart attacks and strokes. See

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/04/110406161030.htm>

**II.** A new British study of about 20,200 men and women, studied the effect of the following four life-style changes on their death rate:

1. No smoking
2. At least half an hour of daily physical activity
3. Moderate drinking (between one and 14 alcoholic drinks per week)
4. Eating at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables

During the study, nearly 2,000 participants died. But, here's the good message: the death rate was four times lower for people who followed these 4 simple health habits compared to those without any of those health habits:

In fact, having all four of those health habits was equivalent to being 14 years younger, according to Kay-Tee Khaw, PhD, and colleagues from the University of Cambridge. And having one, two, or three of those healthy behaviors was better than nothing. See

<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.0050012>

*(Submitted by Dr. Marty Eisen)*



**[Methods to Improve Meditation]**

## **Taking Dan-Tian Breathing a Step Further -- Hui-Yin Breathing**

**By Ken Andes, L.Ac.**

When people first come to qigong, they're often surprised to find out that they've been breathing the wrong way for most of their lives. Most people come to WISH and other qigong centers with the bad habit of breathing shallow breaths from the chest. This alone is one of the major culprits in health problems involving low energy, headaches, immune dysfunction, stomach disorders, and emotional problems.

As the new qigong student begins to change their breathing pattern to a slow, deep, rhythmic breath from the Dan Tian (the area 2-3 inches below the navel), the most common reaction I've seen over the years is that the person feels as if they are "reborn."

As the qigong aspirant begins to make Dan Tian breathing a regular and eventually habitual form of life, the increased oxygenation of the body results in greater energy, a clearer head, relief from gastro-intestinal problems, and relief from chronic aches and pains. Additionally, the increased oxygenation from Dan Tian breathing gives people a higher metabolism and reduced cravings for sugar and junk food. Yes, you heard me right, the breathing methods taught in qigong have helped countless people overcome obesity and weight gain problems after other methods have failed.

Another interesting benefit of Dan Tian breathing is that it forms the basis for the meditation practices in many Eastern systems of spiritual cultivation (Zen, Vipassana, Yoga, etc.). Without realizing it, many qigong students find that they are happier, more content, and less prone to emotional instabilities such as rage, anxiety, and depression.

With all these changes that come from the practice of Dan Tian breathing, it's no wonder that the word "reborn" is so commonly used to describe the experience of the new qigong student.

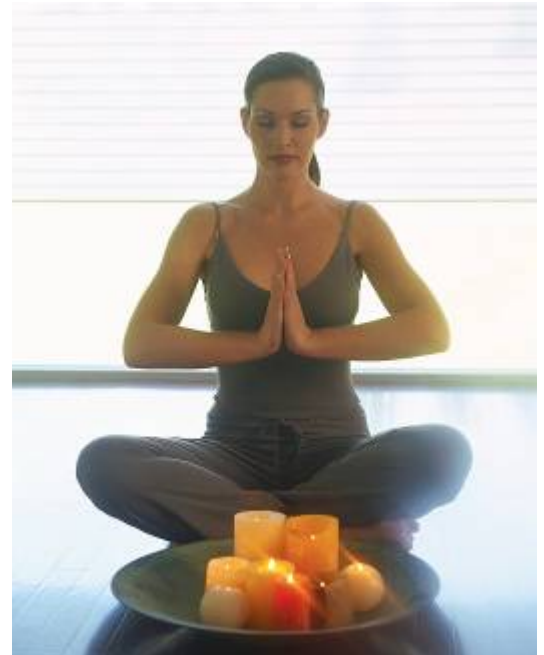
If you are one of the many who have reaped the benefits from learning Dan Tian breathing, I congratulate you on being open-minded and proactive enough to take charge of your health. However, the practice of basic Dan Tian breathing is just the beginning. There are many advanced levels of practice that will take your study of qigong to the next level of growth and evolution. Today, I'd like to share with you what I consider to be the next step in the art and science of breath control.

### **Huiyin Breathing.**

Huiyin is the acupuncture point located directly over the perineum (the area between the genitals and the anus). If the Dan Tian is located 2-3 inches below the navel, you'll notice that Huiyin is considerably lower. In fact, it's the lowest and most yin point on the torso.

Huiyin means "meeting of yin". In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) this point is a gathering point for the yin energy of the body. Yin is the energy of grounding, calming, and centering qualities. Huiyin is also the meeting point of the two most important acupuncture meridians in the body, the Ren (front centerline) and Du (back centerline over the spine).

Directing the breath to this point instead of the Dan Tian will take your qigong practice a step deeper. Activating Hui-



yin through the breath will provide a deeper stimulation to the abdominal organs and lymphatic system. It will take all the physical benefits of Dan Tian breathing a step further.

From an energetic perspective, the activation of Huiyin will energize and open both the Ren and Du meridians in the body. The Ren meridian is the source of yin in the body while the Du is the source of yang. Because both of these vitally important channels meet at the Huiyin point they can be harmonized and activated through Huiyin breathing. The benefits of this practice from a TCM perspective are enormous and too lengthy to go into detail in this article. Since disorders of the human qi field involve imbalances or deficiencies in yin or yang energy, the activation of Huiyin can be viewed as a “cure all” that will help harmonize and rebalance the opposing energies of yin and yang in the body.

### **How to learn Huiyin breathing.**

It's easy. Start by practicing Dan Tian breathing (while either lying down, sitting, or standing), then, once you are in a relaxed and centered state, direct your breath down to the Huiyin point over the perineum instead of the Dan Tian.

Visualize in your mind's eye the breath moving all the way down to Huiyin then spreading out over the bottom of the abdominal floor in all directions, not just to the front. The expansion of the breath in all four directions (front, back, left and right) is what makes Huiyin breathing different from Dan Tian breathing, where the expansion is primarily to the front. If you are keeping your entire body relaxed, especially your lower torso, you'll notice that the sides of your abdomen as well as your lower back will expand outwards along with your belly.

This method of breathing will teach you to relax your whole torso including your lower back.

When I teach this breathing method to students, I'll have them place one hand on my stomach and the other on my lower back. As I breathe, the student will feel both my stomach and lower back expanding outwards as I inhale. They will then feel both my stomach and lower back contract on exhalation. Try having a friend do this to you when you are learning Huiyin breathing. Be sure to relax completely, direct the breath to the perineum, and feel your abdomen expand in all four directions.

From a personal perspective, Huiyin breathing helped me overcome the pain from several debilitating back injuries. Years of full-contact martial arts, weight lifting, and general craziness left me with severe back pain and range of motion problems by the time I was 21. By faithfully practicing this method of breathing, I was able to progressively relax and correct my lower back area by breathing into it. After a few weeks of Huiyin breathing my back felt normal again.

Since then I've taught Huiyin breathing to hundreds of my patients and qigong students with amazing results. Huiyin breathing is excellent for relieving back pain as well as hip problems. It fills the body with qi and corrects the imbalances in yin and yang energy, which so often result in disease and illness.

Practice Huiyin breathing for at least 10 minutes per day. Remember, it's better to practice a little bit each day than a whole lot two or three times per week. Also, practice this breathing method at odd moments. With a little discipline, waiting in line, driving in traffic, and other situations can be turned into qigong practice and the cultivation of self.

**Ken Andes, L.Ac.** – a licensed acupuncturist, Chinese herbalist, and Medical Qigong practitioner, Mr. Andes has studied Qigong since 1989, and has taught Qigong since 1997. His greatest influence has been Master He Binhui, whom he studied Taiji Five-element Qigong. In addition to his full-time Chinese Medicine practice in Ramsey, New Jersey, he participates in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded research, on the applications of medical Qigong to cocaine addiction, and Mr. Andes is also an avid practitioner of Zingyiquan Kung Fu.



## [Experience Exchange]

## An Introduction to the Music TaiChi Class in Montgomery County and at the University of Maryland

Phoenix Liu, Ph.D.

Tai Chi has unique effects of increasing "exercise for the body" and "focus for the mind." Learning TaiChi can add enjoyment to people's leisure time, while also helping to relieve stress and strengthen body. As a sport suitable for both young and old, TaiChi is becoming increasingly popular.

The Music TaiChi Class was founded in 1997 by Master Yee-Tak Fung. Classes have been held every Saturday 12:00-3:00 pm in Tilden Middle School (Montgomery County, Maryland) for nearly 14 years. After passing away suddenly in 2004, Master Fung's students have in turn taken over his classes.



The Music TaiChi class is currently instructed by Dr. Phoenix Liu. The class focuses mainly on Yang Style TaiChi. Dr. Liu continues Master Fung's philosophy of focusing on the training of fundamentals in her teaching. Practicing fundamentals strengthens physical conditions and stabilizes TaiChi stances--an indispensable method of developing the ability to quickly grasp forms.

Detailed Music TaiChi Class Schedule is as follows:

- **12:00 - 12:30: Focus is on warm-ups, stretching and Qigong, with additional imparting of meridian and health knowledge. The goal is for all parts of the body to be exercised.**

Warm-ups begin with the joints of the extremities, and then relaxing the meridian system of the entire body in succession. Stretching the legs is the final and most important part of warming up. Initially, stretching the legs may be boring or painful, but the student must persevere, slowly extending the ligaments to eventually attain the flexibility needed for form practice. After stretching and patting the legs, pat the meridians to loosen the hips and legs. Massage, rotate, and pat the knees for protection. Rotate, stretch and bend the waist for strengthening. As the old rhyme goes, "First in the legs we do age; And with difficult steps now a cane; Remember to walk 100 steps a day; Twist and stretch and healthy remain." The goal of the first section of Music TaiChi Class is to use gymnastics' movements to exercise the waist and legs.

- **12:30 - 1:00: Individual Movement Practice (breaking down the form, explanation of the techniques, and repeated practice of individual TaiChi form movements)**

In martial philosophy, TaiChi movements are described: "roots are in the legs; legs initiate and lead the hip; form is found in the fingers." Hence, in individual movement practice, other than emphasizing

ing stances, steps and hand forms and movements, the most important is using the already relaxed hips to actualize the TaiChi movement. The hip is the axis by which the body twists up and down, closely affecting the four limbs. Hence we need to ponder how to most effectively use the power of the waist to shift weight and adjust the power of our push. Beginners often cannot understand that the circulation of TaiChi's internal power is formed through the four limbs which are led by the rotating waist and spine. They often have the problem of "moving arms and legs without moving the hip." This must be slowly comprehended and applied through individual practice.

Hand forms include the fist, palm and hook. Hand methods include warding, deflecting, squeezing, pressing, plucking, elbowing and leaning. Stances include bow stance, empty stance, crouch stance, T-stance, rest stance and horse stance. Steps include forward, backward, following, retreating, forwarding and covering. Moves such as "part the wild horse's mane," "brush knee and twist step," and "weaving lady works at shuttles" will all be individually explained, including the movement position and direction. Students should carefully grasp and self-examine whether the overall form is in proper position, whether weight is evenly distributed, whether upper and lower parts are coordinated, whether the head is pushing upwards with neck relaxed, whether all movements are smooth and continuous, etc.

• **1:00 - 2:00: Practice Yang Style 24 movements and self-choreographed music TaiChi forms.**

After the movements that are broken down during the individual practice period are grasped to a point, the form will now be practiced in its entirety. Discerning the complicated relations between body movements is now the key. Following a certain movement pattern and the rhythm of the music, gradually comprehend the concepts as the feet lead the legs, the legs lead the waist, and the waist leads the hands in the form.

TaiChi movements are slow, but the vitality should not lessen as a result. In fact, the exact opposite must occur. Vigor must be present. It's not enough to simply stare the eyes forcefully. There must be an inner, controlled vitality. The presence of the music can help to energize and relax, but not deflate. While practicing form, mind, and relaxation, breathing must also be guided like the music. With the coordination of the opening and closing of physical movements, inhaling and exhaling of breath, rising and falling of Qi, and accumulation of energy, the state of using mind and not force, emphasizing internal and not external can be more easily achieved.

• **2:00 - 3:00: Advanced class practice of Yang Style 48 movements, TaiChi Sword 42 movements and Chen Style 18 movements.**

Nowadays, many people practice TaiChi as a physical conditioning exercise, and don't understand that the essence of TaiChi is on the internal and not the external form. The movements are commonly mistaken to be the main point. People think that as long as the movements are grasped, then they know TaiChi; that the more movements they know, then the more advanced they are. Hence they focus on practicing the movements, with an interest in new forms, slowly stepping into the problematic pattern of "Outer practice without a core; A useless fist forever more."

With this in mind, we do not encourage Music TaiChi students to join the advanced class too early. Students of this class must have enough energy, strong fundamentals, and a deep enough understanding of the techniques of TaiChi. Basically, the philosophy of this class is that basic movements are the most fundamental of training foundations. Any music form begins with basics and advances step by step. The student practices movement by movement and gradually gains understanding. The process from beginner to advanced establishes a strong foundation to help prevent weak forms without substance.

Every year, the Music TaiChi class performs in various local festivals. Each time, in the weeks leading up to a performance, classes become group training sessions. Students are usually all very excited and serious



about participating. Many close friendships have been established through years of training together. The class has thus developed into a social supporting group.

Practicing TaiChi requires a calm mind and spirit. Using thoughts to lead each movement leaves the practitioner in a focused yet relaxed state of mind. TaiChi also requires coordinated physical movements that go with the natural flow. Hence practicing TaiChi is also exercising the center of the meridian system, thereby strengthening one's sense of balance. In 2007, Holland's Zeeuwe BioMed Center published a medical research report proving that practicing TaiChi can reduce the probability of falling for senior citizens.

TaiChi is a moderate, full-body athletic sport. The body and limbs are naturally stretched through practice. As muscles relax, blood vessels expand, promoting blood and lymph circulation. This then strengthens the functions of the internal organs and the immune system. In 2007, UCLA published a report in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, showing research indications that TaiChi is beneficial to the immune system of senior citizens.

According to traditional Chinese medical theory, "Disease in any of the five internal organs is reflected in the 12 acupuncture points." The 12 acupuncture points, including Taiyuan (太淵, lungs), Shenmen (神門, heart), Daling (大陵, pericardium), Taixi (太溪, kidney), Hegu (合谷, large intestine), Wangu (腕谷, small intestine), Yangchi (陽池, triple burner), etc., are all distributed along the wrists and ankles. Continuous movement of the wrists and ankles when practicing TaiChi is then equivalent to massaging the acupuncture points, which is a more or less beneficial disease prevention method for the internal organs.

The Music TaiChi class is free and open to the public. Members need to pay only a minimum fee to share the rent. If interested in Music TaiChi, please contact Ms. Fung at 301-365-4622 or <hopecfung@yahoo.com>. Our hope is that TaiChi, as a "valuable remedy," may benefit greater number of people!

[**Phoenix Liu, Ph.D.**, is the Director of the Language House Immersion Program at the University of Maryland, College Park. She received her bachelor's degree in Animal Science (Taiwan), her master's degree in Music Education (German), and her doctorate degree in German Philology from the University of Maryland. Dr. Liu holds a black belt in Cuong Nhu karate, a blending type of hard and soft martial arts, and has been a Tai-Chi practitioner for over 15 years. She demonstrates her dedication to Tai-Chi and Qigong by her efforts of combining these two ancient healing arts with music. She has arranged several Tai-Chi forms to music, which have been performed around the metropolitan D.C. area.]

---

## **[Interesting Links]**

### **U.S.News: Health Buzz: Meditation Is Effective at Relieving Pain...**

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/pain/articles/2011/04/07/health-buzz-meditation-is-effective-at-relieving-pain>

### **Zen Relaxation Oaen Music – Relaxing and beautiful**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ICG\\_EiEl4U&feature=channel\\_video\\_title](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ICG_EiEl4U&feature=channel_video_title)

## The Anti-Inflammatory Lifestyle: A Fountain of Youth?

Genger Garner, MPT, ATC, PYT

It may come as a shock, but you may have hidden inflammation in your body that is causing premature aging and disease. In fact, researchers and health care professionals alike report that most all modern diseases are caused by inflammation in the body (Hsu 2010, González-Gallego et al 2010, Larrosa et al 2010, Sticher et al 2010, Hyman 2009, Garcia-Lafuente et al 2009, Aggarwal and Harikumar 2008, Aggarwal et al 2007, Fantuzzi 2005).

Inflammation plays an important role in your ability to achieve health and well-being. When it is present, other than in a situation of acute injury or infection, inflammation damages your body's ability to heal itself, setting you up for a lifetime of low grade, persistent, degenerative inflammation and accelerated aging.



*"It is becoming increasingly clear that chronic inflammation is the root cause of many serious illnesses - including heart disease, many cancers, and Alzheimer's disease."*

Dr. Andrew Weil, Harvard trained MD

Diets claiming to ward off aging are highly popular, yet the nutrition scene is waist high in confusing, sometimes conflicting information. The good news is I have sorted through it for you. The frontrunner with the most scientific evidence to support anti-aging is the anti-inflammatory diet.

Not a "Hollywood" diet, the anti-inflammatory diet is more of an approach to living. It prevents aging by preventing inflammatory processes in the body that cause chronic disease. Further, there is evidence that adopting an anti-inflammatory lifestyle regimen can help prevent aging and disease more than just diet alone.

But how do you know if you have too much inflammation in your body?

**You could benefit from an anti-inflammatory lifestyle if you:**

- **Are overweight or have difficulty losing weight**
- (being overweight means you have excessive adipose (fat) tissue. Adipose tissue has been proven to harbor inflammatory chemicals which cause inflammation)
- **Are sedentary** (being inactive is now one of the greatest predictors of chronic disease because resting chemical levels, which cause pro-inflammatory responses in the body, are higher)
- **Have arthritis** (osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis)
- **Have heart disease**
- **Suffer from allergies** (seasonal or food)
- **Have diabetes or at risk**
- **Have respiratory or breathing problems such as asthma**

- Are [autistic](#) or have an autistic child
- See the [full list of conditions caused by inflammation](#)

*"Finding out whether or not you are suffering from hidden inflammation is critical, because almost every modern disease is caused or affected by it".*

Dr. Mark Hyman, physician and functional medicine expert

It doesn't take long to see that *everyone can benefit from this method*. If you are doubtful, have a [C-reactive protein test](#). This tests for the amount of inflammation in your body, which can be completely unnoticed or hidden.

**The main benefits of adopting an anti-inflammatory diet and lifestyle are** (Gonzales 2010, Jin 2010, Larrosa et al 2010, Mamplekou et al 2010, Muller 2010, Patsulaia et al 2010, Sticher et al 2010, Garcia-Lafuente et al 2009, Jurenka 2009, Tice et al 2003, McAlindon and Felson 1997):

- Decrease your risk for chronic diseases like heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, dementia.
- Decrease your risk of cancers like breast, prostate, colon, and colorectal
- Decrease your risk of neurodegenerative and [autoimmune](#) diseases
- Lose & maintain a healthy weight
- Improve lung health
- Improve neurophysiological and psycho-emotional health (i.e. depression)
- Decrease allergies
- Stabilize blood sugar

### Getting on the Anti-Inflammatory Train

There are a few steps to be made on the road to healing yourself. I recommend you make changes incrementally and slowly. In other words, get on the train and make a single change at each stop rather than trying to make them all at once.

- **1st Stop: Change Your diet.** To reap the full benefits you will have to add anti-inflammatory foods AND get rid of foods that are inflammatory agents. The nutrition portion is similar to a typical [Mediterranean diet](#). However:  
 If you have a tough time with change, start by [ADDING anti-inflammatory foods and herbs to your diet](#) such as turmeric, blueberries, flax seeds, fatty fish, leafy greens. Fruits and vegetables rich in flavonoids are known to provide anti-inflammatory effects (see sources).  
 If you are ready for change, the quickest way to see results is to [ELIMINATE foods known to cause inflammation in the body](#) such as wheat, dairy, meat, processed foods, and sugar.
- **2nd Stop: Exercise.** Regularly. There is enormous evidence supporting the anti-inflammatory effects of exercise (see sources). In fact, not exercising is one of the single greatest factors that cause the inflammatory process to begin. In other words, you don't suffer from inflammation randomly - it is caused in large part from living being inactive. Just 30 minutes daily has been proven effective for weight loss and anti-inflammatory effects.
- **3rd stop: Green Your Environment.** Exposure to environmental toxins, such as second hand smoke and other pollution like household chemical cleaners or living in larger cities, can also contribute to chronic inflammation in the body, causing you to age prematurely. Leaving your shoes at the front door (instituting a "no shoes in the house" policy), which my family started doing in 2004, is a great way to instantly reduce your exposure and green your house.

### My Story

I personally started following an anti-inflammatory diet, in the [Ayurvedic tradition](#), in 2004. There were immediate seismic changes in my health. My seasonal allergies vanished, I lost 20 pounds, I had more energy,

and my osteoarthritis symptoms vanished along with my nagging chronic tendonitis and other problems.

However the biggest life change was welcoming my son Michael. Ridding my body of the life long low-grade inflammatory state it had been in played a role in his arrival. Science was just starting to connect the dots at that time, between [inflammation and infertility](#). Now there is overwhelming evidence supporting the many health benefits of the anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

**It's Easy.** There are no gimmicks, supplements, drugs, or expensive "programs" you need to be successful at following the Anti-Inflammatory Diet. All you need are organic whole foods, 30 minutes of daily exercise, and a positive attitude.

## Helpful Resources

### Books

- [The Inflammation Cure](#) - the first book I bought about the diet, written by a North Carolina MD, PhD.
- [The Complete Idiot's Guide to The Anti-Inflammation Diet](#) - I have not read this book, but it is written by Harvard MD Christopher Cannon.

### Websites & Shopping

- [Dr. Weil's Anti-Inflammatory Diet Tips](#)
- [Anti-Inflammatory Herbs & Spices](#) I cook with these on a daily basis, and especially go to them when I have fallen off the proverbial anti-inflammatory diet wagon such as at Christmas or a birthday.
- [VitaCost.com](#) - Living on a remote island can make it hard to find whole foods, so I shop online to find gluten free (kid friendly!) products such as pizza crust, pancake, and even birthday cake mixes. (Yes, I make gluten free birthday cakes for my kids. They love them and it tastes great, especially the chocolate.) The best part - \$5 flat rate shipping.

Items to shop for: Search for Organic, Gluten Free, or Wheat Free products. Stay away from "gluten-free or organic junk food" (readily available, highly processed foods that claim to be healthy just because they are organic or gluten or wheat free). Stick with whole foods.

### References:

1. Aggarwal BB, Harikumar KM. Potential therapeutic effects of curcumin, the anti-inflammatory agent, against neurodegenerative, cardiovascular, pulmonary, metabolic, autoimmune and neoplastic diseases. [Int J Biochem Cell Biol](#). 2009 Jan;41(1):40-59. Epub 2008 Jul 9.
2. Aggarwal BB, Sundaram C, Malani N, Ichikawa H. Curcumin: The Indian solid gold. *Adv. Exp. Med. Biol.* 2007; 595: 1-75.
3. Elenkov IJ, Iezzoni DG, Daly A, Harris AG, Chrousos GP: Cytokine Dysregulation, Inflammation and Well-Being. *Neuroimmunomodulation* 2005;12:255-269 (DOI: 10.1159/000087104)
4. Fantuzzi G. Adipose tissue, adipokines, and inflammation. *J. Allergy Clin. Immunol.* 2005; 115:911-915.
5. García-Lafuente A, Guillaumon E, Villares A, Rostagno M, Martínez J. Flavonoids as anti-inflammatory agents: implications in cancer and cardiovascular disease. *Inflammation Research*. Vol 58 (9); 2009-09-01: pp 537-552.
6. González-Gallego J, García-Mediavilla MV, Sánchez-Campos S, Tuñón MJ. Fruit polyphenols, immunity and inflammation. *Br J Nutr.* Oct;104 Suppl 3:S15-27. 2010.
7. Hsu A, Bray TM, Ho, E. Anti-inflammatory activity of soy and tea in prostate cancer prevention. *Exp. Biol. Med.* 2010 235: 659-667.
8. Hyman, M. Is Your Body Burning Up With Inflammation? August 27, 2009. Article originally published in Huffington Post.
9. Jin JH, Kim JS, Kang SS, Son KH, Chang HW, Kim H. Anti-inflammatory and anti-arthritis activity of total flavonoids of the roots of *Sophora flavescens*. *J Ethnopharmacol.* Feb 17;127(3):589-95. Epub 2009 Dec 23.2010.
10. Jurenka JS. Anti-inflammatory properties of curcumin, a major constituent of *Curcuma longa*: a review of preclinical and clinical research. *Alternative Medicine Review*, 2009 June; 14(2): 141-53.
11. Larrosa M, González-Sarriásb A, Yáñez-Gascónb MJ, Selma MV, Azorín-Ortuñob M, Totia S, Tomás-



- Barberánb F, Dolaraa P, Carlos Espín J. Anti-inflammatory properties of a pomegranate extract and its metabolite urolithin-A in a colitis rat model and the effect of colon inflammation on phenolic metabolism. *The Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry*. Vol 21, Issue 8, pp 717-725. August 2010.
12. Mamplekou, E, Bountziouka, V, Psaltopoulou, T, Zeimbekis, A, Tsakoundakis, N, Papaerakleous, N, Gotsis, E, Metallinos, G, Pounis, G, Polychronopoulos, E, Lionis, C, Panagiotakos, D. Urban environment, physical inactivity and unhealthy dietary habits correlate to depression among elderly living in eastern Mediterranean islands: The MEDIS (MEDiterranean ISlands elderly) study. *The Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*. Vol 14(6); 2010-06-01: 449- 455.
  13. Mathur N. Pedersen BK. Exercise as a means to control low-grade systemic inflammation. *Mediators Inflamm*. 2008;2008:1-6.
  14. McAlindon T, Felson DT. Nutrition: risk factors for osteoarthritis. *Ann Rheum Dis* 1997;56:397-400  
*doi:10.1136/ard.56.7.397*
  15. Meggs, William J. MD, Ph.D *The Inflammation Cure*, Contemporary Books Chicago 2004.
  16. Menon VP and Sudheer AR. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties of curcumin. *The Adv Exp Med Biol*. 2007;595:105-25.
  17. Mueller M, Hobiger S, Jungbauer. Anti-Inflammatory Activity of extracts from fruits, herbs, and spices. *Food Chemistry*. Vol 122, Issue 4, October 15, 2010. pp 987-996.
  18. Pansulaia I, Kalichman L, Kobylansky E. Association between radiographic hand osteoarthritis and RANKL, OPG and inflammatory markers. Osteoarthritis and cartilage / OARS, Osteoarthritis Research Society 1 November 2010 (volume 18 issue 11 Pages 1448-1453 DOI: 10.1016/j.joca.2010.06.009)
  19. [Pederson 2006. The Anti-Inflammatory Effect of Exercise...](#)
  20. [Pederson and Saltin 2006. Evidence for Prescribing Exercise as Therapy for Chronic Disease...](#)
  21. [Peterson and Pederson 2006. The Role of IL-6 in Mediating the Anti-Inflammatory Effects of Exercise...](#)
  22. Stewart LK, Flynn MG, Campbell WW, et al. The influence of exercise training on inflammatory cytokines and C-reactive protein. *Med. Sci Sports Exerc*. 2007;39:1714-1719.
  23. Sticher MA, Smith CB, Davidson S. Reducing heart disease through the vegetarian diet using primary prevention. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*. VL - 22, IS - 3, PB - Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 134-139. 2010. Tice JA, Browner W, Tracy RP, Cummings SR. The relation of C-reactive protein levels to total and cardiovascular mortality in older U.S. women. *Am J Med*. 2003 Feb 15;114(3):199-205.
  24. United States Department of Agriculture. Agricultural Research Service. USDA Database for the Flavonoid Content of Selected Foods. March 2003. Beltsville, MD.  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/Data/Flav/flav.pdf>

[Photo Credit: The photograph originally appeared in this article on [Turmeric](#) - which is also a spice my husband and I use frequently in our kitchen for its anti-inflammatory powers.]



**[Ginger Garner, MPT, ATC, PYT** — is an educator and subject matter expert in medical therapeutic yoga and women's health. As a published author and sought after speaker, Ginger pens the popular blog for mothers — Breathing In This Life (BITL —which is one of the columns in Yang-Sheng magazine and network). Ginger is founder of Professional Yoga Therapy (PYT), the first education program for Complementary and Alternative Medicine practice in medical therapeutic yoga in the US. Ginger's focus is on education and activism for maternal and child health — through BITL, her school, PYT, through the organization she founded for Haiti relief in 2009, Musicians 4 Missions, and her work with the Initiative to Educate Afghan Women. Ginger has spoken and performed across the US to educate people about medical yoga and to raise awareness and funds for improving women's health. As a working mother of three she has learned a thing or two about finding work/life balance through the healing arts, which she shares through BITL, at [www.gingergarner.blogspot.com](http://www.gingergarner.blogspot.com). See Ginger's work at [www.gingergarner.com](http://www.gingergarner.com).]

[Tips of Yang Sheng]

## Medicated Syrups and the Nourishing Life Tradition

Henry McCann, DAOM

Chinese herbal medicine is a rich tradition that utilizes an incredibly wide range of substances and methods of their administration. Today the most common way of preparing herbs is in the form of an aqueous decoction, in which bulk herbs are boiled in water and the resulting liquid ingested. Aside from this, various types of herbal pills, capsules, and extract powders are also popular Chinese medicines. Despite this seemingly limited list, from the earliest times Chinese herbal medicine has been used flexibly and in myriad ways.

One of perhaps the least known but highly effective traditional methods of herb administration is in the form of medicated syrups. Nonetheless, syrups are underutilized in clinical practice, and many Western practitioners of Chinese medicine are completely unschooled in syrup production or use. Medicated syrups are especially useful in treating chronic conditions or for preventing disease, making them an almost essential adjunct to Nourishing Life methods (*Yang Sheng Fa* 養生法).



### Basic Definitions

The word *Gao* (膏) in Chinese means an oily or sticky substance. The *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* (說文解字), the most important pre-modern dictionary of Chinese language that analyzes the definition and etymology of Chinese characters, defines *Gao* as *Zhi* (脂), fat. In the practice of Chinese Medicine, *Gao* can refer to a number of herbal preparations including liniments, ointments or plasters. These external preparations are commonly used, commercially available, and familiar to most practitioners in the west.

However, *Gao* also refers to medicinal syrups for internal use. In early medical writings, syrups were referred to simply as *Gao* or *Jian* (煎), and in the *Shuo Wen Jie Zi*, *Jian* is defined as *Ao* (熬), to boil, simmer or stew – an apt description of how syrups are produced. By the Ming (1368 – 1644) and Qing (1644 – 1911) dynasties, syrups for internal administration were referred to as *Gao Zi* (膏滋) or *Jian Gao* (煎膏), while topical plasters or pastes were called *Gao Yao* (膏藥) or *Hei Gao Yao* (黑膏藥) to distinguish between the two.

Medicated syrups are produced by decocting and then highly concentrating herbal formulas, a process that takes repeated boiling of large amounts of bulk herbs. The concentration, in which as many as 15 liters of herb liquid is cooked down to less than 0.5 liters, is a process that alone can take 10 to 12 hours. Once the concentrated liquid is ready, it is preserved by mixing with honey or by preparing in a sugar base. Although the process is extensive and time consuming, unlike conventional decoctions that are prepared daily, one batch of syrup lasts anywhere from several weeks to several months, making their use very convenient. The formulas often rely heavily on supplementing (tonic) herbs, and, like medicated liquors, are a way to preserve and stretch out expensive or rare herbs that would be more quickly consumed if taken in pills or decoctions. Lastly, medicated syrups are pleasant tasting thus increasing patient compliance with treatment plans.

### Nourishing Life Practices and Medicated Syrups

From some of the earliest times in China, the search for longevity took on special cultural importance, with famous stories such as the Qin Shi Huang Di, the first emperor of a united China, expending great resources to find immortality elixirs by sending expeditions in search of Peng Lai, the mountain where immortals held the secret elixir of longevity. Over time practices of macrobiotic hygiene, e.g. sexual yoga,

dietetics, breathing exercises, and others, became associated with the developing Nourishing Life tradition, the Chinese search for health and longevity.

In Chinese medicine, the emphasis on disease prevention in the search for longevity almost defines the core tenets of the tradition. The *Si Qi Tiao Shen Da Lun* (四氣調神大論, *Su Wen* Chapter 2) admonishes that the “sage will prevent disease rather than cure it, maintain order rather than correct a disorder.” (是故聖人不治已病,治未病,不治已亂,治未亂). The first chapter of the *Su Wen*, the *Shang Gu Tian Zhen Lun* (上古天真論), is almost entirely about longevity methods.

One common method of the Nourishing Life traditions is the ingestion of special herbal medicines. In particular, highly concentrated forms of herbs such as *Dan* (丹), special tablets containing rare herbs or minerals, are emphasized in disease prevention. In general, aqueous decoctions and powders effect more the upper jiao and are best in treating acute or exterior patterns. Herbal formulas that undergo a process of concentration, such as tablets, medicated liquors, or medicated syrups, have a greater affinity with the lower jiao and affect a better storage of qi and blood. Thus, these formats, like *Dan*, are suited for long-term administration in disease prevention.

### Exemplar Formula

Medicated syrups were an herbal format favored by Chinese nobility. Their recipes abound in the medical records of the Qing elite, the last imperial dynasty to rule over China. In particular, the medical records of the Empress Dowager Ci Xi have been academically studied and then published in both Chinese and English.

*Jia Jian Fu Yuan He Zhong Gao* is an example of a medicated syrup prepared for Ci Xi. Its ingredients are primarily qi and blood tonics that focus on the spleen and kidney. The instructions call for the formula to be ground and then prepared in sugar or honey for daily ingestion.

*Jia Jian Fu Yuan He Zhong Gao:*

Ingredients: Dang Shen, Chao Bai Zhu, Fu Ling, Chao Dang Gui, Xu Duan, Huang Qi, Chao Gu Ya, Chao Ji Nei Jin, Fa Ban Xia, Xiang Fu, Shu Di Huang, Sha Ren, Pei Lan, Da Zao

Adjunctive herbal therapies in modern clinical practice expand the Chinese medicine practitioner's therapeutic repertoire and allows for a better ability to help patients prevent disease. For more information on medicated syrups, and other herbal preparations of the Nourishing Life tradition such as medicated liquors and congees, please join us at the TCM Kongress.

### References:

Chen K. *Imperial Medicaments: Medical Prescriptions Written for Empress Dowager Cixi and Emperor Guangxu with Commentary*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1996.

Lai TH. Gao zi – medicinal syrups in Chinese medicine. Unpublished article.

Lu HC, trans. *A Complete Translation Of The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine And The Difficult Classic*. Vancouver, Canada: International College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, 2002.

Wang GQ. *Zhong Guo Gao Yao Xue* [Chinese Medicated Syrups]. (text in Chinese) Xian: Shaanxi Science and Technology Press, 1981.

[Originally Published in *Naturheilpraxis*, April 2010]

**[Henry McCann, DAOM, LAc, is on faculty at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (USA) and is the head lecturer for the Cork Institute for Post Graduate Acupuncture (Ireland). He also teaches doctoral candidates at the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine (USA). Dr. McCann finished his doctoral degree in geriatrics of Chinese Medicine and is an expert on the Nourishing Life tradition and the treatment of chronic recalcitrant diseases. He maintains a clinical practice in New Jersey.]**

## [Ancient Wisdom &amp; Modern Kitchen]

## Eats Shoots and Leaves Springtime Soup

By Yuan Wang, Warren Sheir, and Mika Ono

While those of you on the East Coast are still digging out from the last snow storm, here in sunny California signs of spring have already arrived. The first flowers have opened and fresh new growth can be spotted on many of the plants.

As we discuss in our book, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern Kitchen: Recipes from the East for Health, Healing, and Long Life* (Da Capo Lifelong Books), according to traditional Chinese medicine we are intimately connected to our natural environment and the body's dietary needs change according to the season.

In the spring, this tradition advises us to support the natural tendencies of our bodies for growth and renewal. Expressed in the language of traditional Chinese medicine, we need to strengthen the Liver and its regulation of qi. Aligning ourselves with our environment helps us to maintain health and avoid illness.

Good spring foods are often harvested in this season and tend to be pungent, sprouting, and sweet. These include onions, leeks, Chinese yam, wheat, cilantro, mushrooms, sprouts, and spinach and other leafy green vegetables.

Here is a soup to embrace the springtime—whenever it arrives in your part of the world.

### EATS SHOOTS AND LEAVES SOUP

Makes 4 to 6 servings. (Thanks to grammar maven Lynne Truss for inspiring this soup's name.)

#### Ingredients

1 cup bamboo shoots, fresh if possible, cut into ½ inch cubes if necessary  
 6 cups vegetable or chicken broth  
 1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and minced  
 12 – 14 ounces (1 medium package) soft tofu, cut into ½-inch cubes  
 1 1/2 cups (6 to 9 ounces) fresh mushrooms (such as shiitake, oyster, button, enoki, or a mixture), chopped into 1-inch pieces  
 1 cup (2 ounces) mung bean sprouts (commonly sold as “bean sprouts”)  
 2 cups spinach or other leafy green vegetable, well-washed and chopped  
 Salt and/or soy sauce to taste  
 1 tablespoon dark sesame oil  
 2 medium green onions, roots and tough tips discarded, cut into ¼-inch pieces

#### Directions

1. In a small saucepan, boil enough water to cover the bamboo shoots, then put the bamboo shoots in, cover, simmer for 2 to 3 minutes, and drain.
2. In a medium to large saucepan, bring the vegetable broth to a boil.
3. Add the fresh ginger, cover, and simmer for about 3 minutes.
4. Add the tofu, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, and mung bean sprouts. Cover the pot, bring the broth back to a boil, then turn down the heat and simmer for about 5 minutes.
5. Add the spinach and stir for about 30 seconds.
6. Add salt and/or soy sauce to taste, then sprinkle the dark sesame oil and green onions on top.





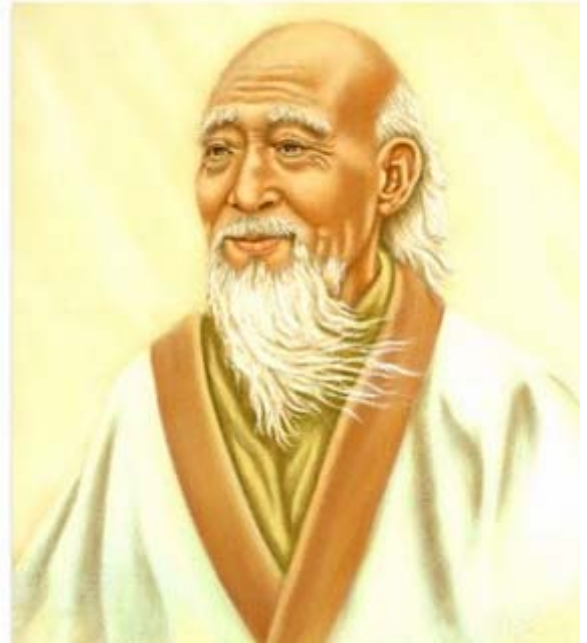
[Soul Salon]

## Respond to the “Dow” with the “Dao”

Rena M. Reese

**The Dao De Jing, may be the oldest spiritual document known to man.** The title translates to “The Way and the Virtue” and it contains 81 short verses that lend insight into the natural laws of the universe that are always at work in our lives. It is positively remarkable that this intriguing text is so relevant so many thousands of years after it was imparted by a man named Laozi.

When you read the Dao it is hard to discount the prophetic exactness and relevance of Laozi’s wisdom for us today. Each one of the verses has powerful implications and applications to us now in the 21st Century. The Dao reminds us that humanity is essentially the same as it was in 2500 BC although our technology and knowledge makes us believe that it is vastly different. Think about that for a moment. Our nature, desire for wholeness, the rules of decency, kindness, creativity, love and curiosity are basically the same as they were for ancient humans. We can use the way of the Dao in our modern lives as we seek to navigate what seems to be the most uncertain time in human history. Applying this ancient and wise text to our lives is one way to respond to the Stock Market and global concerns with trust, optimism and wisdom. Living the Dao or “the Way” in times such as these blends our spiritual quest with our economic and global quests. The Dow Jones Industrial Average is just one indicator of the health of our economy. While we cannot minimize the grave errors made by individuals, organizations and governments that have contributed to the present state of things, their bad decisions and selfish actions, have created a mess that fear and anger will not solve. Harnessing the power of natural law we can step toward healing our economy and our future. While few things seem predictable in the 21st Century the Dao is a place we can go for insight on how to navigate this uncertainty.



### Relevant Wisdom from the Dao:

- *Life is dynamic and composed of opposites.* Illustrated in concepts such as light and darkness, great and small, powerful and weak; the world is an orderly and balanced place. When there is disorder it is really the universal energy trying to “right itself. Selfishness, greed, materialism, power quests, and the disregard for our beautiful planet have gone too far. Now, just like the Stock Market, the universe is encouraging and seeking a correction.
- *Regardless of where your attention flows, by the very nature of your giving something your focus it is fueled.* If your attention is on fear, you are feeding what you abhor. If your attention falls upon opportunity, what you desire is nourished. Be vigilant in your investment of time and focus.
- *Each of us holds an inward concept of happiness that is etched in our minds.* It could entail financial freedom, abundant health, a connection to nature, or a certain level of power and prestige. The myriad ways we describe happiness are an illusion created by our ego in an attempt to feel in control of our lives. Once we realize this, we can choose to find happiness in the way things are in the present moment.

- *Science teaches us that energy is not created or destroyed, it simply changes forms.* This truth speaks to the illusion of having an abundance of money or a deficit of resources. It is all here now, just as it was before this moment. If it appears to be gone, it has just flowed to another place or taken on another form, but still exists.
- *In uncertain economic times we may find ourselves focusing inward on our personal challenges.* A lost job, battered stock portfolios, a plummeting 401K plan or a mortgage in jeopardy all have a way of rocking our security boat. While it is prudent to assess the truth of your present situation, stewing on it, complaining about it and looking to blame someone will never bring you any measure of true relief. Relief will surprisingly be found in acts of selflessness. At this moment, it may seem hard or impossible to lend a hand to another or focus on what is right rather than wrong. However you will find that shifting your attention from your own burdens as you perform a kind act or gesture actually can provide you with comfort, control and connection when you most need them.
- *Laozi teaches us to stop pouring when our cup is full.* Do we honor this in life? When we have long been satisfied with enough do we still seek more?
- *There is a great tendency in life to decide how things are by how pleasing life seems to be to our senses.* Tastes, sounds, and all of the potential sensory stimuli in the world can bombard us to the point of numbness. This is illustrated in the crying child at Disney World who is over stimulated by excessive feedback from the environment. The Dao teaches that we can tire of even the most delicious foods if we eat them too often.
- *Things will come and go and your possessions will become an inheritance one day.* You own nothing and your body is not even yours to keep. Why get caught up in the chase for acquisitions, power, pleasure, and possessions and neglect the care and feeding your inner world to such a degree? Enjoy your outer-world but let your inner-world define you.
- *Words like “empty” and “void” seem to have a negative ring to them.* It seems that these terms may appear to be less than desirable when compared to their perceived opposite word “full”. Today you are encouraged to bless the void for it is there that you can build, plant and fill. If you dig a hole in the earth with a spade, you have a void. Plant a seedling there and that same void becomes a new haven for life.



The upheavals we may be experiencing globally are actually presenting a great gift to us. This gift is the illumination of the path back to right thinking and right action. It's a call to return to what matters most. Living in connection with the Divine part of us is our natural state and this is what has suffered greatly with the advent of our busy and material-driven lives. Laozi spoke about the Dao being the mother of 10,000 things. Perhaps he knew that the things of the earth are here to be enjoyed, but they are not what will give life its true richness.



*[Rena M. Reese is the founder of Soul Salon International, an inspirational multimedia company, which offers coaching and consulting, web-design, publishing support, and fund-raising opportunities for individuals and groups. She is the author of several inspirational titles, a professional speaker and coach as well as the host of a weekly radio program, The Soul Salon. Please visit [www.SoulSalonInternational.com](http://www.SoulSalonInternational.com) and connect with her on Twitter @TheSoulSalon.]*

## Cool Qi Heals

by Cindy Cicero



### Can cool Chi (Qi) energy heal?

**In the past**, “Cool Energy” reminded me of my earlier days in defense contract work at Litton Industries. This was a challenging time when technology was all about thin film components used in our military aircraft. The challenge was we just couldn’t get pass the “heat” factor produced by the aircraft’s environment on our very small microcircuit units. It was this excess of heated energy that needed to be cooled.

These special military aircraft went experienced major temperature swings while in operation. And if the temperature could be maintained in a “cooled way” then we could have functional integrity of the micro components.

**In my world today**, “Cool Energy” is all about using a cool temperature bio-energy method that releases the excess heat buildup in the mind and body.

We all build various amounts of daily excess stress in our bodies which in turn produces a “heat” factor. And it’s this “heat” build up in our body that sends the message to our brain to produce more energy. The more energy demand the more heat produced. It’s the energy demand which depletes our precious bio-energy. This heat factor rises to an excessive level that “wears us out” physically and mentally.

Every to do list and every concerned thought adds emotional fatigue “more stress” than the human body can handle. Do to the over stimulation of our mental or physical activities create excessive “heat”, which breaks down our health in so many different ways. And as this adds up over time, to put it plainly, we just don’t feel so good...

Can Cool “Qi” energy be the answer to reduce and eliminate excessive “heat” to heal our mind and body? Can we wake up feeling good and stay cool minded as we move through our busy days... Yes, we can learn to maintain a cool temperature that relaxes & heals the body and mind. Please just read on and find out...

### First, “What is Qi or Bio-Energy?”

Qi Energy Heals Instructor Don Brown cites

“Although surrounded by ancient mysticism, Qi is that which Western scientists have called the Quantum field. The theories are markedly similar when compared side-by-side. Each [Qinese Mysticism and Quantum Mechanics (1)] speaks of an energy field made up of tiny particles that comprise everything, and move through everything.

Looking at it from a scientific point of view, the shroud of mystery is removed and an objective, scientific perspective remains.

With the understanding that Qi, synonymous with quantum particles, makes up everything and moves through every object, it logically extends that human beings are also made up of these small particles and as both camps postulate, this energy moves through everything.

In the movie, the “Matrix”, it is proposed that: “The human body generates more bio-electricity than a 120-volt battery and over 25,000 BTU’s of body heat”(2).

This is a form of energy.

“According to the Center for Space Power and Advanced Electronics, a NASA commercial center in Alabama, the human body is capable of producing 11,000 watt hours. Broken into usable terms, waiting to be harvested are 81 watts from a sleeping person, 128 from a soldier standing at ease, 163 from a walking person, 407 from a briskly walking person, 1,048 from a long distant runner, and 1,630 from a sprinter, according to the center.”(3)



## Heated temperatures & Cool Qi

To aid in understanding heat & cool Qi or bio-energy on a personal level: Let's say when you are "hot under the collar" or perhaps experiencing intense thoughts, concerns and/or fearful emotions, it is at that time that your body releases a flood of fight and flight hormones. This release of hormones, creates a high demand for more energy because of the increased stress on the body. If "left unmanaged" – Heat builds up. This is the buildup that breaks down the body and mind and leads to many different types of illness and disease.

Over time we just get accustomed to or ignore the little warning signs of fatigue and frustration from our multitasking and "always on the go" activity. After "being in our heads" all day, we can sometimes forget how to think straight or make a choice about dinner. You see our brains really never stop producing heat. And when we push out of our comfort zone the nervous system sends a message for more energy. Accordingly the mind and body feeds the demand to produce more energy. If we never relax down then brain keeps the fire burning till the mind and body is mentally and physically exhausted.

We need to give ourselves the time to learn to relax and get our joy back with a cool bio-energy for body and mind.

### Here is way to feel the immediate benefits of cool Qi energy

1. Go to the freezer take out a least two ice packs
2. Wrap them in kitchen towels
3. Put one curled up on the back nape of your neck & head
4. Put the other one on your chest area
5. Relax down and read more about how "Cool Qi Heals"



### You start to feel relaxed and cooled down

After applying the cool packs, while experiencing a calm alertness. This results because you have released daily excess heat and lowered your heart rate and blood pressure.

You may have even thought you were already relaxed however by just using this physical cool method you relax even deeper. Relaxation is the key to using bio-energy for healing. This is an alternative method that has immense benefits to the mind and body's health and longevity.

### Nice and Cool...

Now to handle daily heat build up from stress, learn to simply "cool down." By cooling your bio-electrical system you're adding years to your life! By cooling down the body, the mind understands the routine of taking a time out for relaxation. You'll actually go out of your way and remember to use the "icepacks." It's the cause and effect of being able to shift into a good and cool feeling that is so desirable, producing great effects for your health simply because you cooled down...

At the School of Qi Energy Heals we teach how to maintain emotional stability "on command" using a cool bio-energy. To accomplish this we've developed a "Tri-concept" method. It's the artful skill in combining "Three Qualities." The first two are "a good feeling and a cool temperature. Last and most important quality is learning to build the presence of an "Energy Form" while maintaining a good feeling & cool - mind and body. This is a step by step process....

Energy healing skills are taught based on two important and specific attributes blended into bio-energy Qi exercises. It's the good feeling & cool temperature blend that cools the "Qi" that is naturally "heated bio-energy." When the body's endocrine system responds to cooling down it releases serotonin, cortisol and other hormones that are anti-inflammatory. And the body continues to release cool pheromones, which activate Natural Killer cells that keep the immune system in optimal balance. The Qi energy exercises are simple and easy to learn low impact aerobic exercises that build high levels of bio-energy in your body's nerve fiber system.

You'll learn step by step how to feel the temperature, emotional content and pressure and density of this electromagnetic bio-energy. Through training you become sensitive and physically feel the energy while learning to create highly specialized healing forms that are very easy to learn. Best of all, you'll be able to use your bio-energy healing forms to command emotional stability with a good feeling and cool energy to heal the body & mind, at any time.



Being able to heal yourself and others at the cellular level with a good feeling and cool bio-energy is a gift of health that keeps giving back. And it answers the question “Can Cool Qi energy heal?”...Just ask yourself how you feel right now – after using the 4 steps to cooling your body and mind.

Instructor Don Brown’s interpretation of our cool Qi method:

“The idea of keeping my energy “cool” was an abstract concept that was particularly difficult to grasp. At the time, I had not realized that Qi/electromagnetic energies have physical temperatures; nor did I realize the cause and effect relationship between “hot” Qi and the physical manifestations of strained muscles, internal discomforts, and disruptive energies exacerbating interpersonal relationships.”(4)

Below is just one more excellent example of how the body and mind can relax with a cool and good feeling virtual world to manage pain instead of depending on pharmaceutical drugs.

### **Virtual-Reality Video Game To Help Burn Patients Play Their Way To Pain Relief**

*Science Daily* (Mar. 22, 2008) —

“To a patient recovering from severe burns, no place would be more soothing than a polar landscape of gently falling snowflakes, snowmen, penguins, igloos and icy rivers. The Snow World software was designed by Hunter G. Hoffman, Ph.D., and David Patterson, Ph.D., research scientists in Seattle, who were both motivated by their concern for the pain, fear and anxiety that children and teenagers experience when undergoing therapy for burn injuries.” The virtual-reality system eases pain of treatment by immersing burn patients in a wintry, computer-generated environment. Its interactive, multi-sensory, features put patients in a deep freeze of distraction, leaving less attention for the processing of incoming pain signals. It’s similar to what has been done with music, movies and even two-dimensional video games, but more effective because it involves problem-solving activities that emphasize coolness.”(5)

### **In Conclusion,**

We believe this cool Qi energy does heal. And it was our desire to unravel some of the mystery to relaxing and cooling down with bio-energy. We hope you continue to use the five steps to cool down in this article on a daily basis till a “cool nature” becomes a second nature. You’ll enjoy the relaxation.

For more information, please visit us at the Online School of Qi Energy heals. [www.Qienergyheals.com](http://www.Qienergyheals.com).

### **References:**

Don E. Brown II, MSIS Certified Instructor; Qi Energy Heals article: What is Qi Bio Energy?. The School of Qi Energy Heals blog (Feb 14, 2011): Retrieved from The Matrix, Reloaded, The Matrix Revolutions and all related media, characters, and stories AOL Time Warner and Village Road show Pictures.(1)

Retrieved from Quantum mechanics is the study of tiny particles which make up atoms behave (2) Merriam-Webster's Dictionary

Retrieved [http://www.space.com/business/technology/body\\_power\\_011128-1.html](http://www.space.com/business/technology/body_power_011128-1.html) (3)

Don E. Brown II, MSIS Certified Instructor; Qi Energy Heals article: Cool Energy. The School of Qi Energy Heals blog (Feb 14, 2011): Retrieved from <http://www.Qienergyheals.com/category/the-science-of-Qi-energy/> (4)

Loyola University Health System (2008, March 22). Virtual-reality Video Game To Help Burn Patients Play Their Way To Pain Relief. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/03/080319152744.htm> (5)



[Cindy Cicero is a teacher and instructor skilled in the art of Qi Energy Heals bio-energy training. She is the Director of Operations for the Online School of Qi Energy Heals and in business since 1998. Certified Qi Energy Heals Instructor & Bio-Energy Healer for Sifu Jones' Online Alternative Bio-Energy Health and Healing School. A Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Meditation teacher who has studied under doctors Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli (University of Massachusetts) and Dr. Jeff Brantley (Duke University). Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork by the International Oriental Bodywork Association and licensed in the state of North Carolina Certified as a Spring Forest Qigong Healer and Teacher; Certified as a Yoga Teacher & Yoga Therapist in the Kripalu Yogic Healing Tradition Certified in the Eastern Institute of Transpersonal Hypnotherapy Member of the Rhine Center Parapsychology Center Member & volunteer on the Board of Directors for the Qigong Institute]

## [Food as Medicine]

## Seasonal Harmony

By Ellasara Kling

There are obvious benefits to eating foods that are local to you and in accord with the season you are in. These include freshness, greater availability, more energetic value, supporting your local farmers and so on. But, there are other benefits that may not be as obvious as they do not necessarily “show up” immediately. A very important one is supporting your health and another is supporting your energetic practice, even though we may not “see” the results of this immediately. It’s one of those things that usually become apparent over time. (However, if one’s health is not very good, even small changes can make an apparent difference pretty immediately.) We are all an aspect of Nature and our bodies are deeply aware of the energy of each season, even if our minds are only relating to the weather reports of variations in hot/cold, dry/damp. Our bodies are nonetheless experiencing the upward and outward flow of Spring or the downward and inward flow of Autumn, for example. Eating foods that follow the energy of the season supports our body’s natural efforts to be in accord with the energy flow. By increasing our awareness of, participation in and experience of Nature, we decrease stress and increase our health and energy practice. Doing what we can to harmonize as much as we can with Nature as it is, increases our energy and reduces our body’s struggle for balance, which in effect increases our energy. Essentially, I am of the view that a multitude of dis-ease manifestations find their source in a lack of energy and energy flow. One way to gather energy is through the foods we eat; therefore, it is best to eat foods that have the optimum possibility of increasing our energy and harmonizing with our bodies at any given time. Eat Seasonal, Eat Local, Think Global!

### SPRING FOODS:

Having listed many foods that harmonize with Spring last month, I would like to highlight **Artichokes** this month as an above-average, often overlooked and under-appreciated Spring/Liver season food. *The artichoke is an excellent food for supporting Liver function.* Its ability to support the Liver and Gall Bladder functions has been recognized for hundreds of years in Greece, Egypt and Italy where it was commonly used medicinally as a tonic and/or detox for the liver/gall bladder. But, it doesn’t really take an infusion or medicinal formula to gain benefit from this wonderful plant.

Exactly what is that strange looking, green, round, thorny-tipped, bud-like vegetable? The artichoke is the immature flower (bud) of a type of thistle. When fully mature, the leaves open and a lavender/blue/purple flower emerges from the green bud. This flower is not edible and its beginnings are found in the center of the artichoke “bud” that we eat. Large artichokes come from the upper portion of the plant and small (“baby”) artichokes grow lower on the plant. The type we see fresh in the U.S. come from California where the climate allows them to grow year round with a definite peak from March through May. The artichoke is a root stock that is planted and harvested by hand. Although there are now varieties that can be planted with seeds, they are not the artichokes that are most prevalent in the marketplace. And, artichokes are a non-GMO food.

For information (and mini-videos) on how to select, prepare, and eat artichokes visit [www.artichoke.org](http://www.artichoke.org) (the Artichoke Advisory Board). Ways to prepare artichokes include soups, baked, steamed, stuffed, fried and marinated. It lends itself to many flavorings and sauces. My personal favorite is to simply steam the artichoke and savor it leaf by leaf with a little fresh lemon juice and salt. Regardless of how you choose to prepare it, this is a satisfying and excellent food for Liver/Gall Bladder system support.

*And one more small thing:* We all know that flowers are at their peak when they blossom. Buds contain the “condensed energy” of the flower in a similar way as an acorn contains a tree. Artichokes as a bud contain condensed energy in the same way that fiddleheads contain the condensed energy of the fern. Lots of energy is expended by the plant in opening and giving us its beautiful show. We can derive extra benefit from the stage of some flowers/plants when they are buds.



**RECIPES****Light & Flavorful Soup**

This soup ends up with all five basic flavors being harmoniously present.

**Ingredients:**

10 cups water or stock  
 6 " lemon grass  
 1 TB (three large slices) ginger  
 ½ tsp red pepper flakes (adjust to your taste – you can always add more)  
 10 oz of sliced mushrooms (usually straw, but use your favorite)  
 6 oz sliced bamboo shoots (fresh if possible)  
 6 oz sliced water chestnuts (fresh if possible)  
 3 TB fish sauce  
 ½ cup lime juice  
 1 TB honey  
 2 plum tomatoes – cut in eighths  
 1 cup cubed pineapple  
 ½ cup thinly sliced scallion –white and green separated  
 1-2 cups of bean sprouts  
 ½ cup of thinly sliced lime  
 1 lb. cod or other solid white fish or medium size shrimp

2 TB chopped cilantro leaves - garnish  
 Very thin slices of lime - garnish

**Directions:**

Bring water or stock to a boil and reduce to a simmer

Bruise the lemon grass and put in the stock with the ginger and red pepper and simmer for about 5 minutes or so

Stir in the rest of the ingredients except the green part of the scallion and garnishes and simmer 10 – 20 minutes till veggies are tender but not over cooked (if using fish, the fish should be flaky) At the last few minutes add the green part of the scallion

Garnish each serving with a thin slice of lime and cilantro and serve

**Ratatouille****Ingredients:**

1 medium eggplant  
 Large bowl with salted lemon water  
 1 large green pepper  
 5 large plum tomatoes  
 3 small zucchinis  
 5 large button mushrooms  
 ¼- ½ cup safflower oil  
 2 cloves garlic – chopped  
 10 -12 young scallions  
 ½ tsp ground black pepper  
 ½ cup parsley – chopped  
 Salt to taste

**Directions:**

Cut the unpeeled eggplant lengthwise into ½" slices and place in salted lemon water. Press the eggplant under the water with a heavy plate a let sit for about 15 minutes

Cut the pepper into strips, chop the tomatoes into chunks, cut the mushrooms into quarters, and slice the zucchini lengthwise into 1/4" strips.



Cut the scallions greens into 2" pieces and the slice the whites into small rings – keep the whites and greens separated  
 Heat ¼ cup oil in a wok or large skillet  
 add the garlic and scallion whites -- sauté for one minute  
 Add the pepper and zucchini, cover and cook for about 5 minutes  
 Drain the eggplant and pat dry  
 Add the eggplant to the wok/skillet stir fry till soft and sweaty  
 Add in the tomatoes, pepper, parsley, and scallion greens  
 Cook over medium heat for 10-15 minutes – add more oil if necessary.

### **Fennel Provencal**

#### **Ingredients:**

2 TB walnut oil  
 four thin slices fresh ginger (approximately 1 TB)  
 3 small garlic cloves  
 4 scallion whites sliced into little rings  
 2 medium fennel bulbs – sliced thinly lengthwise  
 2 TB herbs de province  
 1 large red pepper cut into ¼" wide 3 inch strips  
 10 kalamata olives  
 greens from the 4 scallions cut in 2 inch pieces

#### **Directions:**

In a heavy skillet or wok heat 2 TB walnut oil and add the ginger, garlic and scallions whites.  
 Sauté for 2 minutes and add the fennel,  
 as the fennel begins to wilt, toss in the herbs de province  
 Add the sliced red pepper  
 As the red pepper wilts add the olives and scallions and toss the ingredients lightly  
 Sauté until everything is heated through.



### **TEAS**

Sometimes the change of season from Winter to Spring or too much work can cause feelings of fatigue. This simple tea made from ingredients that are easy to find -- perhaps in your own pantry -- can be a refreshing restorative.

Put together 1 TB chopped, raw peanuts with the red skin still on and about 1 TB of chopped fresh ginger in 2 cups of cold water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 1-2 minutes. Turn off the heat. Add 1 TB of Whole Leaf Black Tea, cover and let stand 5 minutes. Strain and drink. . .sweeten a bit, if you like.

**Health Topic: Eyes** In TCM, the eyes are the opening for the Liver. While the hallmark of the Spring/Liver season is openings/beginnings/emerging, the tensions and stresses of our day-to-day lives may cause us to narrow our focus mentally/emotionally and this narrowing is often reflected in our visual systems as well. When we are tense and stressed, we close down and contract and that tension may be reflected in our eyes. Perhaps they become red, itchy or tired feeling. We may get “floaters” or slightly blurry vision. Remember, the eyes reflect our Liver function. If we remember a time when we were completely relaxed (it could have been now), we will recall that our eyes were gently focused without strain. When we are relaxed, we are involved in opening, emerging. When we look at our eyes in this state, they are clear and bright. Additionally, when completely relaxed, the eyes are not “going out there” to see. Rather, relaxed, open eyes, allow the world in naturally with a fairly broad peripheral vision.

**Seasonal Self-massage: Relaxing the Eyes with Palming** This exceptionally simple technique, deeply relaxes the eyes, leaving them feeling refreshed and free of strain. Palming can be done almost anywhere, including your desk at work. Sitting with your back straight, shoulders relaxed (or lying down), gently rub your hands together for a minute to warm the palms. Let your eyelids close and place the heel of your hands on your cheekbones. Slightly cupping your hands, let your fingers fall gently over the “third





eye" area of your forehead and one hand crosses over the other. Do not put any pressure on your eyeballs. Your thumbs should fall naturally alongside of the outside of your eyes. Keep your fingers together so that no light enters between them. Your breath is natural, without strain or special attention. Try to do this for at least 3 minutes at a time. This is especially helpful for people who spend long periods of time at a computer screen.

Wishing you good health! Remember to smile at all things.

*[Following the threads of her personal tapestry, Ellasara, a long-time student of Master Nan Lu, weaves her life around the exploration and sharing of self-healing through a variety of modalities, primarily focusing on food, common herbal plants, Qigong Meridian Therapy and Qigong for Women's Health. For comments, questions, consultations, ellasara00@gmail.com]*

## [Book Reviews]

### **Six Healing Sounds Qigong for Children**

by Lisa Spillane

Singing Dragon, 2011; Softcover, 24 pages \$14.95

This really a quite wonderful book, written to teach the traditional Six Healing Sounds and the Inner Smile to children. From the book:

Lisa and Ted show children that it's natural to have all kinds of emotions and that they can overcome bad feelings by how they think and act. The stories show that being cruel, anxious, self-pitying or jealous makes us feel unwell but choosing to be compassionate, hopeful, brave, appreciative and generous helps us to feel good....When faced with emotional upsets, Lisa and Ted consult their "calmer minds" and choose to use the exercises and positive attitudes to make themselves feel better...Over time these exercises help children to be more optimistic and open to new experiences because they will be building confidence in their coping skills.

Illustrated in bright colors and written so that a child can understand and follow the directions, this book is a welcome addition to the field of qigong for children, a growing and important field.

*[Reviewed by Solala Towler]*

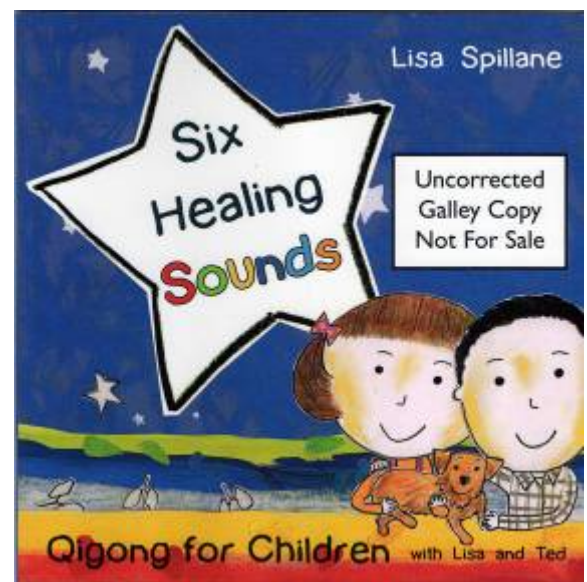
### **The Hut Beneath the Pine -- Tea Poems**

by Daniel Skatch-Mills; Softcover, 75 pages \$12

This book really captures the essence of the Dao of Tea. It reflects years of both tea drinking and wandering on the Way. I love how, in simple and elegant phrases, the author is able to convey so much of these ancient and timeless pastime.

Here's one:

The person awakened to the Dao  
is like a good pot of tea—  
strong, but not biting,  
smooth, but not weak,



she brings people together,  
permeates the entire room with fragrance  
without even trying,  
embodies the One Source that fills  
an infinite variety of cups.

This is why people relax in her presence:  
because she brings what's been  
gathered on the heights  
down to where people can taste it;  
pours herself freely into emptiness,  
which is why those around her  
experience being filled.

Ask, and she's tell you  
her job is easy.  
She simply lets whatever comes  
brew into what it is.

There are many more like that. This is a great book to sit down with over a cup of tea and perhaps a good friend to share the poems with. One more:

Tao is the flow of nature  
pouring into and out of form.  
Tea is the flow of nature  
pouring into and out of your cup.

Tea is the Tao in disguise.  
Tao is what gives rise  
to everything—drink and drinker,  
the cup and the cup's emptiness.

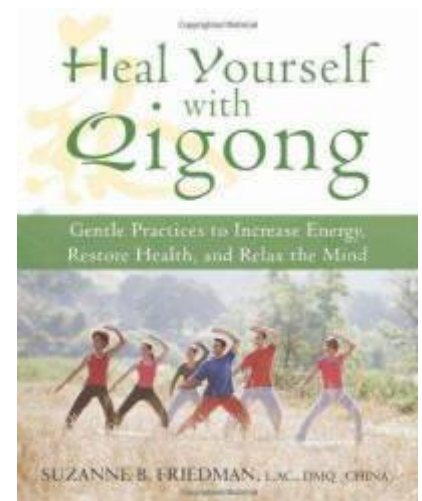
Straining thoughts from your mind  
and words from your tongue,  
can you savor the One Taste?

*[Reviewed by Solala Towler]*

### **Heal Yourself with Qigong**

by Suzanne B. Friedman, L.Ac. DMQ( China)  
\$19.95 Softcover 186 pp.  
New Harbinger Publications, Inc. CA (2009)

The author is an acupuncturist, herbalist and doctor of medical qigong therapy. She is the Chair of the Medical Qigong Department at the Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine College in Berkeley, California. In addition, Ms. Friedman is a featured columnist in *Qi –The Journal of Traditional Eastern Health & Fitness* with her column “Ask the Doctor” where she answers questions on TCM modalities for various ailments.



In this book, the author strives to make qigong work in a one's life. She teaches what she practices by explaining how to empower people to take attentive care for all aspects of their being. The essence of what she is attempting to inform people about can be summarized as follows; *"I have come to understand that some of the deepest and most effective healing is not found at a doctor's office or a hospital, but rather from inside ourselves. Our bodies are designed for self healing and we are capable of both boosting and blocking that ability. It takes literally only minutes a day to calm the mind and restore and revitalize our energy and this book will show you how to do that."*(p.5)

**This is not a book detailing qigong theory or history.** It is designed to give people a straight forward approach to qigong exercises that can be made a part of their busy work schedules. The basics for doing qigong exercises are explained such as proper time to practice or not practice, attire, posture, mental intention, and proper breathing. The book is illustrated with excellent drawings and step by step instructions for each exercise. Early in the book, the author provides 20 exercises designed to give instant energy boosts. These exercises include breathing exercises to calm the mind, relax muscle tension, use of massage techniques to alleviate tension, acupoint tapping to improve energy flow, healing sounds for balancing and strengthening various meridian systems, exercises to loosen, and strengthen the knees, wrist, lower back, neck, shoulder and spinal column.

The reader is then asked to take an honest assessment of his or her's physical health. Specific qigong exercises self-message and issuing healing sounds can be selected to deal with specific issues that one has. The reader is advised that these exercises are not a substitute for medical advice and treatment, and that one should check with their medical advisor before beginning a new exercise routine. Some of the health issues addressed are digestion, heart function, detoxification (liver function), respiration and immune function, kidney function, sinusitis, hypertension, headaches and back or menstrual pain. Nausea, anxiety, bowel function, insomnia and weight loss exercises are included as well.

As part of the mind, body and spirit connection, the author goes on to provide exercises to deal with emotional stress, anger, anxiety, grief, sadness, focus and concentration and centering. Many of these exercises include meditative visualizations. The author concludes the book with a chapter devoted to calming the spirit. Exercises include grounding the mind and body, gathering yin and yang qi, and spontaneous qigong. In addition, meditative visualizations to get in touch with the inner self are described including the only mantra practice in the entire book.

The book ends with the following *"Where the mind goes, the qi follows. If you focus your attention and intention during an exercise, your body's energy will respond accordingly. Above all else, you should enjoy your practice. Health and healing come quicker with a smile than with a furrowed brow! May your qigong practice bring you double happiness."* In conclusion, I feel this book offers many easy to follow qigong practices to help an individual deal with specific health issues, maintain a good energy balance and be able to fit chosen practices into their schedule. The instructions are easy to follow, the illustrations helpful and the words encouraging.

[Reviewed by Sal Casano Ph.D. RN]

[From the Editor]

## Guideline for Submissions

**Yang Sheng (Nurturing Life)** accepts unsolicited submissions from professional and amateur writers, artists and practitioners, both original article/media, and those previously published (with copy-right clearance). For a good sense of our format, style and content, it is recommended to read some of the articles first. After that, here is a general guideline to assist you in developing your contribution to the E-magazine and network

### Contents:

We are looking for featured article and brief essay, as well as new media like photograph, painting, and videos, which fall under the broad concept of “nurturing life,” “self healing,” “daily wellbeing practice” and “mind-body-spirit integration”.

We are promoting the philosophy and culture of self-healing, positive mind and health preservation, and shares knowledge and experiences with each other. We are not only looking for articles or contribution on traditions, histories, famous practitioners, practical methods, and reviews; but also on innovative new approaches and applications, as well as anecdotal stories about implications of Yang Sheng principles to your own life and family or communities. We believe the stories of ordinary persons in quiet corners of the world, improving their health, well-being, and spirituality with the daily practices, are sometimes more interesting and relevant than the historical figures or current teachers who introduced them.

Short stories, brief instruction and practical tips are always welcomed.



### Style:

We do not have specific requirement on style, as long as it reads well, has interesting point(s), and is easy to understand.

Our regular columns run about 500 to 2500 words. Shorter submission is encouraged. For a featured article we can run up to 3500 words. If you are unsure where your article fits in please send us an email about your subject and what you want to say and we can offer you some feedback and help you make it fit.

Images are always welcome (and encouraged) be they photos or line images. Please send them as tiff files or jpg file if possible.

Author(s) should include a brief biosketch about himself/herself at the end of the submission if possible so that readers would be better informed on where the article comes from.

In addition, we request that all submissions be properly cited (given references whenever possible). We suggest the APA, or Chicago style systems, but you are free to choose other citation system.

### Copy Rights:

If your piece is accepted for publishing at Yang Sheng, we acquire the non-exclusive, one-time, publication rights to the accepted pieces. Authors continue to own the rights and are free to sell or license the ‘Work’ elsewhere. However we retain the right to keep the materials archived on the site for readers in the future.

### Payment:

While we cannot afford to pay for articles at this moment, as we are a free publication, we can offer reduced rates or free advertising for our contributors. Please see our ad rates and sizes for more information.

As the magazine grows we hope to be able to offer payments and honorariums in the future for featured articles. Payments and considerations for solicited material will be handled on an individual basis.

Please send your submission (as attachment) to

[editor@yang-sheng.com](mailto:editor@yang-sheng.com)

Or [yangsheng.mag@gmail.com](mailto:yangsheng.mag@gmail.com)

Thank you very much for your support !

<http://Yang-Sheng.com>





work toward the same goals!

# Yang Sheng

## Cultivating Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

### (A network for health, happiness, & harmony)

*Yang Sheng (Nurturing Life)* is an E-magazine and a network for all practitioners of mind-body exercises, health/happiness seekers, and spiritual cultivators. It promotes philosophy and methods of self-healing, positive mind and health preservation, and shares knowledge and experiences with those who are interested in the subjects and their applications in everyday life. Your contribution, participation and suggestions are truly appreciated. **We welcome new columnists to join our editorial team to**

<http://Yang-Sheng.com>

**Publisher & Editor:** Kevin W Chen, Ph.D. MPH

**Editor-in-Chief:** Solala Towler

**Associate Editors:**

Master Mantak Chia  
Christina J. Barea  
Aiguo Han, Ph.D.

**Medical Editor:** Sharon Montes, M.D.

Roger Jahnke, OMD, L.Ac.  
Joy E. Staller, B.A.  
Michelle Wood

**Columnists:**

Ken Andes, L.Ac. D.Ac.  
Cindy Borgonzi-Areglado  
Eric Barreson  
Sal Casano, R.N. Ph.D.  
Cindy Cicero  
Chris D'Adamo, Ph.D.  
Felice Dunas, Ph.D.  
Marty Eisen, Ph.D.  
Ginger Garner, MPT  
Chuiian Gee  
Stuart Greenhouse  
Nadia Linda Hole, M.D.  
Ellasara Kling  
Lilly Lei, M.D.  
Violet Li

Phoenix Liu  
Elizabeth Machenzie, Ph.D.  
Pamela Miles  
Sharon Montes, M.D.  
Steffany Moonas, Ph.D.  
Jacob Newell  
Rebekah F. Owens  
Rena Reese, M.S.  
Michael Rinaldini  
Andy Rosenfarb, L.Ac. N.D.  
Chun Man Sit  
Guan-Cheng Sun, Ph.D.  
Yuan Wang, OMD  
Yang Yang, Ph.D.  
Tina Chunna Zhang,

**Consulting Editors:**

Effie Chow, L.Ac. Ph.D.  
Master Kenneth Cohen  
Lama Somananda Tantrapa  
Tony Zhuo, OMD

Tianjun Liu, OMD  
Master Zhongxian Wu  
Lily L. Zhong, Ph.D.

## Mission Statements

- To build up a virtual community for all qigong, taiji, yoga, reiki, meditation practitioners, and other spiritual cultivators. To share experience and knowledge, to support each other's practice, and to illuminate higher spirituality.
- To create a network and platform for those who are seeking health, happiness, longevity and harmony in life through their own effort, sharing and exploration.
- To promote self-healing, self-empowerment and positive mind power through feasible daily practice and effective clinical applications.