

Cultivate Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

Yang-Sheng

Nurturing Life

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- Awaken the Healer Within
- Winter Wellness & Self-Care
- The Miracle of Self-Initiated Healing
- Daoist Internal Alchemy
- The Nurturing Gong of Push Hands
- TCM Food Therapy & Cancer Prevention
- Eliminate Stress & Triple Your Productivity
- Daoism & the Origins of Qigong
- Staying Healthy in all Seasons
- Embodiment of Mind & Spirit
in Qigong & Philosophy
- Seasonal Harmony...and more!

養生



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Cultivate Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

Yang-Sheng

(Nurturing Life)

養生

A network for health, happiness & harmony

www.Yang-Sheng.com



**The *Yang-Sheng* editorial team would like to
thank our readers and friends
for their support and help in the past year!**

***We wish everyone Happy Holidays
and a prosperous New Year, 2012!***

《養生》杂志祝大家节日愉快！新年好！

***Best wishes for a successful
"World Congress of Yang Sheng" in Hang Zhou, China
December 28-30, 2011***

并预祝中国杭州“世界养生大会”圆满成功！

Yang-Sheng (養生 Nurturing Life) is a FREE e-magazine and network for all Qigong, Tai Chi, Yoga, Reiki, mindfulness and meditation practitioners, spiritual cultivators and health seekers. It promotes the philosophy and methods of self healing and positive mind power, and shares knowledge and experience about daily healthy practice. Yang-Sheng merges ancient wisdom and knowledge with scientific research and clinical applications. It also combines traditional mind-body practices with modern living experiences. Your participation, contribution, sharing and feedback are truly appreciated.



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From the Editor



Welcome to the December issue of Yang Sheng! “The Healer Within” is the theme of this issue. The ability to maintain one's health and balance is an integral aspect of every person's body, mind/heart and spirit. Each of us has that potential; an inner power of healing so great that it can shift matter and transform illness. To acknowledge it is self-empowerment. Recognizing it is to know that you are in charge of your own wellness, that you intrinsically have the inner tools to create the level of wellness you want and need. That knowledge also honors the great web of life, and our undeniable interconnectedness and existence as an inseparable part of it. To engage in the "healer within" practices is to become the designer of your own unique human experience, a participant in the integral order of life and co-creator of manifesting your own health, healing and well-being.

Recognizing and honoring "The Healer Within" is also the foundation of most traditional healing systems. This has not been passed down in our western culture. Sometimes western health care has gone in the opposite direction regarding health care, however that pattern is starting to change. The benefits of Qigong, tai chi, yoga and other mind-body practices are now recognized by the National Institute of Health (NIH) as well as many other western institutions of medical study and research.

In this issue, you will find many articles that share insight, invite exploration and offer tips and methods of practice to support your own inner healer. How Qigong and tai chi, Chinese mind-body wellness practices promote healthy function is the subject of *Awaken the Healer Within - NIH Interview with Roger Jahnke, OMD*. In *Daoism and the Origins of Qigong*, Livia Kohn, Ph.D. describes the historical roots of Qigong. *Winter Wellness and Self Care* by Aihan Kuhn, C.B.D, Dipl., OBT offers five exercises perfect for everyday practice. In *Holy Shift: Some Personal Clinical Pearls*, Nadia Linda Hole, MD shares some basic Qi tools, that she has incorporated into her medical practice, over the years. In *How To Eliminate Stress And Triple Your Productivity*, Niraj Naik, M.Pharm. tells us when our brains engage in several tasks that all require attention it spells bad news for productivity! Ellasara Kling explains what we can do to preserve our essential Qi and shares seasonal food tips and recipes in *Winter: The Season for Contemplation and Restoration*.

One of the most widely read books on Qigong, titled The Healer Within, was written by one of our contributors, Dr. Roger Jahnke, OMD. You will find an article adapted from this book, *The Miracle of Self-Initiated Healing*, on page 5. The Healer Within is also the name of a non-profit institution, The Healer Within Foundation, which brings mind-body practices to populations who would otherwise not have access to them. Dr. Jahnke is also the author of The Healing Promise of Qi and the director of training and research for the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC).

This holiday season, the season of celebration and exchange of gifts, I invite you to give yourself a gift... give yourself the present of really claiming the time and space in your life to honor and support your own "inner healer," and follow the daily practice that is just right for you. Just do it...and expect miracles!

Best wishes for happy holidays and a peaceful and joyous new year to all of our contributors, supporters, and readers from all around the world, our Yang-Sheng community,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Kali". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rebecca Kali, Editor-in-Chief



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The Miracle of Self-Initiated Healing

自愈力的奇迹 (adapted from *The Healer Within*)

by Roger Jahnke, OMD

In the amazing universe of Mind-Body Practice and Energy-Based Healing methodologies, there is one very profound bit of information that turns on our sense of the possibilities:

The human – spirit-mind-body – is naturally enabled to heal and even flourish in a state of enhanced wellbeing and vitality. The most powerful healing elixirs (medicines) ever developed are produced naturally in the human system – for FREE! We are empowered by nature and the architect of the universe to awaken and even master the capacity to cultivate healing energies and healing chemistries within us.

For some reason, we keep the fact that this is possible a secret from ourselves. The amount of money wasted treating preventable disease is tragically immense – as much as \$2 trillion annually in the US.

It is actually quite easy to activate (turn on), and for those who very attentive, it is possible to actually perceive the action of healing resources within, to feel the “healer within,” to sense healing energy (Qi). Learning

Qigong, Tai Chi and other Mind-Body may be the most important thing that anyone can do. These practices make us all the more likely to experience healings and health recoveries that are not well understood by either science or conventional medicine. In the near future we will either bring science to bear on how non-normal healing works or we may simply stop caring about how and just enjoy the gifts of healing that are available, when we cultivate self-healing mind-body practices.



The Message of Placebos, Remissions and Miracles (安慰剂、不治而愈 和奇迹的背后)

“The placebo is the doctor that resides within.” — Norman Cousins



The placebo effect, spontaneous remissions and miracles provide rich food for thought regarding the “healer within” and the marvelous self-healing energies and resources that we may draw upon, cultivate and perhaps even create. In each of these areas, healing occurs where no medical intervention has been utilized or where medical intervention has failed. By exploring the research on placebo, remission and miracles, we gain two bits of wisdom.

First, it verifies that dynamic healing potential is produced spontaneously within the individual. Second, it confirms that we can supercharge our self-healing practice by cultivating certain attitudes and emotions, states of mind or philosophical views.

Ming — Life (Destiny)

The Placebo Phenomena 安慰剂现象

In 1985, I was honored to be invited to give a lecture to the Annual Medical Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona on my thoughts about the medicine within. My research for that presentation led to the literature on the placebo, which I believe is one of the strongest bodies of knowledge confirming our natural self-healing capacity. The concept of the placebo has been through several dramatic phases, just in recent history. In Latin, placebo literally means "to please."

In the 1800s and early 1900s, "placebo" described substances that appeared to be medicines, but had no clinical action. Physicians would frequently administer a placebo, usually a sugar pill, when the patient's healing process was progressing positively and nature needed a little more time to resolve the disorder. In more recent times, the use of placebo remedies has fallen from favor.

The word was then used to describe a process in clinical research, the "placebo effect." In research, the response of two groups is compared. One receives the medicine or surgical procedure that is being studied. The second, called the control group, receives an inert substance that appears to be the medicine or a surgical procedure but actually has no clinical effect. If the group that receives the actual medicine or procedure has results that are significantly better than the control, then it is assumed that it is clinically effective.

A significant percentage of those who do not receive the actual drug or procedure typically experience improvement as well. This is called the placebo effect. Patients who responded positively to inert substances or positive suggestion were termed "placebo reactors." During this time in the history of health care, self-healing was seen as impossible and the placebo effect was nuisance to scientists.

In a unique review of data from older studies on innovative treatments for asthma, ulcer and herpes simplex, researchers from Scripps's Clinic and Research Foundation discovered that 40% of patients reported "excellent" results, 30% reported "good" results and only 30% reported "poor" results, in other words a 70% effective rate (combined excellent and good). This is generally considered to be solid confirmation that a medicine is useful. Interestingly, however, these therapies were later found to be useless. This means that 70% of the patients had exhibited the power of the placebo. Their "excellent" and "good" healing results were completely due to the medicine within.

Bernie Siegel, MD, author of *Love, Medicine and Miracles* and *Peace, Love and Healing*, was asked to comment on the placebo during his term as president of the American Holistic Medical Association. "The placebo effect," he said, "can change the body chemistry and change the internal hormones. It shows that mind and body is a single unit. If you read a chemotherapy protocol with all of its side effects to a patient and then inject him with saline (no medicine, just a weak salt solution), the patient's hair falls out!!"

One hundred years ago, the placebo mobilized the healer within openly. Then, using the placebo to activate the medicine within became the sign of quackery. Next, the placebo became an aspect of medical science that plagued researchers, a nuisance that complicated data. Now, finally, the placebo is gaining attention as proof that the healer within is authentic.

The placebo is helping to redefine medicine in terms that declare the inherent power of natural, internal self-healing resources. Does it work to use mind-body based energy medicine practices, such as Qigong and Tai Chi, to activate the placebo? Absolutely yes!

However, it shifts the power from experts to oneself. Many doubt that they could know themselves well enough to actualize the placebo phenomena without an expert. Mind-body practice purposefully cultivates the necessary sense of personal empowerment that can mobilize the healer within plus the placebo effect.



Dr. Jahnke practices Qigong

Spontaneous Remission 不治而愈

The mechanisms of vis medicatrix naturae - the healing power of nature - are so effective that most diseases are self-terminating.

Rene Dubos - Bacteriologist, philosopher

Spontaneous remission is the phrase typically used in the medical literature to describe cases where the disease is cured or resolved, but it is not understood how. In future decades the mechanism for spontaneous remission will be explored and understood. For now it is not so important how it happens, it is just enlightening that it happens.

When doctors acknowledge that a cure has occurred and then acknowledge that they don't know how, it becomes evident that internal healing resources were spontaneously activated to cause the cure. The Institute of Noetic Sciences, in the 1980s, decided to explore the remission concept as a possible strategy to confirm the human capacity for self-healing.

Brendan O'Regan, then the vice president of research, began a systematic exploration of the medical literature for references to remission. To everyone's amazement he found an immense number of references: three thousand articles from over 860 medical journals in twenty languages. Some of the articles discussed hundreds of cases, so the over all number of cases actually reported in the medical literature turned out to be in the many thousands. "We have many cases of remission (1/5 of all cases)," O'Regan reported, "with no medical intervention at all. These are the purest ones, the ones that give us the strongest evidence that there is an extraordinary self-repair system lying dormant within us." This historic analysis on the "remission" literature from the Institute of Noetic Science is a powerful confirmation the healer within.

As a part of their research the Noetic Sciences team actually tracked down a few of the people who were still living. Their insight is powerful teaching for our work with the self-healing methods. One of the cancer cases in the remission literature felt it was critical to, "keep my state of mind intact, no matter what."

In another case, when one man was asked to what he attributed the remission of his cancer, he stated, "I really think it is our life, the way *we experience* our life." This person's story reveals the value of daily meditation, spousal support, massage, acupuncture, yoga, vegetarian diet and colon cleansing.



These stories are usually called testimonials. As with the placebo effect, remission testimonials have not until recently been in favor. Testimonials were historically seen as subjective and unverifiable. However, these are the stories of people documented in the scientific literature to have experienced the spontaneous remission of a dangerous disorder.

Can this information be an influential tool to create enthusiasm about self-healing methodologies? The stories of people in remission prove, perhaps even as powerfully as science, that self-healing is an undeniable and fully accessible promise. The findings on remission demonstrate that a natural healing power is available. Qigong, Tai Chi and other self-maximizing self-practices are the most profound way to activate the medicine within.

Miracles 奇迹

"There are two ways to live your life. One is as though there are no miracles. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

Albert Einstein - physicist, mathematician, philosopher.

The capacity to produce a healing resource, an elixir within, is a kind of miracle. To some a miracle is a natural occurrence that we do not yet have the knowledge to understand. George Santayana a modern philosopher noted, "Miracles are fortunate accidents, the natural causes of which are too complicated to be readily understood." Certainly, the ability to fly would have required a miracle in previous eras of history, now air travel is a common occurrence that is readily understood.

In the early 21st century, the miracle of self-healing is almost as clearly understood as well. There is a second view of miracles that point to the supernatural and the divine. Miraculous outcomes credited to God's love and angelic presences are very common throughout history. In a fascinating study of miracles Carolyn Miller, PhD has looked into hundreds of unexplainable situations. In her book, *Creating Miracles: Understanding the Experience of Divine Intervention*, she concludes that miracles are frequently supernatural events.

Miller was able to condense from numerous real cases, a formula for eligibility for a miracle. She calls it *miracle mindedness*. "Inner peace leads to miracles, the decision to shift into a loving, peaceful, accepting mental state is a necessary precondition for miracles, miracles do not produce faith, faith produces miracles." In the Book of Luke, in the Christian Bible, Jesus says, "Don't be afraid, just believe and she will be healed." The formula asks that we be at peace. This, in some way, creates the possibility for a miracle.

In our quest to understand self-healing and the empowering resources that we spontaneously produce within, it is not so necessary to know how miracles work. It is enough to know that they actually occur. The shrine of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes in France marks the place where an apparition of the Holy Virgin appeared in 1858. Since then 6000 claims of miraculous healing have occurred.

It is easy enough for miraculous claims to be made, how do you prove a miracle? In 1947 an official commission was formed to qualify whether actual miracles were occurring. The 25 member International Medical Commission is comprised of medical professionals from a broad array of medical specialties from nine countries. They follow a strict 18 point protocol. A correct diagnosis must have been made, the disease must be serious, no sign of psychosomatic influence can be present, spontaneous remission must not be a possibility, medical treatment must have failed completely, the cure must be fully confirmed and the time since the cure must be significant.

With this rigorous set of guidelines in place 64 "certified miracles" have been documented. The 25 physician members of the International Medical Commission have agreed that there is no way that these cases could have achieved a cure without some supernatural influence that is contrary to the observations and expectations of medical knowledge. The cures include the disappearance of tumors, blindness, paralysis and even the regrowth of bone in a case where the hip joint had deteriorated so severely that the leg and pelvis had become separated.

Miraculous healings may be natural events that we cannot yet understand. Or miracles may be direct interventions by supernatural forces, angels or God. In either case the healing occurs by mysterious mobilization of natural resources within the person.



Qi — Vital Life Energy

What a gift we have in the energy based mind-body practices of Qigong/Tai Chi (Qi) and Yoga (Prana). And the most thrilling this is that becoming "prone" to miracles is very accessible with mind-body practice that activates the physiology at the same time as cultivating right mindedness in the psychology.

An Extraordinary Turning Point 不平凡的转折点

We are spot on -- at an extraordinary turning point in human development. Science has begun to honestly explore mysterious concepts that only recently were considered unscientific -- in addition to placebo, remission and miracles there is emerging science on the energy body, turning back the cellular clock, the illusion of time, etc.

Shining the light of science on the placebo, spontaneous remission and miracles has demonstrated that the mysterious can be verified even if it is not understood. It is exciting to know that the placebo is taking on a more positive definition, that one-fifth of the cases in 8,000 medical articles on remission are "pure" and that a 25 member international team using an 18 point criterion has found 64 "certified miracles" at Lourdes.

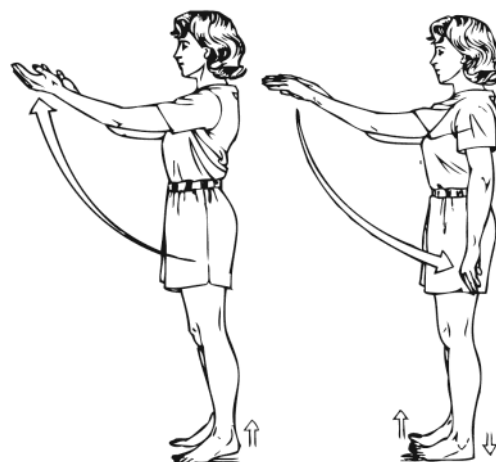
Placebo, remission and miracle are areas of radical breakthrough. They change the rules. They confirm the presence of the healer within. They suggest that our practice of self-healing methods can mobilize the internal capacity for self-repair and health recovery. And --- they point to the value of the body, mind and spirit interaction.

Mind-Body Practice -- Qigong, Tai Chi and other forms of practice, which mobilize the healer within -- are very accessible and practical ways to accelerate the likelihood of healing, disease prevention, the renewal of vitality and the reversal of aging.

A Historic Opportunity 历史的机遇

Consider consciously taking part in your own remission. Make miracles for yourself, because you are allowed to. Decide to turn on the power of the placebo.

Why not become a teacher of Qigong and Tai Chi? Be a part of the revolution in health care and medicine where people of all walks of life learn to turn on the healer within. Spread the word! A new era of health, wellbeing and life potential is emerging. We are the ones who will bring this about.



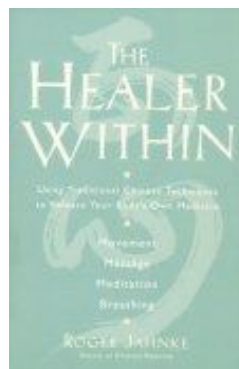
About the author: Roger Jahnke, OMD, has practiced clinical acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine for more than 25 years. He has traveled and studied extensively throughout Asia, visiting hospitals, universities, temples, and sacred mountain retreats to deepen his understanding of the healing traditions of Qigong, Tai Chi, acupuncture, herbal medicine, and natural feng shui. Author

of two of the best-selling books on qigong, *The Healer Within* and *The Healing Promise of Qi*, as well as the acclaimed DVD, *Qigong-Chi Kung: Awakening and Mastering the Medicine Within*, Roger is the cofounder of the National Qigong Association, and director of the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC).

Websites: <http://www.FeeltheQi.com> <http://www.IIQTC.org>
<http://www.TaiChiEasy.org>

The Healer Within: by Dr. Roger Jahnke

(click on the book cover to order from Amazon.com)



Dr. Roger Jahnke translates Asian traditions of self-healing into a four-part health promotion program for daily practice -- gentle movement of the body; self-applied massage, combining massage of the ears, hands, and feet; breathing practices; and methods of deep relaxation and meditation, crucial to calming and focusing the mind. The reader can experiment and choose among the varied practices to tailor an easy-to-implement regimen. Dr. Jahnke makes a persuasive argument for

using these mind-body healing techniques both to recover from illness and to remain healthier and happier all the time.

Winter Wellness and Self Care

冬季保健和自我照顾

by Aihan Kuhn 爱寒, C.B.D, Dipl., OBT

In Chinese healing, the digestive function is very important, because it affects the whole body and overall healing. If the digestive system is not working properly, eventually other body systems will be negatively affected. In the wintertime and especially during the holiday season, we need to pay careful attention to our digestive system.

Accordingly, our diet should include more root vegetables to support kidney energy. The kidney is an important organ; since it helps raise Yang energy to fight cold weather and strengthens the immune system.

Cooking in a crock-pot is a great idea in the winter. It is even better if you add a little spice, or anything pungent, which helps strengthen the Lung energy.

As the holidays approach, make sure to do daily exercises. This not only promotes proper digestion and maintains immune function, but also provides a daily energy boost. Here are some exercises perfect for everyday practice:

Circle Arms

Feet are at shoulder width apart; shift weight from side to side. At a moderate to fast speed, circle arms backward eight times, then circle arms forward eight times; repeat the above movement several times. If you prefer, you can circle one arm at a time.

Shoulder Movement

Rotate shoulders backward four times, then rotate shoulders forward four times extending the rotation to the maximum degree of your comfort level. As you are rotating the shoulders, your chest moves too. If you don't want to shift your weight, you can just rotate your shoulders, but with shifting your weight, you get multi-dimensional movements.

Wrists Rotation

This is a simple movement. Rotate your wrists one after the other, or rotate your wrists simultaneously. You can move your body at the same time. You can freestyle with your footsteps, like a disco dance, as long as you rotate your wrists at same time.

Reach the Sky, Touch The Earth



Your feet can be either together or separate. Reach high with both hands high while rising onto your toes; then put both hands on the floor while bending knees. You don't have to touch the floor if you are unable to, and you don't have to rise onto toes if you are unable.

Hip Rotation

Bend both legs slightly. Rotate your hips clockwise 8 times, then counter clockwise for 8 times. It is a similar motion to using a Hula Hoop, but in slow-motion.



Dr. Aihan Kuhn was a practicing physician in China before coming to America. A 1982 graduate of Hunan Medical University, she has now been practicing Chinese Medicine in the US. Dr. Kuhn is the founder of Chinese Medicine for Health in Holliston,

Massachusetts, a Master of Tai Chi and Qi Gong, an author of many books; three of which have been published, "Simple Chinese Medicine", "True Brain Fitness," and "Natural Healing with Qi Gong". Dr. Kuhn has extensive knowledge and experience in natural healing with: women's health, cancer prevention and healing, children's health, anti-aging education, and more. For more information about Dr. Kuhn, go to <http://www.draihankuhn.com>



Staying Healthy in All Seasons

在各种季节中保持健康

by Mark Melchiorre, L.Ac.

Act in accordance with seasonal, geographic, and personal factors.
This is a statement of fact in traditional Chinese medicine.

Our system of traditional medicine is intimately connected to the ebb and flow of the energy in our universe. Far from being some mystical concept, one can see and feel this energy on a daily basis in the rising and setting of the sun and moon and in their changing trajectory across the sky throughout the year.

Ancient Chinese scholars and philosophers observed the annual changes of the seasons along with their corresponding environmental changes. They noted the onset of growth in the spring, the flourishing of growing things in the summer that then become the harvest of autumn. The harvest is stored for use during winter's cold months which in time, with the climbing of the sun in the sky, once again becomes spring.

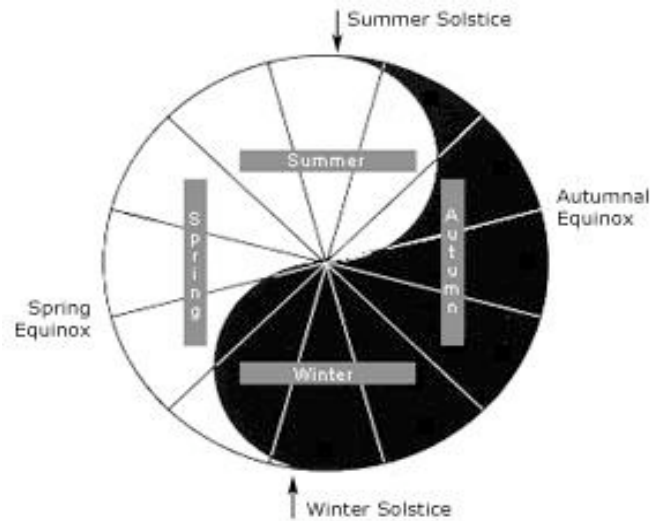


Figure 1. Seasons

They noted the circadian rhythm of sunrise and sunset. Humankind too has its waxing and waning of energy. One is born into a personal springtime, flourishes in adulthood, and, in time, retreats into the winter of life's journey.

Over time, these observations were codified into a system of correspondences known as the Wu Xing or Five Phases (五行). The Five Phases is just one system of diagnosis used in traditional medicine.

Act in accordance with seasonal, geographic, and personal factors

(yin shi yin di yin ren zhi yi) 因时因地因人制宜

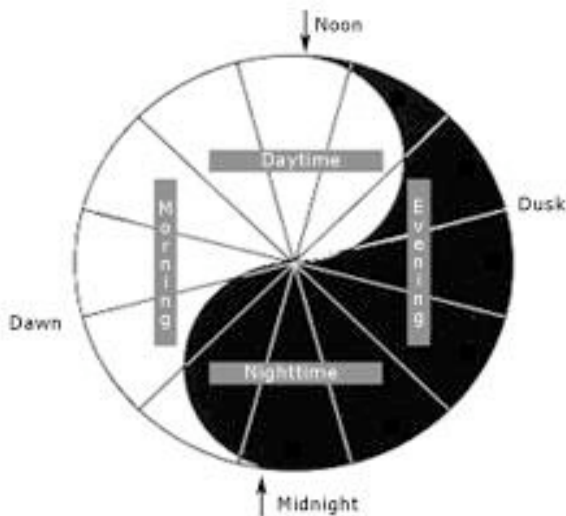


Figure 2 Daily Taiji

The Chinese character for Spring, '春' (Chūn), is written in a stylized, light blue font within a black-bordered square.

SPRING

The months of spring correspond to the Wood phase and the Liver. This is the period of commencement; “heaven and earth are born, and all living things are flourishing. Get up early in the morning, walk around in the courtyard, loosen your hair and relax your body. By doing so you will generate mental strength and act in harmony with the Qi of spring, thus following the way of nourishing life.”

Take stress off of your liver by dealing with any repressed anger, avoiding unnecessary chemicals and additives. Eat liver friendly foods like dandelion, red beets, parsnips, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, and mustard greens. Meditate. Practice yoga or tai chi. Get balanced for the season with acupuncture.

The Chinese character for Summer, '夏' (Xià), is written in a stylized, red font within a black-bordered square.

SUMMER

The months of summer correspond to the Fire phase, and the Heart. In this season all living creatures prosper. Heavenly Qi moves down to meet the rising earth Qi. As a result, living creatures bloom and bear fruit.

To take stress off of your heart “do not burden yourself with depressing thoughts, do not get anxious about future events that may never happen, do not dwell on things that are well in the past.” Eat moderate amounts of cooling foods like cucumber and watermelon. Drink plenty of water. Beware of air-conditioning. Meditation, tai chi, Qigong, and yoga are good choices for any season.

The Chinese character for Autumn, '秋' (Qiū), is written in a stylized, orange-brown font within a black-bordered square.

AUTUMN

The months of autumn correspond to the Metal phase and the Lung. In this season all things ripen. The weather cools; winds strengthen; and colors change.

Go to bed early and rise with the rooster’s crow. Moderate amounts of pungent foods like horseradish, garlic, onions, ginger, and mustard are beneficial to the lungs. Now is the time to strengthen your Qi to prepare for winter. Remember, meditation, tai chi, Qigong, and yoga are always good choices for any season.

The Chinese character for Winter, '冬' (Dōng), is written in a stylized, black font within a black-bordered square.

WINTER

The months of winter correspond to the Water phase and the Kidney. In this season in which the life in all things is hidden. The weather turns cold. Water freezes. It is a season of storage and quietude.

Go to bed early and sleep late (until after the sun rises.) Keep your mind peaceful and your body warm. Avoid perspiring in the cold. Warm meals like vegetable soups with grains, beans, and root vegetables (e.g. carrots, onions, and turnips) are appropriate. Moderate amounts of garlic, ginger, and cayenne are beneficial when the climate is cold. Conserve your Qi now and you will be healthy in the spring. As always, meditation, tai chi, Qigong, and yoga are beneficial.

THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERY PURPOSE UNDER THE HEAVEN.

A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE;

A TIME TO PLANT, AND A TIME TO UPROOT THE PLANT.

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-2

Consider where you are at this moment in time. When you look at your calendar what season is it? If you look at your watch is it the spring of the day or perhaps the winter? And your age... spring, summer, autumn, or winter? To optimize your health, act in accordance with the season.



Mark Melchiorre, L.Ac. is a practitioner of Oriental Medicine Energetics with over 20 years of experience. Mark uses acupuncture, herbs, cupping, tuina massage, Reiki, and qigong to benefit mind, body and spirit. Mark trained in the USA and in China. He has taught graduate level classes in Oriental Medicine. He is a professional member and certified teacher of the National Qigong Association. Mark maintains a private practice in South Pasadena, CA, USA and provides services as part of the Integrative Medical team at the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Cancer Center in Burbank, CA, USA. He is available for private and group lessons in Qigong and Tai Chi. Mark teaches methods that are adaptable to an individual's personal health and fitness requirements.

Awaken the Healer Within

NIH Interview with Dr. Roger Jahnke, OMD

How Qigong and Tai Chi - Chinese Mind-Body Wellness Practices - Promote Healthy Function

唤醒体内医者 — 采访Jahnke医生



This brief interview with Dr Roger Jahnke, OMD, director of the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC), was published in the In-house, staff oriented newsletter of the NIH (National Institutes of Health) in September of 2009. The intent was to inform NIH employees about strategies for wellness and disease prevention. More recently Dr Jahnke presented the Co-Keynote for Washington DC Mind-Body Week with Dr. Herbert Benson, MD, the Harvard physician best known as the Father of Mind-Body Medicine. Throughout the NIH, there are numerous research trials in progress that investigate Qigong, Tai Chi and other Yang-Sheng topics.

NIH Interviewer: Dr. Jahnke, thank you so much for speaking with me. Everyone has their own interpretation for the meaning of Qi (also Chi). Could you define Qi for us?

Dr. Jahnke: Yes, thank you. First of all, I would note that the most popular definition of Qi is energy. However, if you ask in China, “What is Qi?”, it’s rare they would define it that way. Typically the Chinese say that Qi is the dynamic force of a chemical reaction or the dynamic activity of extreme weather. A medical doctor will say Qi is the capacity of the organs and other systems in the body to function. An artist will say that Qi is creativity. A psychologist will say that Qi is consciousness and emotions. So now, for myself as a doctor of Chinese medicine for 30 years, my definition of Qi is really directed mostly by my commitment to developing a definition that respects the Chinese tradition as well as one that supports the evolution of our thinking in the Western world. Qi has three equivalents from Western thinking. At the physiological level, Qi is functionality. The presence of function equals ample Qi. On the energetic level, Qi is equivalent to ion activity in the body and the associated magnetic field. From the perspective of consciousness or mind, Qi is both information and emotionality. Qi is not one thing, Qi is a multiplicity that is given one name in the Chinese tradition.

Interviewer: Could you discuss how the practice of Tai Chi and Qi Gong may benefits employees experiencing stress?

Dr. Jahnke: There are 3 aspects of Qi Gong and Tai Chi. First associated with body function. The second with mind function and the third with what is referred to in most cultures as “spirit”. Stress is a challenge that is associated with the mind-body interaction. In our review of the most well designed research literature (randomized, controlled trials), we’ve found that the largest bodies of research are in the areas of cardiovascular and psychological investigation. In all of those studies, stress is a major component. The finding is that Qi Gong and Tai Chi are especially well suited to support people in reducing the negative impacts of stress in their lives – thus reducing risk for both cardiovascular and psychological challenges. To practice Qi Gong and Tai Chi, one purposefully relaxes. This triggers a reduction in adrenaline based neurological and neurotransmitter activity, which significantly reduces activity of most or all physiological pathways that are aggravated by stress.

Interviewer: What barriers or misconceptions are present when people hear about Tai Chi and Qi Gong?

Dr. Jahnke: The primary misconceptions are that Tai Chi requires that an individual alters his/her philosophical point of view due to the association with other societies. This challenge comes up occasionally. There is nothing about Qi Gong or Tai Chi that requires that. In fact many one of the most vibrant places where Mind-Body Practices are being taught is the health ministry programs of faith based organizations - Christian Churches and Jewish Temples. The second barrier is that people say Tai Chi and Qi Gong are complex and hard to understand. But in fact, most forms of Qi Gong can be modified to be extremely simple. Tai Chi also can be modified. At the Institute for Integral Qi Gong and Tai Chi, we train professionals from social services, education and health care, etc. to teach what is call “Tai Chi Easy” which can be adapted to any population. It is very easy.

Interviewer: Could you tell us about your personal experience with Tai Chi and how you were introduced to this practice?

Dr. Jahnke: My first Tai Chi class was in 1967 and I was immediately inspired by the inter-play of physical, psychological and spiritual elements to the extent that I ‘ve been practicing Tai Chi and Qi Gong ever since. This actually led me to my primary profession which is a doctor of Chinese medicine. My practice of Chinese Medicine goes back 30 years. I have traveled to China eight times to really, seriously, investigate Qi Gong and Tai Chi. This included observations in hospitals, universities, public parks as well as the sacred mountains. Personally, it has been very rewarding. For my patients, it’s been very beneficial to use Qi Gong and Tai Chi to complement acupuncture and herbal medicine. To be able to support the wider understanding of these powerful healing arts in the Western world, we founded the Institute for Integral Qi Gong and Tai Chi to educate the public, train teachers and to do serious research. In addition, the Healer Within Foundation is a 501c3 that delivers Qi Gong and Tai Chi experiences to populations that would otherwise not have access. It is very exciting!



Interviewer: Could you discuss your research with Tai Chi and Qi Gong?

Dr. Jahnke: In collaboration with the University of Illinois and the Arizona State University, we have launched a number of research projects to investigate the general benefits of Qi Gong and Tai Chi. The findings have been significant and positive. This led to collaboration with Dr. Linda Larkey from Arizona State University to perform a comprehensive review of all the research literature on Qi Gong and Tai Chi. There are actually 77 randomized, controlled trials (RCTs) on a wide variety of health challenges. Most impressive is that the next to the largest body of studies explored the psychological benefits. The first largest group is in the review, an even bigger surprise, was cardiovascular diseases.

Given that heart disease is the number one cause of death in the United States, it is fitting that a large amount of research has been done regarding the benefits of Qi Gong and Tai Chi. Another piece of really good news about this research is that generally, the kinds of Qi Gong and Tai Chi that are utilized in investigating for the benefits, are typically very simple forms that are easy to learn and practice. This comprehensive review of the literature demonstrates that the evidence base for Qi Gong and Tai Chi is very robust and it points to the primary areas of need for future research. It’s fairly clear that quite a bit of research will be done on these mind-body practices in the near future.

Interviewer: What are the lessons you've brought from your visits to China regarding Tai Chi and Qi Gong from an integrative health care and medicine stand-point?

Dr. Jahnke: Exploring the health care system in China was very, very interesting. The first interesting part was discovering that the Chinese had no apparent debate about whether to integrate Western medicine. It was clear to me as an observer that Chinese society immediately recognized the benefits of both Western conventional medicine and Chinese traditional medicine in an integrated context. Here in the Western world, there is, it seems, a little less enthusiasm. The economics of medicine in China are much less commercial than in the US. However, it appears that the particularly low cost wellness practices of Qi Gong and Tai Chi will integrate into the Western world very quickly. In 1997, the National Institutes of Health conducted a consensus meeting on acupuncture. This was real policy leverage for the integration of Chinese therapeutics with conventional modalities. In 2005 the University of Illinois co-convoked with the IIQTC, the National Consensus Meeting on Qigong and Tai Chi. This has also had significant policy leverage for Qi Gong and Tai Chi.

In China, it was particularly interesting to find high tech tools such as MRI and CT scanners directly adjacent to the herbal medicine pharmacy. It was amazing to be touring the high-tech medicine portion of the facility and smell the fragrance of the Chinese herbs in the same part of the building. In many cases, the doctors of Western medicine and the doctors of traditional Chinese medicine collaborated to determine clinical strategies that were both the most cost effective and the most clinically effective in a very collegial and open-minded way.

It was very inspiring to see thousands of people in the Chinese parks doing their Qi Gong and Tai Chi practices. More and more now we are seeing evidence of this in America. It's especially amazing to know Harvard and other prominent medical institutions are advocating Mind-Body Practice. One of Harvard's newsletters called Tai Chi, "Medicine in motion." Many physicians of Western conventional medicine are now making enthusiastic referrals to the traditional Chinese wellness practices of Qi Gong and Tai Chi.



Interviewer: What are some of the challenges faced between Western physicians and integrative practitioners?

Dr. Jahnke: I think that here in the Western world we have somehow confused things terribly. There is the idea that medical intervention and health care are the same thing, and that wellness is a medical field. In fact, we even call medicine "healthcare". As a result, our conventional thinking is focused on populations of people who have lost their health. Once a person has lost their health, it is a standard of our system to utilize medical treatment as the sole strategy for resolution. So, until recently there really has been no health care – that is disease prevention based on personal action.

Fortunately, since the 1990s our society has been realizing that most diseases are preventable (70% or more) and that medical treatment is not the first resort, it's the last resort. Personal health action -- wellness -- rather than the being the last resort, should be and will become the first resort.

The biggest challenge is to support the medical community in becoming as oriented and enthusiastic about prevention as possible. Another challenge is to support citizens in understanding that preventing disease is much

more easily accomplished than treating disease medically. Given the fact that medical practitioners are primarily trained in medicine – the diagnosis and treatment of disease -- it is actually not the medical community's responsibility to change what it does and how it works. The shift that will happen and is happening is in policy and in people. As policy supports a more wide spread understanding that almost all diseases are preventable, our citizens will have greater access to programs, and incentives that support prevention through healthful behavior. That way medical doctors can focus on medicine and disease while the society focuses on health care - "to care for health."

For more information, please visit:

Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Dr. Jahnke, OMD: <http://FeelTheQi.com>

The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi: <http://IIQTC.org>

The Healer Within: <http://HealerWithinFoundation.org>

National Consensus Meeting on Qigong and Tai Chi: <http://agingblueprint.org/PDFs/ConsensusDoc.pdf>



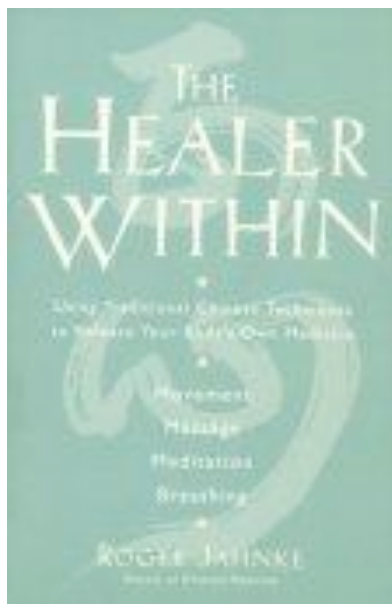
The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)

trains Community Practice Leaders and Certified Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teachers who work in community centers, hospitals, clinics, schools, churches, social service agencies and the justice system. Providing training, certification, career change and enhancement for over 10 years, the Institute makes access to Qigong and Tai Chi easy and enjoyable through effective teaching methods and a focus on principles. The 200-hour certification is completed in three segments (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3). Start leading classes right away as you train! Level 1 begins March 22-29, 2012. Contact info@iiqtc.org to request more information or visit the link below to see how you can begin training:

<https://healthaction.infusionsoft.com/go/12-004/YangSheng/>

The Healer Within: Using Traditional Chinese Techniques To Release Your Body's Own Medicine * Movement * Massage * Meditation * Breathing by Dr. Roger Jahnke

Dr. Roger Jahnke translates Asian traditions of self-healing into a four-part health promotion program for daily practice -- gentle movement of the body; self-applied massage, combining massage of the ears, hands, and feet; breathing practices; and methods of deep relaxation and meditation, crucial to calming and focusing the mind. The reader can experiment and choose among the varied practices to tailor an easy-to-implement regimen. Dr.



Jahnke makes a persuasive argument for using these mind-body healing techniques both to recover from illness and to remain healthier and happier all the time.

(click on the book cover to order from Amazon.com)

Daoism and the Origins of Qigong, Part 1

(道家与气功的起源)

by Livia Kohn, Ph.D.

Qigong or “Qi Exercises” describes a group of practices highly popular in China and increasingly well known in the West. They involve slow, gentle body movements, breathing exercises, self-massages, and the mental circulation of *qi*, with the aim to open the body’s inner channels, provide a free flow of energy, help in healing, and in general create a sense of greater well-being and openness of spirit.

Qigong as a modern system of healing goes back to the 1940s. In 1947, the communist party cadre Liu Guizhen (1920-1983), suffering from a virulent gastric ulcer, was sent home to recover or die. He went home but refused to die—he was only 27 years old at the time! Instead, he took lessons in gymnastics and breathing from the Daoist Liu Duzhou. After 102 days of faithful practices, he was completely cured. He returned to his job and described his healing success to the party, which appointed him as a medical research leader in Hebei province with the task to study the effects of breathing on healing. In 1948, he created the term *Qigong* to indicate the methods which focused largely on breathing at the time. He then began to teach party officials and repeated his success with various ailments (Chen 2003).

As this modern beginning of the practice documents, contemporary Qigong tends to focus on medical goals and the improvement of life quality with the help of methods transmitted by Daoists. It is practiced both in the medical community and actively pursued among Daoist followers and successfully combines techniques that go back to both medical and Daoist sources. The most obvious and direct forerunner of Qigong is Chinese gymnastics, known as *daoyin*, which literally means “guide [the *qi*] and stretch [the body].” Using the same four basic methods as Qigong today, *daoyin* teaches practitioners to move the limbs and torso in a particular way while exercising deep breathing and mentally circulating the *qi* within. Through this, the body’s *qi*-flow is regulated and pathogenic elements are expelled.



Daoyin Tu, “Exercise Chart” circa 168 B.C.E. discovered at Mawangdui in southern China.

Gradually the body not only becomes supple and flexible but health improves and longevity is attained. Gymnastics for many centuries have been described as a valuable tool to prevent old age and cure diseases. They nourish the *qi*, refresh the body after hard work, help fasting and other spiritual practices, and open the body for a long and joyful life. How, then, did *daoyin* relate to Daoism in the course of Chinese history? To begin, let us look at the early documentation and role of the *daoyin* tradition.

The *Dao-Yin* Tradition

The earliest documents on *daoyin* are found in medical literature on healing and health maintenance. Following the dictum of the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic* that the best physician preventing diseases and never having to treat a patient, gymnastic and breathing exercises formed a part of traditional Chinese medicine that specialized in preventative practice and was known as *yang-sheng* or nourishing life. Practices used are commonly called longevity techniques and include diets, breathing exercises, gymnastics, massages, sexual practices, the absorption of solar and lunar energies, as well as various forms of meditation. Used both for healing and enhancing health, these methods ensured not only the realization of the natural life expectancy but were found to often result in increased old age and vigor.

Our earliest sources on these methods, and thus also on gymnastics and breathing, are a set of manuscripts unearthed at Mawangdui and Zhangjia shan in southern China. Written on silk, bamboo and strips of wood, they date from the second century B.C.E. and present practical advice on how to nourish life with the help of gymnastics, breathing, dietetics, and drugs. Works include: *Conjoining Yin and Yang (He yinyang)*, *Discussion of the Perfect Way in All Under Heaven (Tianxia zhidao tan)*, and *Recipes for Nourishing Life (Yangsheng fang)*.

A text called *The Rejection of Grains and Absorption of Qi (Quegu shiqi)*, furthermore deals with techniques of eliminating grains and ordinary foodstuffs from the diet and replacing them with medicinal herbs and *qi* through special breathing exercises. The text repeatedly contrasts “those who eat *qi*” with “those who eat grain” and explains this in cosmological terms, saying: “Those who eat grain eat what is square; those who eat *qi* eat what is round. Round is heaven; square is earth (Harper 1998, 130). The most famous and relevant to our topic among the Mawangdui manuscripts is the *Gymnastics Chart (Daoyin tu)*. It contains color illustrations of human figures performing therapeutic gymnastics. Some of the recognizable captions refer to the names of exercises already mentioned in the *Zhuangzi*, such as “bear-hanging” and “bird-stretching.” The text, although fragmentary, shows the importance of gymnastic exercises, used in conjunction with self-massages to dissolve blockages, help circulation, and increase the harmony of *qi* in the body. It also documents the early use of animal models for physical exercises, a practice that has been linked with ancient shamanic dances (Despeux 1989, 237-38).

Another manuscript on gymnastics is the *Book on Stretching (Yinshu)*, found among several medical texts in Zhangjia shan, Hubei, about 150 miles north of Mawangdui. Dated to 186 B.C.E., it begins with the description of a daily and seasonal health regimen, including hygiene, dietetics, regulation of sleep and movement, as well as adequate times for sexual intercourse. After that, the text details fifty-seven gymnastic exercises, including massages. Some exercises are preventative, others more curative. The third and last part of the *Book on Stretching* deals with etiology and the prevention of diseases. The most important factors that cause diseases, according to this work, are climatic excesses such as the heat of summer, moisture, wind, cold, rain, and dew. An unstable diet, excessive emotions and a lifestyle inappropriate to the season are also named as possible causes of an imbalance of *qi*. The text recommends various therapies, such as breathing exercises, bodily stretches and the careful treatment of the interior *qi*. It says: “If you can pattern your *qi* properly and maintain your yin energy in fullness, then the whole person will benefit” (Wenwu 1990, 86).

It is interesting to note that the text makes a distinction between “upper class people,” who fall ill because of uncontrolled emotions such as rage and excessive joy, and lower ones whose conditions tend to be caused by excessive labor, hunger and thirst. It further notes that the latter have no opportunity to learn the necessary breathing exercises and therefore contract numerous diseases and die an early death. Obviously longevity techniques were very much the domain of the aristocracy and upper classes who could afford quality medical care and the instruction by specialists of prevention (Engelhardt 2000).

Following these manuscripts, records on gymnastics include mention in dynastic histories, such as the biography of

Hua Tuo, staff physician of Cao Cao under the Three Kingdoms in the third century. According to his official biography, he created an integrated system of gymnastic exercises known as the Five Animals' Frolic.

Further codification and development of gymnastic exercises occurred in various medieval medical sources, such as the *Compendium of Essentials on Nourishing Life (Yangsheng yaoji)*. It summarizes early sources and describes longevity practice in ten sections: 1. Strengthening the vital spirits; 2. Caring for the breath; 3. Maintaining the body; 4. Practicing gymnastics; 5. Speaking properly; 6. Eating right; 7. Sexual moderation; 8. Right relations to the common world; 9. Taking medicinal drugs; and 10. Observing protective prohibitions (Stein 1999, 103).

The most important medical source on gymnastics in the middle ages is the *Origins and Symptoms of Medical Disorders (Zhubing yuanhou lun)*, compiled under the supervision of the physician Chao Yuanfang and presented to Emperor Yang of the Sui dynasty in 610. The text presents for the first time a systematic treatise on the etiology and pathology of Chinese medicine, distinguishing four major categories of diseases: inner, outer, women's and children's. Each of these four main parts is then subdivided into sections that outline the origin of the disorder in question, its process of development and its major clinical symptoms. After this, the text does not prescribe phytotherapeutic or acupuncture prescriptions but rather specific exercises of gymnastics, massages, breathing or visualization. This new classification of the practices of nourishing life in accordance with a systematic etiology and pathology represents a big step forward in the development of these techniques (Despeux 1989; Despeux and Obringer 1997).

Further texts of the Tang dynasty continue this tendency, clearly identifying gymnastics as part of the medical tradition and linking them with specific diseases. For example Master Ning, one of the classic gymnastics masters, is cited in the sixth-century *Gymnastics Scripture (Daoyin jing)* as saying:

We practice gymnastics because they make all the pathogenic energy evaporate from our limbs, bones, and joints. Thus only good energy prevails and can become more pure and essential.

Practice the exercises diligently and with care whenever you have time between work and conversation. Either in the morning or at night is fine. Gradually your bones and joints will become firm and strong. The hundred diseases will be eliminated completely.

Whether you have caught a chill [wind-attack disorder] in your chest or are thoroughly fatigued and cannot rouse yourself;

—whether you have periods of deafness when you cannot hear or find your eyes going dizzy and your mind turning mad on you;

—whether you have energy moving against its proper current and rising up violently or experience severe pains in your hips:

—in all cases you can actively expel the disease by practicing these exercises and guiding the energy to the place of trouble, following the proper charts and focusing it on the right spot.

By guiding the energy you will supplement the energy of your spleen and stomach systems; by practicing gymnastics you will heal your four limbs. (2ab; Kohn 1993, 144-45)

How, then, did Daoists approach this medical tradition of gymnastics?

The Daoist Perspective

From the earliest sources and throughout the middle ages, Daoists acknowledged the presence of preventative medicine and the methods of nourishing life as a valuable tool but considered it secondary. Even the very earliest mention of gymnastic exercises in the *Zhuangzi* of the third century B.C.E., has a rather denigrating feeling to it. It says:

To pant, to puff, to hail, to sip, to spit out the old and draw in the new, practicing bear-hangings and bird-stretchings, longevity his only concern—such is the life favored by the Daoying practitioners, and the man who nourishes his body, hopes to live to be as old as Pengzu. (ch. 15; Watson 1968, 167-168)

The contrast made in the *Zhuangzi* is between the liberated master who has a direct connection to the Dao and lives freely in its flow and the technical practitioner who needs to study hard and work systematically at his attainments. A story in chapter 7 illustrates the contrast. Here, a Daoist master named Huzi or Gourd Master gives in to the urgings of

his disciple Liezi and lets himself be analyzed by a fortune-telling shaman. The shaman comes repeatedly, seeing a different personality or mind image each time. After coming for the third time, he exclaims in exasperation: “Your master is never the *same!* I have no way to analyze him! If he tries to steady himself, I will come back and examine him again.” The master, in contrast, is unfazed and explains: “Just now I appeared to him as the great vastness where nothing wins out. He probably saw in me the workings of the balanced energies. Where the swirling waves gather there is an abyss; where the still waters gather there is an abyss; where the running waters gather there is an abyss. The abyss has nine names and I have shown him three. Try bringing him again.”

The next day, the shaman again joined Liezi to see the Gourd Master, but before he even came to halt before the master, his wits left him and he fled—confronted by a vision of the pure Dao at the origins of creation or, as the text says, “that which has not yet emerged from the source—totally empty, wriggling and turning, not knowing anything about who or what, now dipping and bending, now flowing in waves.” (Watson 1968, 94-97).

The same distinction between a level of existence that is completely at one with the Dao and a more technical approach to cosmic harmony is also made in the *Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity (Baopuzi)*, an alchemical classic of the fourth century C.E.. It notes that those who nourish life with herbal remedies, diets, breathing, and gymnastics may deem themselves advanced practitioners of the Dao, but will never reach the higher levels, for which an alchemical elixir has to be prepared and active communication with the gods be established. First, the text clearly acknowledges the medical and long life benefits of the daoyin practices. But then it notes that while these methods may help health, they will not reach to the higher spheres, and that the truly marvelous alchemical recipes can reach much further, granting practitioners states of unlimited immortality and oneness with the Dao. The text has:

Man’s death ensues from losses, old age, illnesses, poisons, miasmas, and chills. Today people do gymnastics and breathing exercises, revert their sperm to nourish the brain, follow dietary rules, regulate their activity and rest, take medicines, give thought to their inner gods to maintain their integrity, undergo prohibitions, wear amulets and seals from their belts, and keep at a distance all those who might harm their lives. In this way they may avoid the six baneful things just listed that can cause death.

Physicians today have pills that activate and brighten the kidneys, powders that benefit the circulation, roasted boxhorn from strengthening bone structure, and infusions of yellow hedysarum as a general tonic. . . . Writings also assert that a certain Wu Pu received from Hua Tuo the Five Animals’ Frolic as a basic form of gymnastics and managed to live to over a hundred. If such are the effects of the humblest of medicines, just think what can be done by those that are truly marvelous! (*Baopuzi* 5.4a; Ware 1966, 103)

This position is radicalized further in organized Daoism, where the relationship to the Dao in the form of various heavens and deities superseded all other concerns and health was the direct result of a pure and pious life. Communal Daoists of the Celestial Masters, founded in the second century C.E., thus prohibited medical and health treatments in favor of religious cultivation. For them, the world was populated by gods and demons—the latter appearing everywhere and in every shape, from the lowly rabbit and the dirty rat to all sorts of natural and supernatural creatures. A list of such demons has been excavated from a Han tomb, and several others are found in the earliest surviving texts of the Celestial Masters. To combat them, members had to fortify their houses and bodies with talismans, learn to recognize the demons and call them by their proper names, and visualize themselves as demon-conquering heroes

The same also holds true for the major medieval schools of Highest Clarity and Numinous Treasure, although their followers were lay based and thus not prohibited from availing themselves of medical treatments. Still, their universe was dominantly characterized by their relation to otherworldly entities with cultivation practices that involved visualizations of gods, opening of divine palaces within the body, ecstatic excursions to the stars, and highly complex ceremonies of communication, purification, confession, and the exoneration of ancestors.

Methods akin to gymnastics and breathing were used mainly as purification measures in the preparation of rituals. Thus the *Introductory Explanation to the Daode jing (Daode zhenjing xujue)*, a fifth-century text on devotional observances to Lord Lao discovered among manuscripts found at Dunhuang, instructs followers who wish to recite the *Daode jing* to begin by burning incense and straightening their robes, then bowing to the ten directions. After this, while

concentrating their mind and visualizing Laozi together with his main disciples, they should open the sacred text and recite an incantation of invitation and praise to the deity that also places the practitioner into a cosmic context

In my room, the seven jewels come together,
Doors and windows open of themselves.
Utter in my purity, I strive for deeper truth,
Riding on bright light, I ascend the purple sky.
Sun and moon shine to my right and left,
I go to the immortals and find eternal life.

Following this, adepts are to click their teeth and swallow the saliva thirty-six times, applying long life methods. Then, however, they again move into the more religious spheres and are to see themselves surrounded by the celestial constellations of the four directions: the green dragon to the left, the white tiger to the right, the red bird in front, and the dark warrior behind. Only when placed in such a cosmic environment can they recite the sacred book

It is thus evident so far, that medical gymnastics as the forerunners of Qigong were acknowledged by medieval Daoists but considered potential hindrances or, at best, preparatory and secondary measures to their main concern of attaining immortality and oneness with the Dao.

Immortality

Looking further into the early tradition, however, it becomes evident that methods akin to gymnastics, breathing, diets, and sexual control were also used by immortals—not as medical methods to restore and enhance health, though, but as ways of transforming the *qi*-constellation of the human body/mind and thereby attain a level beyond natural life known as immortality. A state of having gone beyond the limitations of this world and ascended to a higher sphere, this is a form of transcendence to a divine realm that is closely connected with the origins of the universe.

To attain this state, practitioners live in separation from society, engage in techniques of physical and spiritual control, have their mind set on interaction with the spirit world, and in the process of their training acquire magical powers. They live in the wilderness, dress in garments of leaves or deer skins, fast by living on pure *qi* or eat raw food they find in the woods (Eskildsen 1998, 20-21). They are symbolically associated with birds in the lightness of their bodies and their ability to fly (Kaltenmark 1953, 10). Being so close to nature, moreover, immortals attain extended longevity and continuous vigor and eventually reach the paradises, luscious mountains surrounded by extensive bodies of water, the most prominent of which are known as Penglai and Kunlun (see Sōfukawa 1981).



Daoist Seven Immortals

Not many sources remain that describe immortals and their practices. The first appear in the Han dynasty and are typically written by aristocrats and court writers—such as Sima Qian’s *Record of the Historian (Shiji)* and the *Immortals’ Biographies (Liexian zhuan)*, attributed to Liu Xiang (77-6 B.C.E.). Additional information on immortals is found in later dynastic histories (see Ngo 1976; DeWoskin 1983) and hagiographies, such as Ge Hong’s *Biographies of Spirit Immortals (Shenxian zhuan)* and his work of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, both of the fourth century.

The key characteristic of immortals is the transformation that happens in and to the body of the practitioner. Refining their inner *qi* to higher levels of subtlety, immortals become ethereal beings, feathery, sometimes hairy, with no need to eat or drink and invulnerable to heat and cold, fire and water. Light as ether, they can appear and vanish in an instant, and despite highly advanced years typically look young, fresh, and radiant.

The main techniques leading to this wondrous state involve the refinement of *qi*, which is taken into the body as breath, food, or sexual energy. Immortals accordingly practice control in these areas, using breathing exercises and gymnastics, dietetics and sexual practices in their own unique way. Harnessing the breath through methods of “expelling the old and inhaling the new,” they control breathing and reach high longevity, so that even at an age of several hundred years they still look as if they were only seventeen: a face clear like peach blossoms, a mouth of cinnabar redness, vibrant and smooth skin, and glossy black hair and eyebrows. However, even here breathing is only the preliminary stage, and immortals need to complete the elixir of immortality to fully ascend to heaven (Campany 2002, 357).

Food intake is another major way of achieving bodily transformation. Most commonly this means the ingestion of only natural substances, such as roots, nuts, berries, or pine needles. An early example for this is Chang Rong, who lived in the mountains and ate only ash raspberry roots, thereby maintaining the complexion of a twenty-year old for several centuries before finally being transported to the divine realm (*Liexian zhuan* 2.5b; Kaltenmark 1953, 152-53). More famous than she is Yu Jiang, better known as Maonü, the Hairy Woman. A palace woman under the First Emperor of Qin, she saw the collapse of the dynasty approach and took refuge on Mount Hua. There she met the immortal Gu Chun, who taught her how to eat pine needles and survive in the wilderness—thus gaining the ability to live without solid food, become immune to cold and heat, and move as swiftly as if she were flying. After living at ease on the earth for several hundred years, she ascended to the paradises of the immortals (*Liexian zhuan* 2.7b-8a; Kaltenmark 1953, 159-60). Still a highly venerated and respected immortal, she is depicted in a leafy gown and with hairy legs and still venerated today on various Daoist mountains (Porter 1993, 69).

Another well-known immortal who used dietary techniques is Master Whitestone (Baishi xiansheng). He would have liked to concoct an alchemical elixir, but his family was poor and he could not afford to do so. Instead, he made it his habit to boil white stones and use them for food, the reason why he came to be called Master Whitestone, in combination with bits of dried meat. For the most part, however, he would abstain from all grains and solid foods and thus reach an age of centuries.

A third major way of controlling *qi* as it enters and leaves the body is through sexual hygiene. In many cases this means the practice of celibacy for the preservation of sexual energy and its circulation and refinement within the body (Eskildsen 1998, 38-40), but it can also involve work with partners. Men might have relations with numerous women in order to obtain their *qi* so they could augment their own stock by guiding the precious substance through the body for greater energetic refinement, but some women are also reported to have used sexual methods for their attainment of long life and transcendence (see Wile 1992).

In all these cases, longevity techniques are used by religious practitioners for the attainment of higher stages: first a level of complete health, then a transcendence of health in an extended longevity, often over several centuries, and finally a transformation of the body's *qi* to a more spiritual level of oneness with the Dao. Unlike the organized religious Daoists of later centuries, the early immortals acknowledged and actively used the continuity of *qi* to guide them from healing through longevity to immortality. What, then, is the logic behind this perspective and how can it be part of an integrated Daoist teaching?

[To be continued next month with Daoism and the Origins of Qigong, Part 2]

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Taiji and Qigong for Immune System Health

(太极拳和气功有利免疫系统的健康)

by Eric Borreson

There is considerable evidence that taiji and Qigong can help strengthen your immune system. Doctors do not claim to fully understand what happens, but they do agree that taiji and Qigong help. One way that they may work is by activating our relaxation response. Another way that they may work is by activating our lymphatic system.

Relaxation Response

Meditation has been shown to strengthen our immune system. The mechanism is not entirely clear, but it seems likely it is related to stress reduction. Dr. Herbert Benson studied the effect of meditation starting in the late 1960s and into the 1970s. He concluded that meditation relaxes our body and mind. He coined the term “relaxation response” to describe how our body responds to meditation and calms us after a stressful event.

Our nervous system consists of two parts. The sympathetic nervous system manages the stimulating activities related to the fight-or-flight response when we are under stress. The sympathetic nervous system keeps us alive when we are in danger.

The parasympathetic nervous system is responsible for the relaxing activities that calm us down. It is often called the relaxation response or the rest-and-digest response because it is responsible for the activities that happen when we are at rest.

Stress is known to damage our bodies in many ways. It appears that one of those ways is a weakened immune system. Taiji is a well-known method of developing a mind-body connection that can invoke the relaxation response and activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which in turn reduces damage caused by stress.

Many taiji teachers incorporate meditation as part of the class for a couple of reasons. Meditation is good for your health by itself. In addition to that, learning taiji is stressful for beginners. It is difficult to teach our body to move in the slow, precise ways used in taiji. No student ever pays attention to me when I tell them to relax and not worry about it. They still stress about it. If I put stress into their lives, I want to help them manage it properly.

Taiji can also be used to directly invoke the relaxation response. The basic principles of taiji say to breathe deeply, move slowly and continuously, focus on the movement, and imagine moving against a gentle resis-

tance. These are effective in calming the mind and body.

This is too much for a beginning student to be able to do at first. However, it can happen once a student develops a basic level of knowledge of the taiji forms. Regular practice of the forms in a simple set can be used to practice the basic principles of taiji. This is very helpful in supporting the student in developing the relaxation response.

To the students, it may seem like they are “in the flow”, or “really focused”, or some similar feeling. In taiji terms, it means they are starting to develop some inner strength and intention. In medical terms, they are developing a mind-body connection and invoking the relaxation response, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system. However, this does not happen immediately as people are learning taiji. It takes time and practice to develop the feeling.

Lymphatic System

The lymphatic system has many functions. One function is related to our immune system. The lymphatic system works by circulating lymph through the body. Lymph is a fluid that flows through a network of lymphatic vessels to and from the interstitial areas around cells. Cellular wastes are expelled from the cells and return through the lymphatic system.

The lymph nodes filter out any unwanted materials from the lymph and removes them from the system. We normally think of white blood cells (lymphocytes) being associated with our circulatory system, but they are part of our lymphatic system, too. Lymphocytes collect in the lymph nodes and work as part of our immune system to attack invaders.

A big difference between our circulatory system and lymphatic system is that there is no heart to pump lymph. There are several ways that lymph moves through the lymphatic system. The primary way that lymph circulates is activated when the lymph nodes and ducts are massaged and compressed. The nodes can be manually massaged by medical professionals, but are naturally massaged when you exercise. One of the best types of exercise for this is taiji because the slow movements of the forms causes a gentle, slow massage of body tissues.

Lymph is stored in lymph nodes scattered throughout

the body. There are concentrations of nodes in your upper chest near where your arms join your torso, in the center of your chest, in your lower abdomen where your legs join your torso, and the bottoms of your feet.

The nodes in your upper chest are massaged when you move your arms back and forth and up and down. This happens in many taiji movements, such as brush knee, white crane spreads wings, repulse monkey, etc.

The nodes in the center of your chest are massaged by deep breathing. As the diaphragm moves up and down, it massages the lymph vessels. Taiji and Qigong both emphasize the kind of deep breathing that promotes lymph flow.

The nodes in your lower abdomen are massaged when you step, shift your weight, or open your kua (hips). Taiji emphasizes using the waist to lead the movement. Any taiji form that involves stepping should have the effect of opening and closing the kua.

The nodes on the bottom of your foot are massaged when you step forward onto your heel and shift your weight forward, bringing the rest of your foot down on the floor. In the medical field, the term "pedal pump" is used to refer to methods that massage the bottom of your feet to promote drainage of lymph from the lower extremities.

If a lymph node has been damaged or has been removed during surgery, the interstitial fluids cannot readily enter the lymphatic system. The fluids collect and cause swelling and edema called lymphedema. In addition, bacteria can enter the lymph through the skin and cause infections. It requires daily effort to massage the tissue and ensure the lymph is flowing. Daily Qigong or taiji practice can contribute significantly to keeping your immune system healthy.



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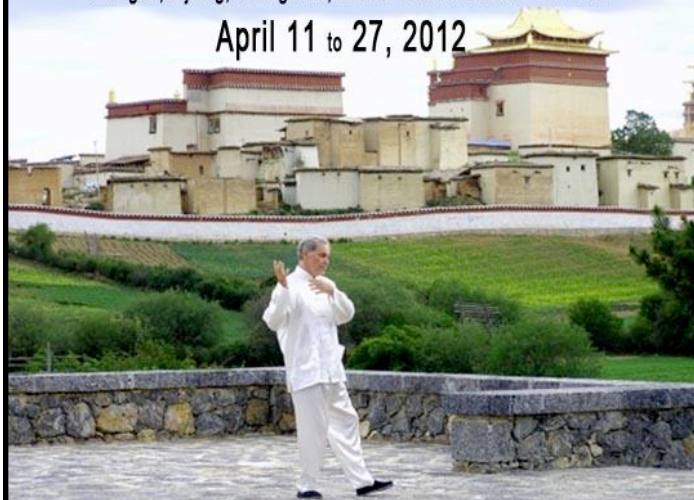
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Daoist Internal Alchemy:

A Deep Language for Communicating with Nature's Intelligence, Part 1

Alchemy Formulas, Qi Field & Language Theory

by Michael Winn



道家内丹修炼术

一种与自然智慧沟通的深层语言

When I was first initiated into Daoist Qigong and internal alchemy, nei dan practice, twenty years ago, I began having exciting and profound experiences. Mysterious hidden inner worlds were suddenly revealed to me. The interior dimensions of my body became a vast playground that I had somehow overlooked in my previous spiritual explorations. As I progressed through "Seven Alchemical Formulas for Attaining Immortality", I gradually came to recognize the nei dan formulas themselves reveal a deep language by which Nature communicates with the different dimensions of its own intelligence. This universal field of intelligence in alchemical terms is the mind of the Dao. Physical nature would be the body of the Dao.

These seven formulas were transmitted to my first Daoist teacher Mantak Chia by One Cloud, a Daoist monk who searched with limited success in various monasteries for thirty years for the secrets of internal alchemy. An abbot finally told him to "go into the mountains to find a teacher". On Long White Mountain in northern China near Manchuria, One Cloud met another Daoist who had left his monastery, and who HAD found a true teacher of internal alchemy. He transmitted to One Cloud these nei dan formulas. One Cloud practiced these methods and entered into the breatharian state (bigu) for some years, meaning he fed his body on Qi alone. (2)

During the Japanese invasion One Cloud left his mountain, and migrated on foot to the mountains behind Hong Kong. He healed local people and taught nei dan to a few students. He was a simple man who constantly smiled; his only complaint was that eating some bad food after he came down the mountain would cause his early death. He died at age 96 in the 1970's. His formulas resonate with writings attributed to Lu Dongbin, one of the semi-legendary "Eight Immortals", around which the "Zhong-Lu" nei dan tradition first flourished in the 10 and 11th centuries. Some of his formulas also resemble the teachings on nei dan of the Complete Perfection (Quanzhen) tradition. Historically, it is not clear if the practice of internal alchemy adopted by temple schools of Daoism like Quanzhen originally came from scattered "mountain Dao" practitioners like One Cloud's teacher. One Cloud told Chia that he had "given him the best from all his teachers". The seven formulas by title and brief summary of their practice are found in appendix A.

Today in China, there are thousands of Qigong forms and many different nei gong and nei dan systems of internal mind training. At first, this is bewildering, as if it were a spiritual labyrinth with too many paths. Now, looking back after 20 years, it is easy to see all methods as expression of a single common deep energetic lan-

guage. Whether the life force, Qi, is moved using body language or is shaped by the intention or imagination of a particular aspect of mind/spirit (shen), it is still the same language of Qi. Just as one can produce many different word combinations in English, all comprehensible because of a common grammar and vocabulary, so one can create many Qigong and nei gong forms, each movement pattern having a unique effect on the body-mind's Qi field.



Nei dan ("inner elixir") is a special class of nei gong ("inner skill") that trains one to "speak" the deep language that silently pulses through the medium of a universal Qi field. One of the meanings of the Chinese character for "Dao" is "to speak, to tell". (3) Hence in the famous first line of the Dao De Jing (Tao Te Ching), "The Dao that can be spoken is not the true Dao", the word "spoken" is the same character as that used for "Dao". The line could even be translated, "The speaking that is spoken is not the true speaking". So the idea that the Dao exists as an unspoken, or silent language, is emphasized in the very first line of this classic.

Linguists generally agree there must exist a "deep language" structure that allows every child born to speak "natural languages" such as English or Chinese, or to cre-

ate "formal languages" such as computer programs or symbol languages such as the I Ching or mathematics. Noam Chomsky posits a "universal grammar" that is deeper even than the "transformational grammar" he thinks underlies each natural spoken language. However, no linguist has been able to describe the structure of this deep language other than to say that it is what defines intelligence itself and all power of thinking and organized perception. Some linguists admit this deep language may best be explored by religion. (4)

Neurobiologists, unable to locate a deep language structure in the brain, have theorized that memory and intelligence are held in some kind of holographic field. Physicists like David Bohm, Erwin Lazlo and Mae Wan Ho posit a holographic quantum field filled with self-creating organisms that communicate via energy fields with a super-conscious universal organism. (5) This organic quantum field theory (not accepted by most physicists, who view space/time as mechanistic) bears some similarity to ancient Daoist alchemical ideas. One major difference is the Daoist ideas have gone through several millennia of practical testing and application to the evolution of humans.

My thesis is that a deep language ability is stored in the Qi field, and that One Cloud's nei dan formulas are a good example of how it is possible to train oneself to directly perceive and communicate with Nature's intelligence in a mostly non-verbal and non-ordinary language. Daoist alchemy allows us to approach closely the Mystery of our Inner Voice. Whether we hear these voices inside our head as audible voices or as silent thoughts, or instinctual feelings from our gut, who is speaking to us? Alchemy answers the question: where do intuition and inner guidance arise from? By learning the alchemical process of communicating through resonance with different dimensions of the Qi field, we can systematically get in touch with the origin of those voices.

I define Qigong ("skill with energy") as a natural body language arising to the "surface" from nei gong's deeper grammar of Qi patterns. (6) Practicing Qigong (in which I include taiji, bagua, and xingyi internal arts) is like learning the strokes of the Qi alphabet and their "meaning" or expression in physical reality. By calming the mind, regulating the breath, and moving one's body in particular patterns, the Qi field governing the meridians and energetic centers of the physical body is activated and "speaks back" to one initially as different feelings of energy. Qigong and nei gong are not something that one "does" in the ordinary sense of action; rather they are methods of shaping how one communicates. The shape of the Qi patterns being communicated then shape one's reality.

The Qi field is the field of all possible relationships. Every relationship involves communication; communication requires a language, and as Ludwig Wittgenstein demonstrated in his famed treatise on "private language" - every language by definition is public and accessible. The seven nei dan formulas I learned give a coherent public structure and sequence to a human language process for speaking with and listening to the deepest levels of Nature's intelligence. I believe alchemy is a process of learning to speak with this universal intelligence using the entirety of one's personal being -- body, Qi, and spirit fused into one.



Personal Account - Learning the Language of Alchemy

It may be useful to note alchemy was not my first spiritual path. I had previously spent four years of 4 to 8 hours of intensive daily practice of tantric yoga and kundalini meditation. I briefly describe these tantric experiences as they offer an interesting contrast with the effect of Daoist nei dan, and offer a window into how different spiritual practices shape what is communicated to and from humans through the Qi field of nature.

The tantric practices were designed to raise the kundalini by activating the "ojas", an essence perhaps equivalent to Daoist term "jing". This yoga focused almost exclusively on using breath, asana (postures) and mantras to move energy through my spine and out the crown of my head, beyond my physical body into some unknown Higher and hopefully Ultimate Self. Rigorous daily practice put me into a state of near hallucinogenic ecstasy. However, I was not on drugs. I was celibate, yet could

feel my testicles pulsing continuously with a sexual, electrical like energy up my spine, day and night, with my pineal and pituitary glands pulsing on the other end. I would exit my "cave" (apartment) and walk around the streets of New York feeling I was ten feet tall, looking down on everything, as if floating above my body. However, I noticed that as my head became more expanded, my body grew weaker. I was less able to stand the cold, one reason I grew curious about the more body centered Daoist approach. I was also attracted to the language of the Daoists, poetic and mystical yet embodying truth with scientific precision.

When I started practicing Daoist Qigong and nei dan, the energy field shifted deeper inside my body. I got grounded, less spacey, and my body grew strong again. Rather than looking down from above my head, I felt myself deep inside my body looking out. As I began learning the first formulas, my vital organs began pulsing with new life; currents of energy began flowing in different meridians and in my limbs. Buried emotional patterns I thought were long gone surfaced and released. This opened up more space inside my body. Later there was a progression of strange symbols and images - cauldrons floated deep within the inner spaces of my body, bagua shapes made of light suddenly flashed. I felt sexual-like orgasms in different vital organs, and once my spine ecstatically dissolved, as if some invisible being were making love inside my body.

I had entered some new mythopoeic world, seemingly crafted with amazing elegance and subtlety in advance of my arrival into it. It was a unique feeling of satisfaction, as if I had been allowed a glimpse inside my real body. These experiences arose from practicing only the second alchemy formula of "Lesser Water and Fire", long before I understood anything about original Qi or communication with deeper levels of Nature's Qi field. Later, I came to recognize the progressive levels of "emptiness" in the cauldrons used in each formula were actually "filled" with this elusive original Qi; that "sitting in forgetfulness" was actually remembering my original energy. At this time, I was still at a low level, but didn't know it and didn't care. I felt I was going home, and was willing to start over completely to get to the heart of the Dao.

Oddly, shifting from tantra to Daoist alchemy reminded me of my experiences in learning new foreign languages, which I did often in the course of travelling to 90 countries over my lifetime. I had immersed myself in Russian language and travel in college, taught myself French living on the Riviera after graduation, and learned Amharic (Ethiopian) and enough Arabic to get by while working as a freelance war correspondent in Africa. Learning each language had given me the thrill of being

able to communicate with a secret set of sound-symbols unknown to non-initiates of that language. Each language unlocked a new culture. When local people heard me speak in their tongue, their hearts opened. I was recognized as belonging to their world and invited inside their lives and homes. Each culture was a private microcosm, holding its own intimate conversation within the macrocosm of a planet with billions of people chattering away in thousands of different dialects and tongues. (7)



As I was inexorably drawn deeper into Daoist alchemy, each succeeding alchemical formula resembled gaining fluency in an exotic foreign language. When first learning a formula I would feel awkward, as if I didn't know how to get around or ask for anything. I would gradually get comfortable "speaking" through a new subtle Qi channel or "talking" with the local Qi field of a vital organ, a mountain, the ocean, or the sun using the language of resonance. As each formula gave me confidence to communicate with a new aspect of the collective mind reasonably well, I was invited into a deeper and more intimate level dialog with "Nature". This meant learning to listen to both self-nature (microcosmos) and environment-nature (macrocosmos). Where was this conversation going? It felt like I was entering a series of rooms or nested cauldrons within myself, leading into some unseen inner sanctum.

Learning to speak in the deep language of each formula meant learning to shape my personal Qi field into a recognizable alphabet of energy patterns within myself that matched some invisible inner faculty of intelligence in Nature. The repeated alchemical cooking of the main "ingredients" - body-mind-spirit-emptiness (jing-qi-shen-wu) - were octaves of the same inner conversation, taken a little deeper in each formula. The increasingly subtle nature of nei dan's deep language made the stream of thoughts chattering within my mind seem increasingly secondary.

Is Chinese Language Essential to Learning Alchemy?

At one point, a crisis was ignited within me: did I need to learn Chinese in order to truly plumb the depths of Daoist alchemy? Was this alchemical world of transmuting elements and pulsating currents of energy, at its deepest levels, an exclusive club for the Chinese speaking, as some Chinese claim? Was Daoist alchemy a product of Chinese culture? On the other hand, was it the other way around, that Chinese language and culture were somehow shaped by an alchemical process imbedded within the deep language of Nature? I chose to spend my time practicing alchemy rather than learning classical Chinese; better to rely on scholars fully dedicated to translation. But, would it lessen my mastery of alchemy?

I learned enough Chinese to see their pictographs are visually richer in association than western alphabets and thus facilitate grasping the multiple meanings of obscure Daoist terms. However, they are still intermediary written images, interpreted by the mind's visual functions, and do not by themselves open communication with the deep language patterns underlying them. If speaking Chinese did this automatically, everyone in China would be enlightened. Alchemy also uses an intermediary language, but it is mostly not spoken nor written. This language consists of Qi channels in the body and in nature, resonating spheres of sensation, feeling, and perceived spiritual qualities. It requires observation of natural processes within one's body and in physical nature, and sometimes employs these natural images as language symbols. Together these evoke and shape silent language patterns within an omnipresent Qi field. The written symbols of the I Ching are used by many adepts as a concise shorthand for describing alchemical processes, but it is not necessary to study the I Ching to practice the seven formulas of One Cloud.

A separate, but related question: is Chinese a sacred or initiatic language, with its four tonal inflections suggesting a resonance to the four elements (fire, water, metal, wood) and the central fifth element earth, the tone or voice of the speaker giving it mind intent (yi)? Speaking such an initiatic language in Five Phase (wu xing) tones might in ancient times have been viewed as a way to shape shift the local Qi field or energetically manage the forces of human culture. For nei dan initiates speech can be a shortcut to activating directional Qi flow or summoning ancestral spirits. Could not English be used for such a purpose if imbued with correct intent?

Biology is a factor in language, both spoken and deep. A fascinating study suggests one's spoken language may control brain hemisphere dominance. This study,

conducted in Japan, showed that Japanese speakers processed vowel sounds and intuitive feelings in their left-brain, the opposite of westerners. But, westerners raised from an early age with Japanese language shifted to left brain intuition. (8) This raises the question whether Chinese speaking nei dan adepts might also have a different pattern of resonance with nature than westerners, reflected in the dominant qualities they resonate with, i.e. sun vs. moon, water vs. fire. Daoism is described as the "watercourse way". Daoist cultures appear more intuitive than western culture, which may facilitate introspection and sensing inner body space. This may be an example of how one's surface language biologically "wires" one into the deep language.

I finally concluded that the only language I needed to learn Daoist alchemy would arise spontaneously through my heartfelt and sincere meditation practice of the seven alchemical formulas of Immortality. Due to the organized teaching of One Cloud's formulas in the west since 1981, many tens of thousands of non Chinese speaking westerners have learned to practice some part of these nei dan formulas, perhaps more than are practicing similar meditations in China (due to communist policies). This is not to imply that One Cloud's nei dan formulas are the definitive description of Nature's deep language. To the contrary, I see the numerous expressions of nei dan in China, which often vary from mountain to mountain, as different formulations of the same deep language. Each may use different meditation methods, or vary in the use of language, myth, deities or images. However, they all seem to share a common underlying deep grammar of a jing-qi-shen-wu (essence-energy-spirit-emptiness) continuum on a pulsating yin-yang-yuan (negative-positive-neutral) energy grid extending to five cardinal sacred directions or spiritual qualities.

[Continued next month with Daoist Internal Alchemy part 2]

FOOTNOTES:

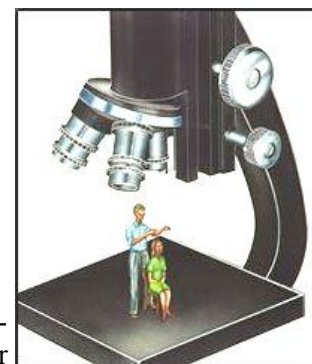
- (1) Adapted from Vitality, Energy, Spirit (Shamballa, 1991) T. Cleary, ed., pg. 185.
- (2) The bigu ("without food") phenomenon has left the realm of legend. For conference of western scientists studying students of modern nei dan teacher Yan Xin who stopped eating for months or years without undue weight loss, see www.yanxinqigong/bigu.html. For account by one of my western students that entered bigu using One Cloud's formulas, "Healing Tao Goes Breatharian" by Eve Adesso, at www.healingdao.com/library_index.html
- (3) Tao Te Ching, Addiss & Lombardo (Hackett Publishing, Indiana) pg. xviii.
- (4) Raphael Gamaroff surveys the confusion and disagreements amongst linguists over what "deep language" means at www.und.ac.za/und/ling/archive/gama-01.html
- (5)--Organism and Psyche in a Participatory Universe, by Mae-Won Ho. www.i-sis.org/organism.htm
- (6) The line between qigong and nei gong is necessarily fuzzy, depending on subtle mind intent and skill of each practitioner. "Wuji qigong" is a term often used to denote a "superclass of qigong" that is also a nei gong form focused on opening a connection to the Origin. I learned an 800 year old lineage wuji qigong form that came from a 106 year old Daoist monk on Wudang Mtn. Based on daoist cosmology and alchemy, it feels qualitatively very different from other qigong forms. Available as video, www.healingdao.com
- (7) U.N. reports there are 6,000-7,000 spoken languages on the planet; nearly 5,000 of them tribal, disappearing at a fast rate. lycos.com/ens
- (8) From abstract of study by Prof. Tadanobu Tsunoda, Tokyo Medical and Dental University, unknown where it was published.



Michael Winn is the founder of Healing Tao University with 30 Tao summer retreats in Asheville, N.C. and is the past President of the National Qigong Association. Michael has over 30 years experience in Taoist arts and leads an annual China Dream Trip. He has co-authored 7 books with Mantak Chia, and is also the author of 10 Qigong and Inner Alchemy home study courses, as well as a free e-book, Way of the Inner Smile. All are available on www.HealingTaoUSA.com or call: 888-999-0555

Mind-Body Medicine Research Update

身心医学科研动态



Effects of Tai Chi on pre-landing muscle response latency during stepping down while performing a concurrent mental task in older adults. *Eur. J Appl. Physiol.* 2011 Nov 22. by Tsang WW, Hui-Chan CW, Fu SN. From Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, China.

Abstract: To investigate whether elderly Tai Chi practitioners are better able to descend a step while performing a concurrent mental task than non-practitioners. The design includes cross-sectional study. The setting includes university-based rehabilitation center. The subjects were 16 young women, 29 elderly women, and 31 elderly women who had been practicing Tai Chi regularly for at least half a year. Pre-landing muscle response latencies in their tibialis anterior (TA) and medial gastrocnemius (MG) muscles were measured during stepping down (single task) and stepping down while performing a concurrent mental activity (dual tasking). The non-practitioners had earlier onset of muscle activity in the TA in preparation for landing than the other subjects. The response latency of the Tai Chi practitioners was not significantly different from that of the young controls. When the cognitive task was added, the pre-landing response in the TA was significantly altered in both elderly groups. Response was significantly delayed among the non-practitioners, but significantly earlier among the Tai Chi subjects. The average change in response latency was significantly greater in the non-Tai Chi group compared with the young subjects and the Tai Chi practitioners ($p = 0.006$). Such findings suggest that practicing Tai Chi helps the elderly maintain the same strategy as much as younger subjects during stepping down. Tai Chi practitioners seem to have a greater capacity to shift attention between mental and physical tasks than other elderly women.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/g72n671158616345>

Mindful attention reduces neural and self-reported cue-induced craving in smokers. *Soc Cogn Affect Neurosci.* 2011 Nov 22. by Westbrook C, Creswell JD, Tabibnia G, Julson E, Kober H, Tindle HA. From University of Wisconsin. cwestbrook@wisc.edu.

Abstract: An emerging body of research suggests

that mindfulness-based interventions may be beneficial for smoking cessation and the treatment of other addictive disorders. One way that mindfulness may facilitate smoking cessation is through the reduction of craving to smoking cues. The present work considers whether mindful attention can reduce self-reported and neural markers of cue-induced craving in treatment seeking smokers. Forty-seven ($n = 47$) meditation-naïve treatment-seeking smokers (12-h abstinent from smoking) viewed and made ratings of smoking and neutral images while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Participants were trained and instructed to view these images passively or with mindful attention. Results indicated that mindful attention reduced self-reported craving to smoking images, and reduced neural activity in a craving-related region of subgenual anterior cingulate cortex (sgACC). Moreover, a psychophysiological interaction analysis revealed that mindful attention reduced functional connectivity between sgACC and other craving-related regions compared to passively viewing smoking images, suggesting that mindfulness may decouple craving neurocircuitry when viewing smoking cues. These results provide an initial indication that mindful attention may describe a 'bottom-up' attention to one's present moment experience in ways that can help reduce subjective and neural reactivity to smoking cues in smokers.

Effects of yoga exercise on serum adiponectin and metabolic syndrome factors in obese postmenopausal women. *Menopause.* 2011 Nov 14. by Lee JA, Kim JW,



Kim DY From the Department of Physical Education, Kyungsoong University, Busan, South Korea.

OBJECTIVE: Regular and continuous yoga exercise is one of the most important nonpharmacological methods of improving serum lipid concentrations, adipose tissue, and metabolic syndrome factors. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of yoga exercise on serum adiponectin and metabolic syndrome factors in obese postmenopausal Korean women.

METHODS: Sixteen healthy postmenopausal women aged 54.50 ± 2.75 years with more than 36% body fat were randomly assigned to either a yoga exercise group ($n = 8$) or to a "no exercise" control group ($n = 8$). The variables of body composition, visceral fat, serum adiponectin, and metabolic syndrome factors were measured in all the participants before and after the 16-week study.

RESULTS: Body weight, percentage of body fat, lean body mass, body mass index, waist circumference, and visceral fat area had significantly decreased. High-density lipoprotein cholesterol and adiponectin had significantly increased, but total cholesterol, triglyceride, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, blood pressure, insulin, glucose, and homoeostasis model assessment-insulin resistance had significantly decreased. Serum adiponectin concentrations were significantly correlated with waist circumference, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, diastolic blood pressure, and homoeostasis model assessment-insulin resistance in the postyoga exercise group.

CONCLUSIONS: Our findings indicate that yoga exercise improves adiponectin level, serum lipids, and metabolic syndrome risk factors in obese postmenopausal women. Consequently, yoga exercise will be effective in preventing cardiovascular disease caused by obesity in obese postmenopausal Korean women.

Effect of short-term pranayama and meditation on cardiovascular functions in healthy individuals. *Heart Views*. 2011 Apr;12(2):58-62. by Ankad RB, Herur A, Patil S, Shashikala GV, Chinagudi S. from Department of Physiology, S. Nijalingappa Medical College, India.

CONTEXT: Asana, pranayama, and meditation are three main techniques of yoga practiced in India over thousands of years to attain functional harmony between the body and mind. Recent studies on long-term yogic practices have shown improvements in cardiovascular functions.

AIM: The present study was conducted to ascertain if a short-term practice of pranayama and meditation had improvements in cardiovascular functions in healthy individuals with respect to age, gender, and body mass index (BMI).

DESIGN: This study was conducted in the Department of physiology of S.N. Medical College, Bagalkot.

METHODS: Fifty healthy subjects (24 males and 26 females) of 20-60 years age group, fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria underwent two hours daily yoga program for 15 days taught by a certified yoga teacher. Pre and post yoga cardiovascular functions were assessed by recording pulse rate, systolic blood pressure, diastolic blood pressure, and mean blood pressure. The parameters were analyzed by Student's t test.

RESULTS: There was significant reduction in resting pulse rate, systolic blood pressure, diastolic blood pressure, and mean arterial blood pressure after practicing pranayama and meditation for 15 days. The response was similar in both the genders, both the age groups, <40 yrs and >40 yrs and both the groups with BMI, <25 kg/m(2) and >25 kg/m(2).

CONCLUSION: This study showed beneficial effects of short term (15 days) regular pranayama and meditation practice on cardiovascular functions by age, gender, and BMI in healthy normal individuals.

Impact of Relaxation Training According to Yoga in Daily Life(®) System on Self-Esteem After Breast Cancer Surgery. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2011 Nov 22. by Kovačič T, Kovačič M. from Centre for Education, Work and Care Dobrna, Dobrna, Slovenia.

OBJECTIVES: The purpose of this pilot study was to gather information on the immediate and short-term effects of relaxation training according to the Yoga In Daily Life(®) system on the self-esteem of patients with breast cancer.

DESIGN: This is a parallel-groups design.

SETTINGS/LOCATION: Baseline interventions took place at the Institute for Oncology of Ljubljana (Slovenia). At discharge, the experimental group was issued with audiocassette recordings containing the instructions for relaxation training to be practiced individually at home for an additional 3 weeks.

SUBJECTS: The convenience sample of 32 patients with breast cancer was recruited from an accessible population of hospitalized women. Patients were randomized to the experimental ($n=16$) and to the control group ($n=16$).

INTERVENTIONS: Both groups received the same standard physiotherapy for 1 week, while the experimental group additionally received a group relaxation training sessions according to the Yoga in Daily Life(®) system. At discharge, the experimental group was issued with audiocassette recordings containing similar instructions

for relaxation training to be practiced individually at home for an additional 3 weeks.

OUTCOME MEASURES: Outcome measures were obtained by blinded investigators (physiotherapists) using standardized questionnaires (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) at baseline (after the surgery); at 1 week (1 week postattendance; at discharge); and at 4 weeks (4 weeks postattendance); prior the commencement of radiation.

RESULTS: Analysis of variance showed that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental and control group in all measuring self-esteem scores over the study period ($p < 0.0005$). At the same time, the control group's scores remained unchanged over the study period ($p > 0.05$).

CONCLUSIONS: The results indicate that relaxation training according to the Yoga in Daily Life system could be a useful clinical physiotherapy intervention for patients who have breast cancer and who are experiencing low self-esteem. Although this kind of relaxation training can be applied to clinical oncology in Slovenia, more studies need to be done.

Tai Chi Enhances the Effects of Endurance Training in the Rehabilitation of Elderly Patients with Chronic Heart Failure. *Rehabil Res Pract.* 2011; 2011:761958. by Caminiti G, Volterrani M, Marazzi G, Cerrito A, Massaro R, Arisi A, Franchini A, Sposato B, Rosano G. from Cardiovascular Research Unit, Department of Medical Sciences, Centre for Clinical and Basic Research, IRCCS San Raffaele, via della Pisana 235, Roma, Italy.

PURPOSE: To assess if Tai Chi added to endurance training (ET) is more effective than ET alone in improving exercise tolerance and quality of life (QOL) of elderly patients with chronic heart failure (CHF).

DESIGN: Sixty CHF patients, age 73.8 ± 6 years, M/F 51/9, were enlisted. Thirty pts were randomized to combined training (CT) performing Tai Chi +ET and 30 patients to ET (ET only).

METHODS: At baseline and after 12 weeks all patients underwent 6-minute walking test (6MWT), assessment of amino terminal probrain natriuretic peptide (NT-pro BNP), quadriceps maximal voluntary contraction (MVC) and peak torque (PT), QOL questionnaire (MacNewQLMI), blood pressure (BP), and heart rate (HR). All patients performed 4 sessions of exercise/week.

RESULTS: Distance at 6mwt improved in both groups with significant between-groups differences ($P = .031$). Systolic BP and NT-proBNP decreased significant in the CT group compared to ET ($P = .025$) and $P = .015$),

resp.). CT group had a greater significant improvement in physical perception ($P = .026$) and a significant increase of PT compared to ET group.

CONCLUSIONS: The association of Tai Chi and ET improves exercise tolerance and QOL of patients with CHF more efficiently than ET.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3195859>

A perception theory in mind-body medicine: guided imagery and mindful meditation as cross-modal adaptation. *Psychon Bull Rev.* 2011 Nov 8. by Bedford FL. From University of Arizona, P.O. Box 210068, Tucson, AZ, 85721, USA, bedford@u.arizona.edu.

Abstract: A new theory of mind-body interaction in healing is proposed based on considerations from the field of perception. It is suggested that the combined effect of visual imagery and mindful meditation on physical healing is simply another example of cross-modal adaptation in perception, much like adaptation to prism-displaced vision. It is argued that psychological interventions produce a conflict between the perceptual modalities



ties of the immune system and vision (or touch), which leads to change in the immune system in order to realign the modalities. It is argued that mind-body interactions do not exist because of higher-order cognitive thoughts or beliefs influencing the body, but instead result from ordinary interactions between lower-level perceptual modalities that function to detect when sensory systems have made an error. The theory helps explain why certain illnesses may be more amenable to mind-body interaction, such as autoimmune conditions in which a sensory system (the immune system) has made an error. It also renders sensible erroneous changes, such as those brought about by "faith healers," as conflicts between modalities that are resolved in favor of the wrong modality. The present view provides one of very few psychological theories of how guided imagery and mindfulness meditation bring about positive physical change. Also discussed are issues

of self versus non-self, pain, cancer, body schema, attention, consciousness, and, importantly, developing the concept that the immune system is a rightful perceptual modality. Recognizing mind-body healing as perceptual cross-modal adaptation implies that a century of cross-modal perception research is applicable to the immune system.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/3826622432264231>

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Which health conditions cause the most unhappiness? *Health Econ.* 2011 Dec;20(12):1431-47. by Graham C, Higuera L, Lora E. from Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, USA; University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA.

Abstract: This paper assesses the effects of different health conditions on happiness. Based on new data for Latin America, we examine the effects of different conditions across age, gender, and income cohorts. Anxiety and pain have stronger effects than physical problems, likely because people adapt better to one-time shocks than to constant uncertainty. The negative effects of health conditions are very large when compared with the effects of income on happiness. And, while higher peer income typically elicits envy, better peer health provides positive signals for life and health satisfaction. Health norms vary widely across countries.

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Health and Gross National Happiness: review of current status in Bhutan. *J Multidiscip Healthc.* 2011;4:293-8. by Tobgay T, Dophu U, Torres CE, Na-Bangchang K. from Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Kawajangsa, Bhutan.

Abstract: Worldwide, contemporary measures of the success of health development programs have been mostly in terms of the reduction of mortality and morbidity as well as increasing longevity. While these goals have yielded much-needed health improvements, the subjective outcomes of these improvements, as experienced by individuals and the communities, have not been considered. Bhutan, under the overarching policy of Gross National Happiness, has provided due consideration to these subjective indicators. Here, we report on the current status of health and happiness in Bhutan as revealed by conventional objective indicators and subjective Gross National Happiness indicators. The current literature on health in Bhutan in relation to the Gross National Happiness Survey conducted by the Centre of Bhutan Studies has been reviewed. Bhutan has made great strides within a short period of modernization, as shown by both objective and subjective indicators. Tremendous challenges lie

ahead to achieve the ultimate goal of health and happiness, and how Bhutan articulates its path to modernization may be a lesson for the rest of the world.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3155859>

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Association between perceived happiness levels and peripheral circulating pro-inflammatory cytokine levels in middle-aged adults in Japan. *Neuro Endocrinol Lett.* 2011;32(4):458-63. by Matsunaga M, Isowa T, Yamakawa K, Tsuboi H, Kawanishi Y, Kaneko H, Kasugai K, Yoneda M, Ohira H. from Department of Cerebral Research, National Institute for Physiological Sciences, Aichi, Japan.

OBJECTIVES: The idea that perceived happiness may be associated with health and well-being is a recent topic of focus. However, the neurobiological mechanisms underlying the positive effects of happiness on psychological and physiological wellness remain obscure. In this study, we attempted to clarify the association between systemic inflammation and happiness.

METHODS: We recruited 160 healthy volunteers for experiment 1 and compared peripheral inflammatory markers, namely the concentrations of pro-inflammatory cytokines in the serum, between perceived high-happiness and low-happiness groups. Subsequently, we recruited 7 romantic couples for experiment 2 and investigated changes in peripheral pro-inflammatory cytokine levels after the evocation of happiness, which was induced by warm physical contact with the partner.

RESULTS: We found that circulating levels of interferon- γ (IFN- γ), which can affect brain functions and induce depressive symptoms, were lower in the high-happiness group than in the low-happiness group. A negative correlation between the levels of perceived happiness and IFN- γ concentrations was also observed. Furthermore, we also found that experimentally induced happiness could reduce peripheral IFN- γ levels.

CONCLUSIONS: These results revealed an association between the perception of happiness and systemic inflammation. Increased happiness may suppress the peripheral circulation of pro-inflammatory cytokines.

[Compiled by Kevin W Chen, Ph.D.]

The Healer is the Spirit Being Within...

医者乃内在之精神...

by Sifu Cindy Cicero

Is it possible that the *healer within* is a spirit being that inhabits our human host body? If this is possible, could this *healer within* be the one that exists beyond the body? Or is it as others believe that we are only the physical body that ceases to exist after death?

There are many people who believe that we survive after death. I believe that a spirit being does live within the human body. We are all explorers learning and seeking for truth. While searching I came across a very unusual energy healing method. With this method, I was able to reach a much higher level of energy work than I had ever reached before. I found out that there is more to this “*healer within*” than I could have reasonably anticipated.

It was during my early training I found out how much I was controlled emotionally, by my body’s hormones. For a while, I actually thought that when I looked into the mirror I was this human animal body. However, after practicing this new Qii energy method, I now know that I am a “spirit being”.

Yes, I am saying that I am a spirit being in a human animal body that was divinely set in place for an earthly experience. During this development of becoming super sensitive from this Qi energy method, I became aware that my spirit could separate from my body.

Perhaps you may think that I’m speaking psychologically of my inner voice, inner child or higher self however, this is not the case. In only six months of building up my nerve fibers, I started to physically feel the reality of my spirit being. Doing these specially designed energy exercises gave me a deep level of calmness, which was all new to me. As the training months past, I found that I was feeling good and was more flexible with others. I never realized how tight I was inside my own body even though I had been doing meditation, yoga and Qigong as a daily practice for most of my life.

Looking back, I realized I could have never made this distinction between the human body and the spirit being because of the inherent flaws in the energy methods I had studied. It was when I trained in this new energy method with the Tri-concept that I learned to feel my spirit being.

The Tri-concept is using an energy form with a good feeling and cool temperature. What I learned in the method was how temperature has to be accounted for while doing energy work. Refer to the different [scientific reference articles](#) on why this temperature factor is true. I used cool packs to reach a good feeling and cool temperature. They were the best training device for learning how to cool the body and mind. By using an ice pack wrapped in a small towel and applying it to areas such as the back of the neck, chest or stomach, I



slowed down my mind. I then found it was much easier to get into a good mood.

I also learned how to use the Tri-concept to guide the “energy form” through different parts of my body. When I didn’t use the Tri-concept I would have had bad or painful side effects because I was cultivating large amounts of energy. I found this unique energy method was much too strong to use without this Tri-concept. I first felt the difference between my body and my spirit being after feeling a series of different unusual sensations. The sensations felt like moving energy that started becoming more pressurized and dense. After a while, the energy morphed into a useable form that I could physically feel. As a result, I actually felt the physical difference between my animal body and my spirit being, for the first time.

This unique energy method also showed me how my body’s pheromones and natural killer cells are directly affected by the way I did my energy exercises. These are topics that were never covered in the different other energy methods that I studied. The method explained how using this Tri-concept is the best way to release my natural killer cells. Our bodies Natural Killer cells are our last line of defense against viruses. (refer to the article: [Natural Killer Cells](http://www.chienergyheals.com/2011/06/5041) <http://www.chienergyheals.com/2011/06/5041>.)

By learning to cultivate large amounts of Qi or bioenergy in this specific way, I was able to bring out my spirit. In the past, when I heard people talking about remote viewing, astral projection or out of body experiences, I could only think of these events in abstract or a metaphysical way. I found out that skills like this are obtainable with the right type of training.

Each of us tries to find the best path to choose “the healer within.” I found my best path was following the program at the School of Bioenergy. I became a much better healer, in addition I became the Director of Operations at the School of Bioenergy.



Certified Instructor Sifu Cindy Cicero is the Director at the School of Bioenergy. Cindy is also a certified Chi Energy Instructor skilled in bioenergy healing techniques and mentoring. Sifu Cicero has over 20 years experience in energy work and 12 years experience in teaching energy skills. Cindy Cicero is a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Meditation teacher who has studied under doctors Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli from the University of Massachusetts Medical School, and Dr. Jeff Brantley of Duke University’s Center for Integrative Medicine, 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.

The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)



The Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQTC)

trains Community Practice Leaders and Certified Integral Qigong and Tai Chi Teachers who work in community centers, hospitals, clinics, schools, churches, social service agencies and the justice system. Providing training, certification, career change and enhancement for over 10 years, the Institute makes access to Qigong and Tai Chi easy and enjoyable through effective teaching methods and a focus on principles. The 200-hour certification is completed in three segments (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3). Start leading classes right away as you train! Level 1 begins March 22-29, 2012.

Contact info@iiqtc.org to request more information or visit the link below to see how you can begin training:

<https://healthaction.infusionsoft.com/go/12-004/YangSheng/>

A Comedy Moment 开心一刻



- Have you heard about the dyslexic yogi who goes around chanting "MO"?
- Why did the Buddhist coroner get fired?
Answer: because he would always record the cause of death as 're-birth'.
- Why can't Buddhists vacuum their meditation cushions?
Answer: Because they don't have any attachments.
- People used to explore the dimensions of reality by taking LSD to make the world look weird. Now the world is weird and they take Prozac to make it look normal.
- Right now I'm having amnesia and déjà vu at the same time... I think I've forgotten this before.
- "Blessed is he who finds happiness in his own foolishness.
For he will always be happy."
- Time is the best teacher, although it kills the students.
- The enlightened ones have no boundaries, but respect those of others.
- I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.
- Your personality is an often insurmountable speed-bump on the path to Nirvana.
- Nothing is fool-proof to a sufficiently talented fool.
- A day without sunshine is like, you know, night.
- When someone points at the moon, don't worship the finger!
- Having trouble sleeping?
Try counting your blessings.
- If you want to ruin the truth, stretch it.
- When asked what he wanted for his birthday, the Yogi replied, "I wish no gifts, only presence."



How to Eliminate Stress and Triple Your Productivity

怎样去除压力、倍增你的工作效率

by Narij Naik, M.Pharm.

We live a world where it is not uncommon to be talking on the phone, while checking emails, having a conversation on Skype, cooking dinner and trying to take care of the kids all at the same time!

But this, unfortunately, is not something that is very natural for our brains to handle.

This ability we have of multitasking arises from the pre-frontal cortex of our brain, which is found in the more recent neo-cortex.

Psychologist Marcel Just at the Carnegie Mellon University has extensively studied multitasking.

He states that your brain is a marvel at multitasking and many things that happen simultaneously, such as breathing, your heartbeat and digestion

“When a human is assessing tasks, prioritizing them and assigning mental resources, these frontal lobes are doing most of the work, says Dr. Jordan Grafman, a neuropsychologist and chief of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke at the National Institutes of Health.”

“Grafman says, that the prefrontal cortex is the part of the human brain that is most damaged as a result of prolonged stress, particularly the kind of stress that makes a person feel out-of-control and helpless. The kind of stress, say, that you might feel when overwhelmed by the demands of multi-tasking.”

“Such stress, Grafman says, also will cause the death of brain cells in another region — the hippocampus, which is critical to the formation of new memories. Damage there can impair a person's ability to learn and retain new facts and skills.”

Multi-tasking, almost by its very nature of course, creates stress,” Grafman says. And long-term stress, in turn, is likely to make us less able to multi-task, he says. It's a humbling lesson in the limits we face, he acknowledges. "If you're multi-tasking, and it's very stressful," Grafman says, "you're not going to get better at it."

would not be possible without this amazing power of your brain.

This is a quality of your subconscious mind. When a behavior is ingrained into your subconscious it become automatic, freeing up your conscious mind to focus on other things, such as eating lunch while



“Researchers peering into the brains of those engaged in several tasks at once are concluding what some overworked Americans had begun to suspect: that multi-tasking, which many have embraced as the key to success, is instead a formula for shoddy work, mismanaged time, rote solutions, stress and forgetfulness, not to mention car crashes, kitchen fires, forgotten children, near misses in the skies and other dangers of inattention.”

“Complaints of forgetfulness among women in their 40s and 50s are so prevalent that Peter M. Meyer, a biostatistician at Chicago's Rush University Medical Center, in the late 1990s conducted a study intended to gauge how deeply the hormone changes of menopause disrupt women's memory.”

“Instead, he got a lesson on women and multi-tasking. The tests of short-term memory and verbal memory consistently showed that women of this age, though they complained of forgetfulness, were not missing a step.”

“Their forgetfulness appeared to be a function of depression, stress and "role overload" — the multi-tasking of many roles at once — Meyer concluded.”

reading a newspaper.

Unfortunately, this amazing power is not true of your conscious mind and is perhaps due to its tiny, limited processing power compared to your mighty subconscious mind.

When your brain engages in several tasks that require conscious attention it “discounts” the attention applied to each by spreading its processing power across each of the tasks...that spells bad news for your productivity!

It has been shown in many experiments that people who multitask have bouts of forgetfulness and reduced short-term memory

Gary Small, a neuroscientist and author of the book *iBrain*, warns that children who spend their formative years multitasking lose out on chances to

“Trying to learn while doing something else, such as doing homework while watching TV, sends information to an inappropriate part of the brain”, explains Professor Russell Poldrack, a psychologist at the University of California.

“Using brain-scans, he has found if we multitask while studying, the information goes into the striatum, a region of the brain involved in learning new skills, from where it is difficult to retrieve facts and ideas. If we are not distracted, it heads to the hippocampus, a region involved in storing and recalling information.”

“There is a cost to the way that our society is changing. Humans are not built to work this way”, Professor Poldrack, University Of California says. “We're really built to focus.”

focus on developing crucial, but slow-forming, interpersonal skills.

“With the weakening of the brain's neural circuitry, controlling human contact, our social interactions may become awkward and we tend to misinterpret - and even miss - subtle, non-verbal messages,” he says.

Multi-tasking denies us essential pauses in our mental space.

“We need this time to develop our inner resources and grow neural connections in the cortex humanitatis - the part of brain that makes us civilized creatures”, says Daniel Siegel, associate clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA Medical School in America.

I feel a big factor that played in getting my own stress-related disorder is the crazy multitasking I had to do at work.

As a pharmacist, not only do we have to label, dispense and check prescriptions, but we also have to manage the store and the staff, answer the telephone and perform patient consultations-all at the same time!

I am sure many people can relate to my own scenario. I feel this modern day multitasking has been

David Shenk is the author of the famous book, *The Genius in All of Us: Why Everything You've Been Told About Genetics, Talent, and IQ Is Wrong*.

Shenk argues we have before us not a “talent scarcity,” but a “latent talent abundance.” Shenk states “the vast majority of us have not even come close to tapping what scientists call our ‘un-actualized potential.’”

Shenk reveals science is revealing the attainment of “genius” to be the product of highly concentrated effort.

Shenk also cites some of history's great achievers — Ted Williams and Michael Jordan, Mozart and Beethoven — as examples of individuals who worked hard, day and night, to master their chosen fields.

Malcolm Gladwell also seems to agree, at least in part, with this notion. In his recent work, *Outliers*, Gladwell looked at people who rose above the rest and achieved incredible success in their respective endeavors.

An interesting point Gladwell makes is all people successful in their respective fields all have one

thing in common: they have spent at least 10,000 hours learning, internalizing and perfecting their crafts. That applies to all the top artists, musicians, writers and IT leaders. They all spent at least 10,000 hours or more doing what they do. That's at least a solid five years or more of dedicated work.

Shenk concurs, saying the key to success is practice, practice, practice for years and years. "You have to want it, want it so bad you will never give up, so bad that you are ready to sacrifice time, money, sleep, friendships, even your reputation," he writes. "You will have to adopt a particular lifestyle of ambition, not just for a few weeks or months, but for years and years and years. You have to want it so bad that you are not only ready to fail, but you actually want to experience failure: revel in it, learn from it."

allowed to get out of hand for way too long.

What Is The Solution?

The first, most important thing to understand is we are just not designed to be conscious multitaskers. Whether we like it, all multitasking, if not correctly managed, will lead to chronic stress.

Your conscious mind loves being able to focus on one thing at a time. If you try to do eight different things at once, it will take you eight times as long to complete any of those tasks!

In fact, this ability of narrow focus is what all the great geniuses shared.

Unfortunately, multitasking is something very difficult to avoid in our hectic, modern lives. However, it can be safely managed, so its damage to your health and productivity is minimized.



Here are some golden rules to help you manage your multitasking better:

Do Not Multitask In The Afternoon

- Our body actually goes through a natural sleep cycle around 2pm. This is one of the reasons why siestas were introduced in Spain. Post-lunch tiredness added to the strain of multitasking, often causes overload.

Set One Major Task To Be Completed Each

Day – If you are planning on starting a business, it is wise to focus on one major goal for your business, then chunk down all the tasks needed to be done to move your business forward by splitting them into one major task per day. If you have eight different business ideas and try to do them all, you will end up taking eight times as long to complete any of them, probably resulting in failure. The same goes for each area of your life, from your house hold chores to the workplace. Try focusing on one task at a time and complete it before moving on to the next. You can also only do two hours of productive work at a time. So, take regular breaks where you do something that requires very little conscious thought (like meditation) to recharge your brain.

Turn Off Skype, Emails, Twitter and Your Mobile When Trying To Work – Did you know that any interruption to your work will take you 20 minutes to get back into focus and productivity again? So, turn off all distractions. Otherwise, you will feel overwhelmed, stressed out and find it hard to get simple things done.

Meditate Regularly - Brain scans of non-religious Westerners who meditate show they have increased

The Alpha Mind System is designed to help you maximize your productivity by helping you recharge, refuel and focus your conscious mind!

To find out about the full Alpha Mind System and to download a full 79 page eBook based on the self healing experience of the Alpha Mind System founder, Niraj Naik visit this site <http://www.AlphaMindSystem.com> This system will show you a simple method for learning how to meditate easily helping you to skyrocket your productivity!



Niraj Naik, M.Pharm., is a pharmacist and health and wellness consultant to several businesses based in the UK. Having a musical background he has focused his attention on using sound and music as a

"side effect" free tool for relieving stress, depression and tension, that he believes are the main culprits for chronic disease. Niraj Naik also runs two successful websites and produces music and sounds with consultant psychiatrist Dr. Mrigank Mishra, under the alias amAya, some of which is infused with their novel Trypnaural Brainwave Entrainment Technology designed to increase the natural production of tryptamines, DMT, serotonin and melatonin that can lead to deeper sleep, relaxation and better health.

Looking Up 向上看

by Solala Towler

My personal practice these days consists, in a large part, in something I call Looking Up. By Looking Up I mean, number one, to physically look up. It is amazing how often we travel down the road or even across our yard or across the street, all the while looking straight ahead, if not down at our feet. When we look up, we see the blue, blue sky above us, with the bright shards of sunlight flowing down to us. Or else we see the great billowing clouds, all full of the promise of rain to make all things on our planet grow and flourish. Or else we might see the rain itself, falling down into our open eyes and perhaps, open mouth. Or, we might see the tops of the trees swaying slowly in the breeze, reaching into the sky, connecting from their deeply entrenched roots down in the great yin of mother earth and then stretching up higher and higher into the great yang of the heavens.

It is just a wonderful practice to notice what we don't usually see when we are walking or driving along. The tops of old buildings in many cities are covered with wonderful designs. Even just the sight of the rooftops of the buildings around us, as they blend in with the line of the sky behind them can be beautiful. We might see birds swooping around in the tops of the trees or on the rooftops or even on the tops of electrical lines.

And, of course, as with all real practices, we can take it a step further and use the concept of looking up in our own lives. It is often when we become obsessed or distraught by the small details of our lives that we lose the big picture. If we can, in our moments of stress or depression, we need to take a look up to become more aware of our lives in all their grandeur. When we are looking at a more objective view from on high we can see how each little moment comes together to form the amazing and beautiful mosaic of our lives. And while it is true that many of these moments contain lots of pain and suffering, we can also get a grander view if we only practice looking up.

(Continued on page 42)



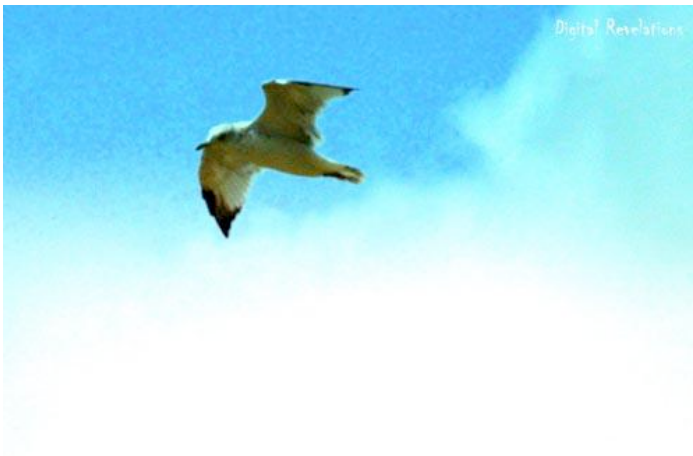


photo by Cera Spallone

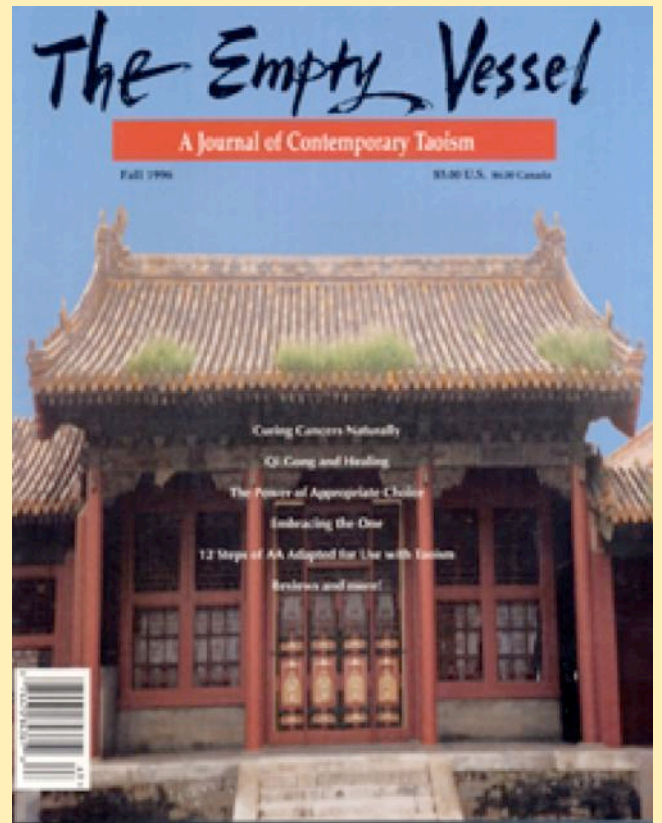
In that looking up, we can perhaps see the pattern more clearly and in this way we can learn to let go of the small stuff and focus on the whole journey rather than each individual step.

Laozi says we suffer because we have a material body. The Buddha also said life contains suffering because of our attachment to having things the way we want them to be rather than of the way they are. By using the teachings of these two great masters we can, perhaps, take this long and high view of ourselves and of the world we find ourselves in. And in that way we can free ourselves from our earthly-bound material body selves and find ourselves soaring and swooping through the blue, blue sky, free like a bird on the wing.



Solala Towler is the editor and publisher of The Empty Vessel: The Journal of Daoist Philosophy and Practice, now in its 20 year of publication. See it online at www.CommunityAwake.com. Mr. Towler 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 of meditation, relaxation, and movement music, using Tibetan singing bowls, and both Chinese and Native flute with harmonic overtone singing. You can find more information about Solala Towler on his website, <http://www.abodetao.com>



The Empty Vessel

A Journal of Contemporary Daoism is a quarterly publication dedicated to the exploration and dissemination of non-religious Daoist philosophy and practice. Gain a deeper understanding of the shifting sands of our times through the ancient, but universal truths of Daoist philosophy.

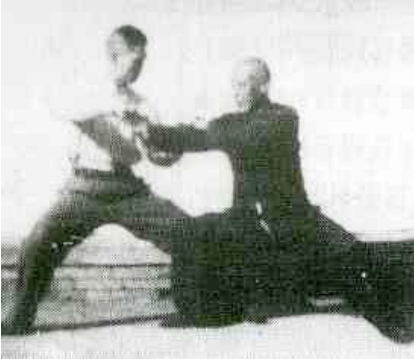
Learn practical applications of Daoist thought, tai ji quan, internal arts, Chinese medicine and qigong. Enjoy articles, interviews, and feature stories that show how contemporary practitioners have incorporated a balance of body, mind, and spirit into their day-to-day activities. Includes art, poetry, essays and reviews of the latest book, tapes and videos on Daoist subjects. The Empty Vessel is the only journal of its kind, covering all aspects of Taoist philosophy and practices in a thought-provoking and timely manner.

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推手练功

The Nurturing Gong of Push Hands

by Rodney J Owen



Push hands practice is a crucial component of a complete Taiji curriculum. There are multiple styles, types, and approaches to push hands, but ultimately it is a two-person approach to Taiji practice that serves as a bridge between

Taiji form and san shou, or free fighting. However, push hands is not fighting. In my system of study, all of Taiji is seen as gong practice, or the process of improving balance and coordination, and replenishing Qi. It is easy to see how Qigong and Taiji form are crucial gong practices, but many people don't understand push hands in the same light. However, one can only go so far with solo practice. Partner practice adds another dimension to Taiji, and adds depth to the gains acquired through solo practice. Additionally, push hands, understood a certain way, is as much a healing practice as any component of the Taiji curriculum.

There are many practical benefits of Taiji practice. Of utmost importance is the development of Fang Song, or the quality of "being sung." This is often translated as relaxation in English, although relaxation is not quite what sung means. Many people understand relaxation as implying a limp state with no force. A better description may be the lack of tension. One of my teachers described it as moving without feeling the movement. In the practice of Taiji in general, and push hands in particular, one should strive to find the sung state and maintain it. That is no easy task, but is one worth pursuing. Good push hands training helps with the development and maintenance of sung. And this is a benefit that stays with us as we leave the training hall and descend into the streets of life.

The development of sung contributes immensely to our health. A relaxed mind/body is open to the flow of Qi, is not as susceptible to the effects of stress, and is better able to fight off illness and disease. Push hands practice is as beneficial in protecting us against illness as in teaching us to deal with muggers and attackers. In fact we are much more likely to find the need to fight off ill-

ness than thugs. In addition, if or when the situation arises that we need martial skills, they are much better deployed by the healthy than the ill.

Our lives are full of potential stressors. Some of us are better at controlling these than others. For example, think of the various ways people react in heavy traffic. Some take it in stride, some get a little stressed, and others develop what is known as road rage, all in the same or similar situations. However, it's not the stressors themselves that are the problem. It's our reactions that determine how they affect us. We have the ability to be either adversely affected by or to deal optimally with various experiences. There is no entity out in the world called road rage that is waiting to infect the random unsuspecting driver. There is only traffic; or unemployment, or death in the family, or aggressive bosses and nasty co-workers, or catastrophic weather, etc... These things, these potential stressors, are real and their effect on our health, our lives, and the lives of the people around us are also very real. Fortunately, we have within us the ability to deal effectively with these stressors. Peace of mind is an option for anyone and everyone. It has only to be discovered and developed. Push hands is one of the tools that contributes to this development.



Most stress management techniques primarily consider mental and emotional defense mechanisms. These provide tremendous results and should be considered a crucial component of stress management practice. The general idea is that as we engage stressful situations we respond emotionally, which induces a physical reaction, which feeds back to our mental state and may induce another, perhaps different emotional reaction, which induces yet another physical reaction, and on and on. For instance, suppose your boss yells at you and upsets you. You in turn get angry and subconsciously tighten your shoulders. This tension strains your back and makes it hard to maintain a good posture at your desk, which in turn causes back pain. The back pain and shoulder tension make it hard to concentrate on your work, which your mind interprets as another stressor because you have a deadline and are falling behind, and your boss will only get angrier, which adds to the physical reaction, which in turn makes you angry and snappy, etc.... Contemporary stress management techniques work by teaching one to calm the mind and emotions in order to deal with the stressor, or to reinterpret the situation as something not worthy of an adverse reaction.

Taiji takes a reverse approach to the management of stress by going to the feedback system first. The physiological response that is engaged by the mental reaction to stress is a feedback mechanism. Concurrently, this feedback also registers with the brain as stress. Hence, a headache can trigger anger, or vice-versa. The practice of Qigong and Taiji form develop sung, activate the various meridians, and increase the flow of Qi, all of which help to develop internal harmony, which in turn calms the mind. These are the qualities of healthy living and it's easy to develop and feel these in solo Taiji practice. However, we need to be able to maintain these qualities even when our harmony is challenged by stressors.

Push hands can be utilized as a method of stress simulation. In the practice of push hands we try to maintain central equilibrium while challenging the equilibrium of our partner. And our partner in turn tries to upset our equilibrium. In the process we give each other something to work with and the opportunity to deal with stressors while attempting to maintain peace of mind. Another person inside of one's personal space, trying to upset equilibrium, can be a stressor. While relatively mild, controlled, and simulated, it is enough to challenge the relaxation gained in solo practice but is safe enough to not cause any real harm to the players. Every newcomer to push hands knows this experientially. Most people are not comfortable with another person being in their personal space. It is even more uncomfortable when one's balance is challenged. The principles and

techniques of push hands can be utilized to train our bodies to effectively deal with threats without getting tense or upset. In Buddhist terms, it is a method for developing equanimity. As a healing practice, it teaches the mind/body to remain calm under attack, which in the day-to-day world could just as easily be from a flu virus, an angry boss, or maniacal drivers in rush hour traffic.

While push hands practice is associated with the martial application of Taiji, it is not fighting. To fight is to struggle. Fighting implies diametrically opposed energies colliding head-on against one another. Push hands is more about cooperation, even if it means learning to cooperate with the uncooperative. Push hands is about redirecting opposing energies and learning to go with the flow rather than opposing it. Push hands is about harmonizing with the environment and finding peace of mind in the midst of chaos. Peace of mind is not something reserved for monks and hermits. It's something inherently available to all of us. It is within us. Solo practices like those we find in meditation, yoga, Qigong, and the Taiji form help us to find and become familiar with this, to nurture it. Partner exercises, like push hands, provide us a way to learn how to maintain it under challenging conditions. Peace of mind, developed and maintained through bodily integration, leads to completeness wholeness and health.



Rodney Owen has had a life-long interest in the relationship between meditation and martial arts. Over the years he has followed and studied systems that emphasize that relationship: Aikido, Qigong, Taijiquan, I Liq Chuan, and Buddhism. He practices and teaches Taiji, Qigong, Kung Fu, and Meditation in High Point, NC. His primary interest is in the practical and functional aspects of these arts and in the concept that Kung Fu is a way of life, a methodology for improving and enjoying the content of life, of discovering and manifesting our higher selves. He maintains a blog on martial arts and mindfulness at <http://nagualtime.blogspot.com/> Samples of his writing and other interests can be found at <http://rodneyowen.com>



WINTER:

THE SEASON FOR CONTEMPLATION AND RESTORATION

冬：沉静和恢复的季节

BY: ELLASARA KLING

The Winter Season is ruled by the Kidney-Urinary Bladder organ system and is usually referred to as Kidney Season. During this season, we strive to nourish the Kidney function. Let's look at some of the relationships of this season and then how we can nourish the Kidney function. Please refer to the chart on page 46 as we do so.

In TCM Five Element Theory the Kidneys are the place where our "essential Qi" (jing) is stored. This essential Qi is akin to the principal of a trust fund that we inherit from our biological parents. The vitality that we gain from this essential Qi is the basis of our embryonic and fetal development. Once born, essential Qi continues to affect various aspects of our physiology and to be the prime support for our growth. Two important and readily understood physiological aspects are healthy, strong bones (and bone marrow); and how the Kidney function supports hearing through its connection with the ears. Perhaps an easy way to see this function is by what we know about aging in general. Generally speaking, as people age and use up their essential Qi, commonly acknowledged signs of aging begin to appear: hearing loss and weaker bones. Fortunately, essential Qi is not our only source of vital Qi. The other is known as "acquired Qi" and comes from the food we eat, the air we breathe and from Qi cultivation in our energy practice, such as Qigong.

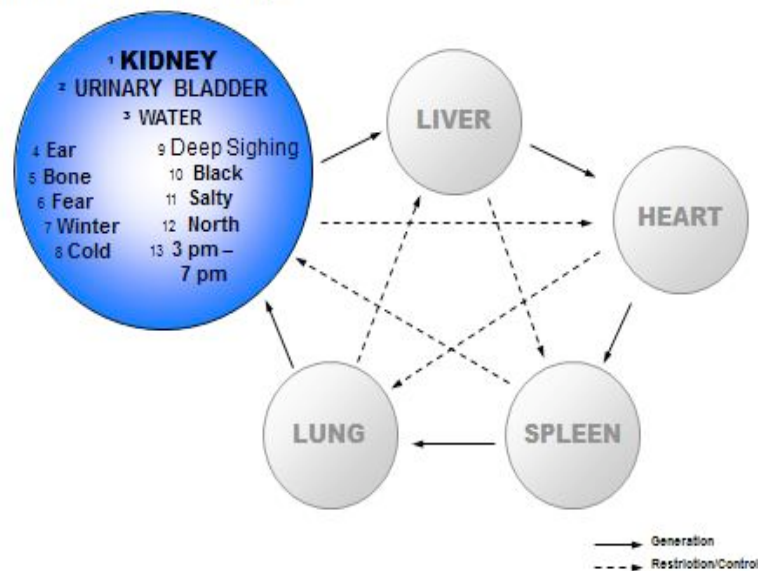
However, like a trust fund, we do not want to use up the principal. We want to preserve the principal and add to it, if possible. At all times, but especially during Winter we have opportunities to preserve our essential Qi. We do this through following the flow of nature. In Winter the energy of the earth is drawn downward and inward. The barren trees and land, the early setting of the sun, the cold essence and temperatures all signify a world at rest. The seeming barrenness of the time is an opportunity to gather strength. This rest leads to restoration when Spring begins; and it actually begins long before we see the first signs of spring. Winter is also an opportunity for us to engage in greater contemplation, quieter inner reflection, and more energy practice.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PRESERVE OUR ESSENTIAL QI IN WINTER?

Everyone has a different reaction to each season. Some people love summertime and the warmth it brings and a more outdoors lifestyle – others not so much. Whereas the cold of Winter usually inspires people to snuggle in the warmth of their home with a warm bowl of soup, hot chocolate or cup of tea. Other folks want to be out on the ski slopes or frozen lakes, skating, ice fishing, or even wind surfing. Each person's preference

is fine just keep in mind the basic guidelines for the season and don't over exert yourself and be sure to get enough rest. Even if you cannot go to bed earlier, do your best to get extra rest during the day. Even when the temperature may be warmer on a particular day during this time of year, stay covered up. The essence of the season is cold and it is good to remember that, when planning your wardrobe. A hat, hood or scarf can be excellent choices. Additionally, eating foods such as soups, congees, hearty stews and warming drinks are excellent choices for the season. Still, do not over eat and thereby tax your digestive system. Eat only until you are 70-80% full. Recall, that a simple way to gauge that is to only eat until you

Five Element Theory



are no longer hungry. Winter season foods are generally denser in nature, such as root vegetables, which are more filling. Even greens such as cabbages and Kale are denser than summer greens. Below is a list of some of the foods that are in harmony with this season. If you are not already familiar with them, try adding them to your diet. Seek out the foods which are natural to your locality in winter and that have not been shipped in from far away. It is already externally cold, refrain from eating cold and cooling foods such as iced drinks, and raw foods. Remember, the stomach likes warmth. Practice your Qigong or tai chi and meditate more. These seemingly simple ideas can go a long way in supporting your health throughout this season and help you to enjoy good health in the Spring.

SOME FOODS THAT ARE PARTICULARLY GOOD FOR THE WINTER SEASON:

black beans, black mushrooms, blackberry, black sesame seeds and oil, black soybeans, blueberry, bone marrow, cabbages, celery, chard, chestnuts, cranberry, ginger, Job's tears, kale, kidney beans, kohlrabi, Longan, Lotus seed, miso, mulberry, mutton, Ocean Perch, parsley, pine nuts, prunes, raspberry, rutabaga, seaweed, shrimp/prawns, soy sauce, string beans, turnips, walnuts, wood ear mushrooms.



RECIPES FOR WINTER 冬季菜谱

WINTER CONGEE

Ingredients:

1/2 cup glutinous white rice
about 1/4 cup each: pearly barley, small red beans,
lotus seeds, boiled peanuts
2 TB size piece of Astragalus also called Huang Qi and
Yellow Vetch*
15 or so dried chestnuts
about 15 cups of water
15 or so red dates
pinch of salt
sugar or honey

Directions:

After rinsing/washing and then draining your grains, add them to a heavy bottomed pot with the water, bring to a boil and then reduce heat to a simmer and cover

Stir lightly and allow to simmer for about 20 minutes, then add the chestnuts and astragalus, stir lightly and simmer for another 20 minutes

Stir lightly and add the red dates and simmer for 15 minutes and then add the peanuts and sweetener to taste. When cooking is complete remove the piece of astragalus before serving.

*known by a variety of names, Astragalus/Huang Qi/Yellow Vetch has long been used in many cultures as an immune booster in home cooking and in herbal remedies.



ETHIOPIAN INSPIRED VEGETABLES

Ingredients:

1/4 cup grapeseed oil
1/2 minced onion
1 TB minced fresh ginger
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp ground black pepper
2 small red chili peppers (sometimes called birds eye peppers)
2 cloves of garlic - minced
2 stalks celery - chopped
3 medium potatoes - cut into 1" cubes
1 cup water or broth
1 head cabbage cut into large wedges
2 carrots cut into 1" pieces

Directions:

In a wok or heavy skillet heat the oil and add the onion, ginger, salt, black and red pepper, garlic and heat through, then add the celery and sauté till it begins to sweat, add the water/broth and potatoes, cover and cook on medium heat for about 5 minutes

Add the cabbage and carrots and cook until tender. .
.add more water or broth if necessary. Stir the ingredients together thoroughly so that the spices are distributed evenly. Remove the 2 small chili peppers and serve.

This is a warming, hearty dish that is not too spicy but is very flavorful. Winter flavoring should be warming but not hot and spicy. Please adjust to your taste.



BLACK RICE DESSERT

Ingredients:

1 cup black rice
1-1/2 cups coconut milk
2 cups water
25-30 red dates
1" ginger root - peeled and sliced as if it were a fan so that it stays in one piece
1/4 cup wolfberries also called goji berries
3 TB toasted black sesame seeds
coconut sauce - optional
1-1/2 cups coconut milk
sugar or honey
cinnamon - optional

Directions:

In a 3 quart pot, add the black rice and ginger root to the coconut milk and water, bring to a boil, reduce heat, stir lightly . - Add the red dates, cover and simmer for about 20 minutes -- check occasionally -- you want the liquid to be completely absorbed - 1 cup of rice will provide about 3 cups of cooked rice

While the rice is cooking, boil 1 cup of water and pour it over the wolfberries. . as they rehydrate, pick out any stems or other material and then strain out the liquid .
- Toast your black sesame seeds in the oven for about 10 min. at 350 degrees F. then pour them into a large round bottomed bowl

When the rice is done add it to the bowl with the sesame seeds and stir them into the rice, then add the strained wolfberries. Rehydrated wolfberries are easily smashed so treat them gently. - Lightly flatten the top of rice mixture in the bowl and place a large plate over the top of the bowl, turn over quickly and gently remove the bowl, you will now have a beautiful spherical shape.

Optional sauce: Reduce the coconut milk and sweetener until it thickens, pour over rice sphere, sprinkle with cinnamon if you wish.



KALE AND BLACK BEANS

Ingredients:

3 TB grapeseed oil
5-7 cloves of garlic - sliced
5-6 scallion whites - sliced into thin rings
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1 bunch Kale - well rinsed and cut into ribbon strips
1/2 cup to 1 cup water or broth
1-1/2 cups cooked black beans

Directions:

Heat a wok or heavy skillet and add the grapeseed oil, garlic, scallion whites, salt and pepper and heat through till the oil shimmers.

Add the Kale (remember to remove the tough part of the stems on each leaf) with 1/2 cup of water/broth, cover and simmer for 5 minutes

Add the cooked black beans and toss lightly. Heat thoroughly and serve.

Optional: a little sprinkle of black or balsamic vinegar at the end prior to serving.

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

The Embodiment of Mind and Spirit in Chinese Qigong and Philosophy

(心灵在中国气功和哲学中的体现)

by George Xavier Love, OMD

According to classical Chinese medical thought, fluids and energies constitute the body and are especially stored in the bones and internal organs. The mind permeates the body and is contained in the blood and Qi that are circulated throughout. Although body and mind possess their distinct functions, they are understood to be a fluid continuum.

The following paragraph from the *Guanzi*, a syncretic text composed between the first and fourth centuries B. C.E., equates the circulation of energy with that of the mind: When the mind opens up and energy expands we speak of the circulation of energy. This movement of the mind is as ceaseless as the continuous revolution of the cosmos. (in Ishida, Kohn, Ed., 1989:49)

Not only the mind, but also the spirit (Shen) accompanies the blood and Qi through the body. This can be explained in part by defining Xin and Xue. Xue is often translated as “blood.” Misha Cohen provides a more thorough definition: The Chinese word Xue (sch-whey) is a much more precise description of this bodily substance than blood, which is the common English translation. Xue is not confined to the blood vessels, nor does it contain only plasma and red and white blood cells. The Shen or spirit, which courses through the blood vessels, is carried by Xue. Xue also moves along the channels in the body where Qi flows. (Cohen, 1996:14)

Xin means heart, heart/mind or emotional mind. The heart is closely allied with intention and the will, in the sense of will-to-life and a deep and vital inner knowing. “It comes from the guts and lower belly but resonates perfectly with the Intent and with the Heart.”

Elizabet Rochat de La Valle’ & Claude Larre₁, my teachers at the International Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Montreal attribute the following attributes and responsibilities to the heart: Heart, spirit, intimacy, intelligence, thought, mentality, moral conscious, feeling, emotion, humor, intention and attention.

The authors describe the heart’s establishment of order that is maintained with the help of the blood: The circulation of the blood under the heart’s authority carries regularly, everywhere, the double maintenance of life, which is both nutritive and spiritual. It reconstitutes vitality while also permitting sensitivity and the going and coming of information between the inside and outside. The quality of the blood and its governance by proportioned breaths are judged by the pulsations of the network of animation, which are the pulses, and by the color of the face (complexion). (Rochat & Larre, 1995:174)

Reaching an enhanced quality of stable awareness in which the energy of the mind fills the entire body is called the “complete mind” which manifests on the outside of the body as a radiance:

The complete mind cannot stay hidden in the body. Rather, it takes shape and appears on the outside. It can be known from the complexion of the face. When people meet someone whose appearance and mind are full of positive energy, they will feel happier than if they had met their own brother.

On the other hand, when people meet someone with negative energy, they will feel more hurt than if they had been confronted with arms. His words without words (his radiance) will sound better and farther than an eight-sided drum. When the complete mind appears on the outside, it shines brighter than the sun, and people recognize such a person easier than their own children. (Ishida, Kohn, Ed., 1989:57)

As the flowing complete mind infuses the body with spiritual sustenance, so does energy fill the void. Confucius wrote: Such is energy. It is exceedingly great, and exceedingly strong. Nourishing it straightforwardly without harming



it, it will fill-up everything between heaven and earth. (Ishida, Kohn, Ed., 1989:58)

According to the Daoist transformational practices on which Qigong is founded, the humble task of working with what we are given, beginning with the body, has a healing purpose that transcends the body. Although this alchemical route to individuation and spiritual realization is beautifully mapped, by nature, such a profound path includes circuitous detours, set backs and blind spots as part of the terrain.

Thomas Cleary has translated *The Book of Balance and Harmony*, a 13th century anthology of Daoist writings. In these classic teachings, the alchemical process of “gathering medicine” is seen to potentially mature beyond technique and linear progress. Gathering medicine means gathering the true sense of the essence of consciousness within oneself. This is done by first quieting the mind to still the impulses of arbitrary feelings; when stillness is perfected, there is a movement of unconditioned energy. This is the energy of true sense, and its first movement arising from stillness is called the return of yang. This is to be fostered until sense and essence, energy and spirit are united. After that, withdraw into watchful passivity, because if you persist in intensive concentration after the point of sufficiency, your work will be wasted. (Cleary, 1989)

“Watchful passivity” implies activity and passivity at the same time, an on-going theme of Qigong and Daoism. The text cautions against the imbalance of compulsive, self-defeating, over-work, and respects a natural spiritual rhythm.

In the same collection, Cleary defines the completion of Outer and Inner Medicines. The outer medicine can be used to cure illness and prolong life. The inner medicine can be used to transcend being and enter into nonbeing.

Learning the Dao usually should start from the outer medicine; after that you come to know the inner medicine on your own. Advanced practitioners who have already developed basic qualities know it spontaneously, so they cultivate the inner medicine without cultivating the outer medicine. (Cleary, 1989:21)

The “outer medicine” is a system and a map for promoting health and also is potentially preparation for spiritual development as consciousness brings the unconscious to light. Cultivating the “inner medicine” is the search for the Truth, the “ever changing changeless,” a path that depends on faith.

¹Claude Larre, S.I. & Elizabeth Rochat de la Vallee have translated and commented on chapter eight of the *Lingshu* portion of the *Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine* 1995. This section of the ancient Chinese medical classic explores the metaphysical context of TCM. Deemed “superstitious,” this important work has been omitted from many post-cultural revolution translations with a more materialistic bias.



George Love Jr. is a primary care physician licensed in the state of Florida since 1986. As a Doctor of Oriental Medicine DOM and licensed Acupuncture Physician, he is qualified to prescribe herbs (herbalist) and therapeutic diets (food therapist). He is the former Dean of Acupuncture Studies at Barna College of Health Science in Ft. Lauderdale, and the author of six health books including *S.H.I.E.L.D. Your Immune System in Just 12 Weeks*, *Meridian Chi Gong*, *You Won’t find Love in the Refrigerator* and *Ear Reflexology Massage Your Ears to Health*. He has been involved in the Alternative Health industry for 30 years both as an educator and health care provider. He teaches Self Healing workshops across the country on Ear Reflexology, Meridian Chi Gong, 4 Doors to Healthy Happiness and 21 Days to Wellness.



Daoist Yang-Sheng: Preserving Life At All Costs

道家养生：不惜一切保养生命

by Neil Kingham

Last year I was lucky enough to be able to spend the day at a series of conferences and workshops entitled 'The Embodiment of the Dao: Daoist Yangsheng Practices and the Cultivation of Health and Vitality'. It was an inspiring and informative day, and I'd like to share some of what I learned.

In the morning, Dr. Vivienne Lo talked about the history of Yang-Sheng self-care practices, and discussed their relevance and importance to the modern day. She emphasized that the key components of health have always been to keep moving, and eat a healthy seasonal diet, adding that though this is common sense, it is not common practice! To me, this shows the importance of Qigong and Taiji, and Chinese dietary therapy/nutrition as the cornerstone practices for good health.

Professor Jiao Guocheng from the Renmin Peoples University of China then spoke on the Daoist approach to life and the practice of self-care techniques. He contrasted the pressures of the modern world with the simple Daoist beliefs – today we strive for success, wealth and fame at the cost of our health, while to the Daoists, health and well-being were precious treasures to be guarded and preserved at all costs.

He quoted from Daoist philosopher Chuang-Tzu, who said the modern way is like "shooting a sparrow on a high cliff with priceless pearls". The pearls represent your life and health, which you waste, the sparrow is the uncertain profit that you aim for, and the cliff is the dangers that you face along the way.

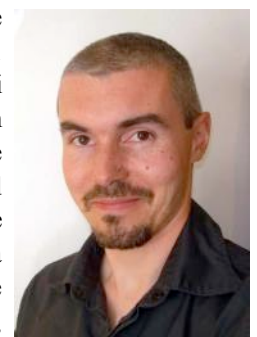
In the afternoon, we were treated to demonstrations and workshops by Abbot Liu Suibin (pictured) on Qingcheng Qigong and martial arts, and Abbot Wang Chengya on Daoist Five Phase Kung Fu. Some of these forms were extremely simple, but had very powerful effects – as Westerners we often complicate things when we don't need to, but the Daoist way is simplicity itself.

In my clinic, I see clients with countless health problems of all kinds caused by poor diet over a long period, stress, and lack of exercise and bad posture. These are truly the health problems of the modern Western world, and we are all prey to them to a greater or lesser extent! In my mind, the ancient Daoist Yang-Sheng practices for self-care have enormous relevance in the modern day. Qigong and Taiji practice help to calm the mind and reduce stress, and work the physical body to maintain suppleness, balance and movement. Proper eating practices, as described by Chinese nutrition, help to maintain the body and mind by ensuring that we get sufficient nourishment.

These two foundation practices of good health can provide an antidote to 'the modern condition' and help us to nourish rather than squander life, and live longer, with better health and greater happiness. The Yang-Sheng self-care practices are as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.



Neil Kingham has been involved in the Chinese healing arts for over 14 years. His interest in the area began with Taiji and Qigong, and these disciplines remain an important part of his own practice today. He has trained in the UK and China, and runs a busy practice in the UK in Bristol and South Wales. He is a great believer in using the Chinese health arts to prevent illness and disease, and maintain optimum health. Neil is a respected writer and teacher in the field of Chinese medicine. He is also an experienced practitioner, and course/workshop leader, and has worked in diverse settings with corporate groups, young sports-people, children with learning difficulties, and various health organizations. For more information about Neil and his blog, go to <http://neilkingham.com>



Holy Shift

Some Personal Clinical Pearls

(神圣的转变：一些个人的临床经验)

by Nadia Linda Hole, MD

Between Holiday blues and all that's happening in the world - from the homeless of Occupy Wall Street, to unprecedented earth changes, solar flares, tsunami's, earthquakes, meltdowns, and so on - The list goes on and on ... Holy Shift!

Thank heaven for breaths of fresh Qi! From the Braco phenomenon, and Thrive movement, to ABC's 20/20 report on Orgasmic Childbirth... After all - Tis the season to be jolly!

Yet... Dang the spirit of the season! As a physician, I know that "Happy Holidays!" are for many, a not so comfortable, time of year. As a single mom, I must confess it's a challenging time, for me too, as well. Painfully life changing events tend to occur for me between Thanksgiving and New Year's - divorce, catastrophic illness, and other heartbreaks.

As Qigong enthusiasts, how are these times, honestly, for You? Your clients? Your loved ones?

Anyone else feeling as if we've lost our bearings? a bit unsettled? disoriented? Noticing that what used to work, somehow is no longer working, on so many levels?

As Qigong practitioners, what Qi tools can we offer?

In my own clinical and personal experience, patients come to my office, often with no prior knowledge, experience, nor interest in Qigong. They simply feel overwhelmed by how intense life can be nowadays, in the relentless whirlwind of this Shift, where so many feel tossed about, beyond anyone's control, watching so much of what we once valued, being blown away.

Another resounding cry I'm observing in my practice, amidst this Shift, is how more than ever before, people of all ages, from all walks of life are expressing helpless frustration at finding, living, and fulfilling their heart of hearts, basic needs, desires, true passion and purpose. Many have lost hope, and given up on "Follow your bliss."

Who are YOU, really? Who am I, really? In light of this issue's theme May be it's time to awaken the Healer Within?

As teachers, healers, parents, and leaders, sung and unsung, what practical Qi tools do we have, simple to teach, simple to learn, for those who come to us, to awaken this Healer Within?

Hopefully, we've some Qi tools for everyday living, for sparking and re-igniting both our individual and collective passions, for Yang Sheng, fully living, fully enjoying, fully nurturing Life.

Here are some Qi tools, we've incorporated into my medical practice, for our patients, over the years, that we've found simply work.



1) Belly Heart Breathing, Divine Breath: Breathe deeply - energetically into your heart, and physically into your belly, via your diaphragm. Imagine breathing into your heart a golden light of Qi. Deeply inhale “good” Qi. Deeply exhale “bad” Qi.

Belly Heart Breathing helps you open your heart to yourself, and to all the unconscious uncontrollable “stuck” Qi, we carry in our bellies. Since we can’t do much with our “stuck” unconscious, since it is unconscious; we can at least Breathe consciously.

Conscious Breathing gives the “greater” Qi a chance to naturally awaken our Healer Within, for “miracles” - Dispels “bad” Qi, to make way for “good” Qi.

Whether or not, you or your patient, consider yourselves spiritual, make every breath a wordless prayer anyway. As innocently, and simply as possible, like a child, reconnect your heart to Source, to Love, to that still small voice within, as Solala Towler so beautifully writes in November’s Every Breath a Prayer.

2) Inner Smile of Gratitude: No matter how “bad” life seems, no matter what anyone involved feels - Smile! Smile! Smile!

The Qigong Inner Smile is about being Gentle, Kind, Forgiving, and Accepting of your Self. Gratitude is key here. Remind both yourself and your patients, with each breath, to give a smile of Gratitude to every organ, cell, and thought of your Being.

Smiling is long scientifically documented to measurably transmute your body’s inner workings - body chemistry, immune system, endorphins, neurotransmitters, heart variability, and other measurable indices; for the happier and healthier.

For “advanced” students – Laughter is the medicine of angels. Just enjoy Breathing, and everything else for that matter, in Joy. Laugh! Laugh! Laugh! Lemons to lemonade! A merry heart doeth good medicine make.

3) Yi Nian, Clear Intention: Remind yourself, and teach your patients, via kinesiology, how every thought affects our Being, and everyone around us as well. Negative thoughts weaken. Positive thoughts strengthen. One “negative” person in the room affects the energy of the entire room, and everyone in it. Ditto the positive, with worldwide implications.

With the Shift accelerating “instant manifestation,” notice how your thoughts, in a heartbeat, become your instant reality.

4) Connect & Love: Hug! Hug! Hug! Touch! Touch! Touch! Love! Love! Love! The ancient Qigong concept that we are all One, all interconnected is far more than a concept. Science documents the very real ripples of how we each have far reaching impact on the lives around us, far and near, and on the life of Mother Earth as well.

Love is, of course, the most powerful Qi tool we have – for Healing, for Redemption, for Transformation. Pure unconditional Love speaks louder than words, and is most effective, emitted or transmitted.

How did my Mom, a pediatrician, word it, as she lay dying? “Stop talking! We don’t need to talk about anything. Don’t waste time! Just Love me...” The picture and true story of “The Rescuing Hug” speak more powerfully than words. Hug time!



5) Sacred Sounds: Whether or not your patient knowingly appreciates Sacredness, we invite our patients to experiment sounding a heartfelt “Aaaahh” sound with each breath. The sound “Aaah” simply works, often with palpable results.

Why Aaah? “Aaah” is a heart opening sound in Chinese Medicine. In many languages, “Aaah” is a key sound in the name of God. In nearly every culture, “Aaah” is the universal voice of the heart, beyond words.

Feel and sound for yourself your own Aaah’s - of sadness, loss, grief, fear/terror, anger/rage; and on the other end of the spectrum - surprise, thrill, excitement, joy, surrender, passion, ...the orgasmic Aaah of Life, where, in orgasmic Oneness, there is no longer any separate You or I.

6) Remembrance: With each breath, Remember to breathe in your Spirit. With wordless prayer, sound on each breath, a Name or Quality of God, or simply the sound “Aaah.”

Allow your heart to be as the heart of an innocent child. Ask as a child would ask, for your heart of hearts true, authentic, desire. Ask and trust the (Divine) Qi to help you Remember, who you truly are - your gifts, your essence, your eternal connection to the Universal One, to the Divine.

The practice of Remembrance happens to be a Sufi Qi practice. Like practices include mantras and the Hail Mary of the Catholic rosary. Sufi is simply the way of Love, the way of the heart, practiced by those of all faiths.

I’ve clinically used the Remembrance in my medical practice for years. Remembrance often brings tears, the melting of pain, and times modest “miracles,” where a miracle can be as miraculous as years of documented paralysis dissolving, or as miraculous and ordinary as an unexpected smile.

Without having to explain much to my patients in words, the practice of Remembrance speaks for itself.

7) De, or Virtue: Qigong is ultimately a way of Life - about Living a life fulfilled in “Virtue” – “right” action, “right” relationships, “right” living. Consciously choose, with each breath, to make necessary choices that bring you closer to a life of “Virtue.”

Which virtues, or qualities, support “greater” Life for you? ... each breath, this breath, Now? What gives you a greater sense of Happiness and Ease? What action best serves this? Trust that whatever best serves You, best serves others. - In Qi, with virtue, simply BE the son, the daughter, of your moment, Now.

8) Give, Serve, Love: One way of forgetting your own trials and tribulations, is freely and selflessly, giving to something or someone else, not expecting or wanting anything in return; yet at the same time, not forgetting yourself. As Confucius taught - 1st take care of yourself, then your family, then your community, then the world. In Remembrance, focus on giving and serving something greater than yourself.

9) Count your Blessings and Give Thanks, especially for Blessings in disguise! Remember the story of the boy, digging and singing away, knee deep in horse poop – “With all this horse poop, there must be a pony here somewhere, and I’m going to find it!” We are so blessed ... Yes?

In the Spirit of the Season - One of my Qigong Masters taught that one of the greatest Qigong Masters who ever lived, is of course, Christ. Another teaches that this Shift is in part about, how All of us, and Mother Earth, no matter what your religion, are each in the process of being “Christed.”

All around the world, people are celebrating the birth of the Christ child - Fear not! I bring you tidings of Good news, and great Joy ... for unto us a child is born.

No matter what your religion, there is an undeniable Christed universal message in “Fear not! ...” Fear vs Love? What do we choose?

Times and Shift As Is - Who can possibly argue with the Qualities, or “Virtue,” Christ re-Presents? as in re-Presence? - Pure Love, Compassion, Forgiveness, Mercy, Freedom, Peace, Victory, Joy to the World, New Life, Miracles, and more.

Aren’t these Qualities of the Healer Within? Isn’t Qi, after all, about deeply Breathing, past all the noise, all the stories, all the separation, to that place where we’re all One? ...One Heart, One Love. No matter what your religion, in the Spirit of the season, may Qi ease your Way.

We humbly invite you to play with these Qi tools. Experiment, experience, and see for yourself, what’s possible as our collective Healer Within awakens.

Oh Holy Night, Oh Holy Shift! What the world needs now is ... What we need now is...


The time has come. The time is now. May the Qi be with you. May the greater Qi guide you and Bless us All.

Thank You for being part of our Qi family! Happy Shift & Joyeux Noel!



Nadia Linda Hole MD, as a graduate of Princeton, Duke, & Oneness Universities, is a long time practitioner & teacher of Qigong, for community & medical organizations. She has served as a consulting

editor for Chinese Medical Qigong; a contributing author of chapters on Qigong & Koryo Hand Therapy for the medical textbooks *Alternative & Complementary Treatment in Neurologic Illness* (Michael Weintraub MD), *Pain Management - A Practical Guide for Clinicians* (Richard Weiner PhD), & *Cardiac Illness – Integrative Treatment & Prevention* (Frishman MD & Micozzi MD); & on the faculties of the American Academy of Pain Management, American Holistic Medical Association, & World Congress on Qigong. One of her passions is a more heart centered, Qi approach, for medicine. As an ordained spiritual healer, & Sufi “master” teacher, currently residing in Hawaii; she also hosts Dolphin Qi Pilgrimages, & helps anchor an international interfaith, Remembrance telecall, for peace.



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Improving Immunity with Tai Chi

太极提高免疫力

by Violet Li

It has been shown that in certain circumstances, practicing tai chi has an effect on boosting the immune system for older adults similar to getting a vaccination. Michael R. Irwin, MD, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and other scientists have conducted research showing that practicing Tai Chi Chih, a modified tai chi form, provided the same benefit as getting a vaccination to prevent Shingles, an immune system deficiency disease. In a related study, people who practiced Tai Chi Chih were also vaccinated and their immunity levels were doubled. There are additional health benefits that the practitioners gained by practicing Tai Chi Chih which included depression abatement, physical function enhancement, body pain reduction, vitality growth, mental health improvement, and sleep quality betterment.



Dr. Michael Irwin was the recipient of the Scientist of the Year Award by the recent World Congress on Qigong and the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). He presented the aforementioned research results during the Scientific Symposium during the World Congress held in San Francisco in late April.

Tai Chi Chih is a modified tai chi form. It consists of 19 movements and one pose with minimal aerobic impact. It was developed by Justin Stone in 1974. It adheres to most of the tai chi fundamentals, i.e. clearly identifying Solid and Empty, breathe slowly, consistent and constant body weight shifting, proper body alignment, practicing with Intent, and moving arms and hands through “thick” air, and totally relaxing the body. It focuses more on the Qigong aspect of tai chi.

Dr. Irwin, Director of the UCLA Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology and Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, along with other scientists did several studies from 2001 to 2005. They worked with 112 healthy adults aged 59 to 86 with an average age of 70, who were divided into two groups: one group was taught Tai Chi Chih while the other group was provided health related info. The tai chi session and the health info session were 40 minutes each and conducted three times each week. After 16 weeks, the health education group was given a vaccination to boost their immunity to prevent development of Shingles. At the 25th week, it was found that the immunity level of both groups was elevated. Surprisingly, the tai chi group’s immunity index was slightly higher than the other group inoculated with vaccine. According to Dr. Irwin, this result is extremely encouraging. It shows that tai chi alone can provide the same health benefit if not more as immunization and in addition, it is especially good for many seniors since some of them are not suitable for vaccination. To further the understanding of the relationship of tai chi practice and vaccination, the researchers also vaccinated some of the tai chi practitioners. The results showed that their immunity level was twice as high as the tai chi group who did not get the vaccination and the health education group who only received vaccination. It shows that practicing tai chi does not interfere with the benefits of getting a vaccination. In fact, they can work together to provide a greater benefit.

It was extremely remarkable to discover that the average VZV-RCF level or immunity index of Shingles prevention of the older adults who practiced Tai Chi Chih and got a vaccination is comparable with the average level of healthy adults of 30 years younger.

Another study, *Tai Chi Chih Acutely Decreases Sympathetic Nervous System Activity in Older Adults of 2005*, also utilized Tai Chi Chih as a method of intervention. The researchers designed a slow movement



exercise, which is similar to Tai Chi Chih with little aerobic impact for a control group to learn. In comparison with the health education group, the group that practiced Tai Chi Chih had significant changes in depression reduction, physical function increase, body pain reduction, vitality boosting, and overall mental health improvement.

Improving Sleep Quality in Older Adults with Moderate Sleep Complaints, another tai chi study, also showed that the Tai Chi Chih practitioners were able to improve their sleep quality and sleep efficiency, lengthen sleep duration, and reduce sleep disturbance. These studies indicate that the magnitude of benefits achieved with Tai Chi Chih is comparable to pharmacologic treatments.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tai_chi_chih

http://www.tai_chichih.org/originator.php



Violet Li – an award winning journalist, certified Tai Chi instructor, and certified Heart Zone Trainer, has studied Tai Chi, Qigong, and heart fitness with many grandmasters and experts, and has taught Tai Chi, Qigong, and other fitness programs to various groups. 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 individuals. NBC of St. Louis featured one of her classes in “100 Year Old Tai Chi Artist”. Ms. Li writes regularly for the St. Louis Tai Chi Examiner and the National Tai Chi Examiner, and has readership from over 18 different countries. Do you have a story or comment to share? Please contact her at violet.li@tadi.com.

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Meridians and Organs: Yin Organs

气的科学探索(17a): 经络与脏腑器官

by Marty Eisen Ph.D.

1. Introduction

First, the Chinese concepts of Meridians and Organs will be introduced in a series of articles. Then, possible western scientific explanation of some of these concepts will be given in subsequent parts. More scientific research is still required to explain some of these ideas.

Chinese concepts will be denoted by capital letters and western concepts by lower case letters. For example, the Heart in Chinese Medicine is different than the heart in Western Medicine.

The theory of Meridians, Collaterals, Zangfu Organs, Qi, Blood, etc. was developed from the observation of symptoms and signs of diseases, the transmissions of acupuncture needling sensations, Tuina (Chinese remedial massage, Daoyin (ancient Qigong breathing) and ancient anatomic knowledge based on centuries of clinical practice in Chinese medicine.

Chapter 33 in the Classic of the Miraculous Pivot, (*Lingshu Jing*), states "that internally the 12 Primary Meridians connect with the the Zangfu Organs and externally with the the joints, limbs and other superficial bodily tissues, transporting Qi and Blood to nourish the Zangfu organs, skin, muscles, tendons and bones."

Chapter 10 in the Classic of the Miraculous Pivot states "that the Meridians and Collaterals are so important that they determine life and death in the treatment of diseases and the regulation of excess and deficiency conditions. Thus, one must gain a thorough understanding of them."

The Channels can be classified into four categories: Jing (to move through), Luo (a net), Muscle/Tendon and Skin Zones: (i) The Jing Channels are the 12 Primary Meridians, 8 Extraordinary Channels and 12 Divergent or Curious Meridians. (ii) The Luo Channels include the 15 Major Collaterals, Minute Collaterals and Superficial Collaterals. (iii) The 12 Muscle/Tendons Channels which serve as external connections of the 12 Primary Meridians to the muscles muscles, tendons and ligaments. (iv) The cutaneous regions are 12 distinct areas on the surface of the body within the domains of the 12 Primary Meridians according to Chapter 56 of Huangdi Neijing Su Wen (*Plain Questions: Yellow Emperor's Internal Canon of Medicine*). Some modern books add the cutaneous regions of Conception Vessel and Governing Vessels so that there are 14 cutaneous regions.

Zangfu is the general term for Organs in Chinese medicine. Both Zang and Fu mean "organ". The character for Zang is composed of two parts, one indicating "flesh" and the other indicating "to store". This shows that the Zang (Yin) Organs are in charge of storing vital substances. One part of the Fu ideogram means "flesh" and the other means "seat of government". This indicates that Fu (Yang) Organs mainly receive and digest food, and transmit and excrete wastes, just as the ancient Chinese government was in charge of food distribution.

Zangfu are not like the organs in western medicine, since they also have other properties such as spiritual and neurological. The six Zang Organs are the Heart, Pericardium, Lung, Spleen, Liver and Kidney. The Fu Organs are the Large Intestine, San Jiao (Triple Burner), Small Intestine, Stomach, Gallbladder and Bladder. The Brain, Marrow, Bones, Gallbladder and Uterus are known as the Extraordinary Organs and store various substances. The Organs and their connection with the Channels appear in Figure 1.

There is a structural and functional connection between the Zang and Fu Organs individually as well as collectively, and also by the Meridians and Collaterals with these Organs and the five sense organs and tissues. The Classified Classics by Zhang Jiebin (1562-1639) state the Zangfu Organs are located interiorly and manifested exteriorly. Therefore, the theory of these Organs is called Zang-Xiang, where Zang refers to their interior location and Xiang denotes their manifestations or image.

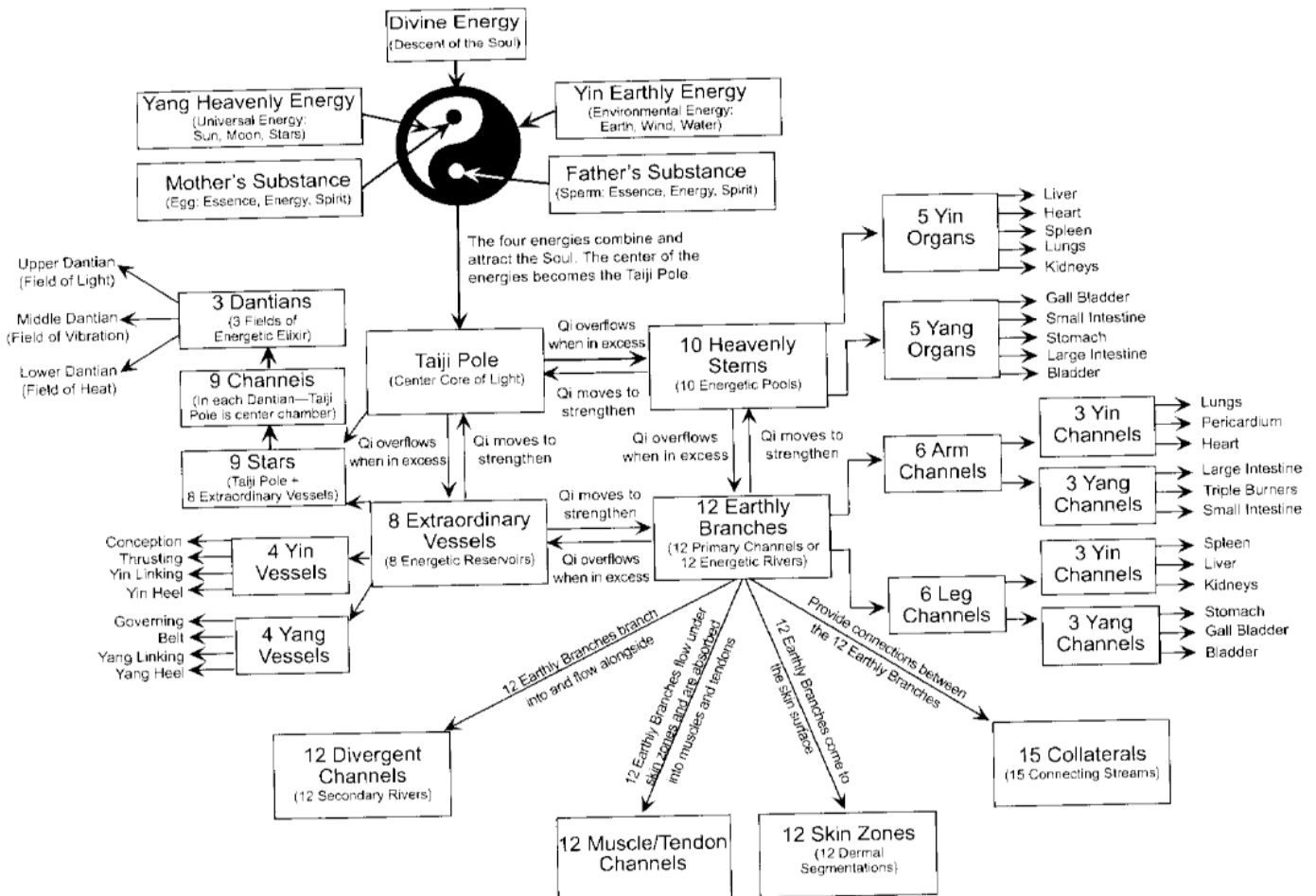


Figure 1 Channels and Organs, Their Connections and Energy Flow

2. Formation of the 8 Extraordinary Channels and the 12 Meridians

The following theory is one of the theories taught at the Hai Dan Medical Qigong College in Beijing, China (1). The ancient Chinese did not have an idea of cells and their division. Modern theories postulate that the channels are formed at the earliest stage of cell division to create an energy matrix for the developing fetus.

The following three energies combine in the developing fetus: Jing (Essence), Qi (Energy) and Shen (Spirit). Jing nourishes the tissues and is the foundational bodily substance. Qi emerges from the circulating Jing and promotes the body's metabolism. Shen governs the body. Collectively, they are called the "Three Treasures of Man".

The father's sperm and the mother's egg contain these Three Treasures and they will be referred to as Father Qi and Mother Qi, respectively. The combination of Father and Mother Qi is known as Yuan (Original) Qi.

The quantity and quality of Yuan Qi the baby receives at conception depends on the condition of the parents' sperm and egg, their health (physical, mental, spiritual) at conception and karma, which is brought into the life by incoming spirit/soul.

Upon entering the ovum, the sperm produces a polar axis that creates an energetic vortex. This central vortex creates the Taiji Pole, draws Qi from Heaven and Earth and the Eternal Soul into the fetus.

The Taiji Pole has been described by some people through a meditative process. It appears to be a vertical column of brilliant white light, full of vibrations and energetic pulsations. This channel flows from the Bahui point at the top of the head, through the center of the body to the Huiyin point at the center of the perineum. It connects the three Dantians. The characteristics of the energies located there are unknown and have not been detected by modern scientific methods.

This polarization not only produces the Taiji Pole but also determines a ventral and dorsal surface, which contain the embryo's Conception (Ren) and Governing (Du) Vessels, respectively, produced upon the first cleavage of the fertilized egg. The first cell division also establishes a left and right side containing the Yin and Yang Heel vessels.

The Belt and Thrusting Vessels form at the time of the second cell division. The four vessels (Ren, Du, Belt and Thrusting) are interlinked for the production, circulation and regulation of the Jing of the fetus. The body's energy system is established and maintained by these four vessels when cell division occurs. As cellular division progresses, the Yang and Yin Linking Vessels are formed and are responsible for the development of the exterior and the interior of the body, respectively.

These eight vessels are known as the Prenatal or the Extraordinary Vessels and have a specific role in embryonic development: (a) The Governing Vessel (Yang) controls the fetal back development. (b) The Conception Vessel (Yin) controls the fetal front development. (c) The Thrusting Vessels carry energy through the center of the fetus and control the fetal central core. (d) The Yang Heel Vessels control the development of the fetal right and left Yang energy. (e) The Yin Heel Vessels control the development of the fetal right and left Yin energy. (f) The Yang Linking Vessels control the development of the fetal exterior and correlate to Heaven energy. (g) The Yin Linking Vessels control the development of the fetal interior and correlate to Earth energy. (g) The Belt Vessel binds all the channels together.

The eight Prenatal Vessels form a vortex of energy in the embryo's center, the area between the locations where the kidneys will develop. The Taiji Pole and the Thrusting Vessels are at the center of this vortex and will form the following pools or Seas of energy corresponding to the developing organs and channels. These are the Seas of the five Yin and six Yang Organs, the Seas of the Twelve Primary Channels, and the Sea of Blood associated with the Thrusting Channel. Qi and Blood are distributed at the energetic level from the Taiji Pole and Thrusting Vessels through the small rivers or channels that flow out of the Seas of the channels. This supplies the energy for the growth of the embryo's physical form.

During the formation of the embryo, nine Yang channels begin to flow out of the Governing Vessel (Sea of Yang Qi). These nine rivers are: the Small Intestine, Triple Burner, Large Intestine, Stomach, Gall Bladder, Bladder Meridians, and the Yang Heel, Yang Linking and Belt Vessels.

Similarly, nine Yin channels begin to flow out of the Conception Vessel (Sea of Yin Qi). These nine Yin rivers are: the Lung, Heart, Pericardium, Spleen, Liver and Kidney Meridians and the Yin Heel, Yin Linking, and Thrusting Vessels.

Each of the ten lunar months of the development of the embryo is also influenced by the associated Primary Meridian of the mother. This theory, described in (1), was created by Dr. Chao Yuan Fang, a Qigong expert during the Sun Dynasty, about 610 A.D.

3. The Zhang (Yin) Organs (1, 2, 3)

The Heart (Xin)

a) Governs Blood

It transforms Food Qi into Blood. The Lung Qi helps push Food Qi to the Heart. The energy for this process, called the Post-Heaven Cycle of Blood production, is supplied by the Original Qi. Blood is also produced by the Pre-Heaven Cycle, which will be described next month in Part 2, in Kidney (f).

It is responsible for the circulation of Blood although other Organs, such as, the Lungs, Spleen and Liver, also have a role.

One's constitution is primarily related to the Kidney Essence, but is partly determined by the strength of the Heart and Blood. If there is ample Blood and a good circulation, a person will be vigorous and have a good constitution.

b) Controls the Blood Vessels

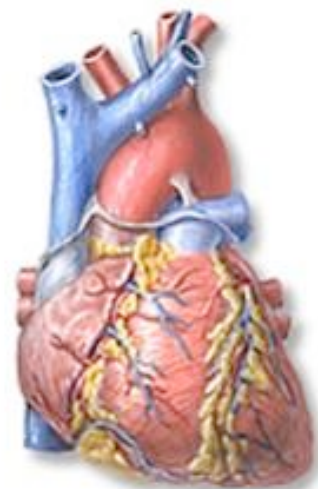
Blood Vessels depend on the Heart's Qi and Blood. If these are strong the Blood Vessels will be good and the pulse will be full and regular.

c) Manifest in the Complexion

If the Heart is strong and the Blood is abundant, there will be a rosy and lustrous complexion. If the Blood is hot or is stagnant the complexion will be too red or bluish-purple, respectively. If the Blood is deficient, the complexion will be bright white or pale.

d) Houses the Mind and Spirit (Shen)

Shen is used in two different ways in Chinese medicine: (i) Shen indicates a complex of mental activities which "reside" in the Heart and so denotes the Mind. If the Heart is strong and the Blood is abundant, there will be normal mental activity,



balanced emotions, a clear state of consciousness, good long-term memory, intelligence and sleep. For example, low intelligence can be somewhat improved by tonifying the Heart. (ii) Shen is also used to denote the whole complex of the spiritual, mental and emotional aspects of man. In this sense, Shen is not only related to the Heart but also to other mental and spiritual aspects of the Yin organs. In the discussions of the other Yin organs, it will be seen that they influence emotions, Mind and Spirit in different ways. The Heart is called the Emperor or supreme controller of all the Zangfu.

e) Emotions

The Heart is related to joy. If the Heart takes excessive control of mental activities, it will cause uncontrollable laughter. A Heart deficiency can make one susceptible to grief. Excessive joy as well as other excessive emotions can affect the Heart because the mind is housed in the Heart. Conversely, emotional problems can cause Heart problems.

f) Opening into the Tongue

The tongue is referred to as a “seedling” or “offshoot” of the Heart. The Heart influences the appearance, form and color of the tongue, particularly, its tip. It also controls the sense of taste. The tongue will be rosy, moist, lustrous, with a normal sense of taste and move freely for a healthy Heart.

The Heart also affects speech, influencing talking and laughing. Thus, an abnormality of the Heart can cause excessive talking, inappropriate laughter, aphasia or stuttering.

g) Controls Sweat

Body Fluids are transformed into sweat by Qi activity. The secretion of sweat depends on the opening and the closing of pores, which are controlled by Wei (Defensive) Qi. Blood and Body Fluids mutually interchange. If the Blood becomes too thick, Body Fluids enter the blood vessels to thin it down. The Classic of the Jade Letter of the Golden Shrine states that Body fluids enter the blood vessels and change into Blood. Since the Heart governs Blood and there is a continuous interchange between Body Fluids and Blood, the Heart controls sweat.

The relation of the Heart to sweat also appears clinically. Unchecked, profuse sweating will lead to deficiency of Blood. Deficiency of Heart Yin often causes night sweating. A deficiency of Heart Qi often causes spontaneous sweating.

h) Dreams

Dreams and sleep are related to the Heart, since it houses the Mind. The Heart’s housing the Mind depends on an adequate Blood supply. Conversely, the Heart governing the Blood depends on the Mind. If the Heart-Blood is strong, the Mind resides in the Heart and one will easily fall sound asleep. If the Heart is weak the Mind is not anchored in the Heart and flits around at night. This leads to difficulty in falling asleep, disturbed sleep and excessive dreaming.

Chapter 80 in the Huangdi Neijing Su Wen (Plain Questions: Yellow Emperor’s Internal Canon of Medicine) states that if the Heart is weak, one dreams of fires or volcanic eruptions in the summertime. Chapter 43 in the Spiritual Axis says that if the Heart is in excess, one dreams of laughing; when it is deficient, one dreams of fire, smoke and mountains.

i) Hates Heat

Heat, more than any other exterior pathogenic factor, adversely affects the Heart. However, the Heart is not invaded by external Heat since it is shielded by the Pericardium. The Heart has vessels and Channels carrying Blood and Qi to the brain. These are interpreted as “Orifices of the Heart”. When the Pericardium is invaded by exterior Heat, the Heat clogs the “Heart Orifices”. This can lead to aphasia, delirium or coma, since the Heart houses the Mind.

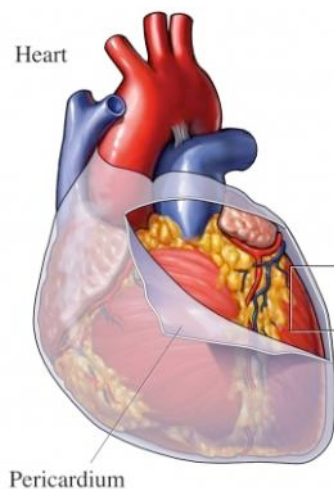
Western Medical Functions (4)

The heart propels the blood through the body. The circulating blood carries nutrients and oxygen for the cells and aids in the removal of waste products and other substances.

The Pericardium (Xin Bao)

The Pericardium is considered to be a protective covering of the Heart more than an independent organ. It is considered to be the official or Prime Minister who protects the Heart (Emperor). Chapter 71 of the Spiritual Axis states that if a pathogenic factor attempts attacking the Heart, it will be diverted to attack the Pericardium.

The functions of the Pericardium are approximately those of the Heart. It governs Blood, houses the Mind and influences mental and emotional states. The Pericardium tries to create feelings of pleasure or joy for the emperor (Heart).



The western medical function of the pericardium is to provide a protective covering which encloses the heart. The pericardial cavity contains a lubricating fluid which allows the heart to move with less friction.

The Lungs (Fei)

a) Govern Qi and Respiration

The Lungs inhale pure Qi (air) and exhale dirty Qi. This ensures proper functioning of all the physiological processes that require Qi.

They also govern Qi by producing it. Food Qi is extracted from food by the Spleen and is sent to the Lungs. There it combines with the inhaled air to form Gathering (Zong Qi) or the “Big Qi of the chest”. Since this synthesis and storage occurs in the chest, the chest is often called the “Sea of Qi” or the “Upper Sea of Qi”. Zong Qi helps the Heart and Lung functions, promoting circulation.

The Lungs are the most external of the Organs because of their location and so are referred to as the “canopy” of the Organs. Hence, they are more vulnerable to attack by external Pathogenic Factors and sometimes called the “Tender” Organ.

b) Control the Voice

The Lungs control the strength, clarity and tone of the voice. Weak Lung Qi can cause a weak voice, breathlessness and tiredness. A muffled tone of voice can result from the obstruction of the Lungs by Phlegm.

c) Control Blood Vessels and Channels

The Lungs govern Qi and Qi is required to help the Heart to circulate the Blood and also to circulate Qi in the Channels. Thus, if Lung Qi is strong, Blood and Qi will circulate properly to warm the limbs. If the Lung Qi is weak circulation will be impaired and the limbs, particularly the hands and feet will be cold.

d) Control Dispersing and Descending

Dispersing refers to the disseminating Lung Qi throughout the body to perform the functions in (i). Descending refers to sending Lung Qi downwards in the body to perform the functions in (ii)

(i) Dispersing Function

The Lungs spread Body Fluid and food Essence, transported to the Lungs by the Spleen, throughout the whole body and externally to the skin and body hair. The Body Fluids are spread as a fine “mist” in the space between the skin and the muscles. The fine mist moistens the skin, regulates the opening and closing of pores and sweating. Edema, usually of the face can occur if the Lung’s don’t disperse properly.

In an Excess condition the pores become blocked, resulting in anhidrosis - for example, this occurs with the invasion of exterior Wind-Cold, with the prevalence of Cold. In a Deficient condition the pores remain open and there is spontaneous sweating. This occurs in an interior condition of Yang deficiency or with the invasion of exterior Wind-Cold, with the prevalence of Wind.

The Lungs also disperse Wei Qi between the skin and muscles warming them and also protecting the body from external Pathogenic Factors. Invasion by exterior Wind-Cold obstructs the spreading of Wei Qi. This can lead to a bad Cold, with a headache, stuffed nose, feeling of cold, etc. Everything feels blocked, just like the blocking of the dispersing function.

(ii) Descending Function

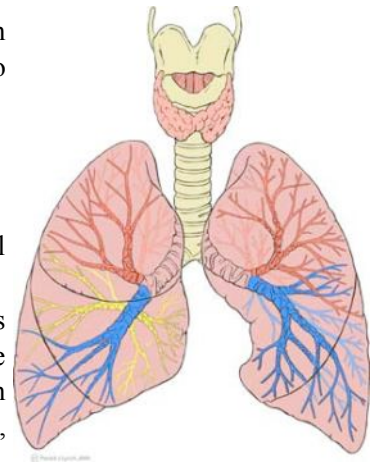
The Lungs are the upper most Organ and so their Qi must descend. They send Qi down to the Kidneys which hold the Qi. The Lungs also direct Body Fluids and food Essence transported to the Lungs by the Spleen downwards as part of the dispersing function. They also direct fluids to the Kidney and Bladder.

Impairment of the descending function results in Qi accumulating in the chest. This causes cough, breathlessness and a stuffy feeling in the chest. If the Colon and Bladder do not receive the descending Lung Qi, retention of urine and constipation, respectively, can result, particularly in seniors.

e) Regulates the Water Passages

The Lungs, after receiving the refined fluids from the Spleen disperse them in a fine mist under the skin and also direct fluids down to the Kidney and Bladder, as described in d) (i) and (ii). The Kidneys receive the fluids, vaporize part of them and then send them up to moisten the Lungs.

The Lungs by its dispersing and descending functions helps excrete Body Fluids via sweat and urine.



f) Control Skin and Body Hair

The dispersing function, described in d (i), nourishes and moistens the skin and hair.

g) Opens into the Nose

Since respiration can occur through the nose, it is called the “opening” of the nose. The Lungs are the major Organ affecting the sense of smell, but other Organs have some influence, mainly the Spleen.

If the Lung Qi is strong, the nose will be open, respiration and the sense of smell will be normal. Heat invading the Lungs can result in loss of sense of smell, bleeding and rapid flapping of the alae nasi. Invasion of an exterior Pathogenic Factor can lead to a blocked nose, sneezing and loss of the sense of smell.

h) Fluid is Mucus

This follows from g).

i) House the Corporeal Soul (Po)

The Lungs house the Po. The Po is the mortal part of the Soul and is a manifestation of the breath of life. Breathing can be interpreted as pulsations of the Corporeal Soul. It is stated in the *Simple Questions* that the Po is close to Essence and Qi. The *Classic of Categories* (1624) states "the Po moves and accomplishes things; pain and itching can be felt when it is active." This can be interpreted as the Po is responsible for clear and sharp sensations and movement.

j) Emotions

Sadness and or grief obstruct the movement of Po and so constrict breathing. An example is the shallow and short breathing of a sad and depressed person. Thus, treating the Lungs is often helpful in emotional problems arising from anxiety, bereavement, depression, sadness or grief.

k) Governs the 100 Vessels

The Lungs govern Qi and so have an influence on all of the blood vessels as described in (c). Therefore, the radial pulse on the Lung Channel reflects the state of all of the Organs.

l) Dreams

Chapter 17 in *Simple Questions* states 'if the Lungs are in Excess one dreams of weeping.' Chapter 80 states "that if the Lungs are Deficient one dreams of white objects or of bloody killing. If the dream occurs in Autumn, one will dream of battles and wars."

Chapter 43 in the *Spiritual Axis* states "if the Lungs are in Excess, one dreams of worry and fear or crying and flying; if Deficient, one dreams of flying and of strange objects of iron and gold."

m) Lungs Hate Cold

The Lungs are the canopy of the Organs and influence the skin and Defensive Qi and so are easily attacked by exterior Pathogenic factors, especially Cold.

Western Medical Functions

On inhaling air, oxygen is introduced into the lungs and on exhalation carbon dioxide is expelled from the lungs. Blood passing through the lungs receives oxygen and expels carbon dioxide. The oxygenated blood is delivered back to the heart where it is circulated through the body.

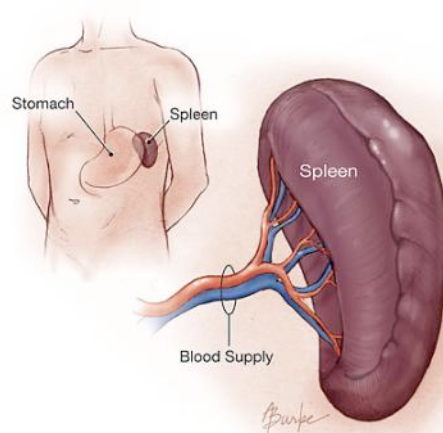
The Spleen (Pi)

a) Transportation and Transformation

(i) Food

A part of the food and drink processed by the Stomach is sent down to the Spleen. This is transformed by the Spleen, which extracts Qi, called Food (Gu) Qi, from it. Then, the Spleen transports the Gu Qi and other refined parts of food, called Food Essence, to various parts of the body. Recall that the Gu Qi is sent upwards to the Lungs, where it combines with the air to form Gathering Qi, and to the Heart, where Blood is formed.

Impairment of these functions of transportation and transformation of food can result in a poor appetite, bad digestion, abdominal distention and loose



stools. A maxim in Chinese medicine is that the Spleen likes dryness. This means that excessive consumption of cold drinks can easily impair these functions of the Spleen.

(ii) Water

The Spleen also controls the transformation, separation and movements of Fluids. The Spleen separates a usable from an unusable part of ingested fluids. The “clear” part goes upwards to the Lungs, where it is distributed to the skin. The “dirty” part goes downwards to the Intestines for further separation.

If these functions of the Spleen on Fluids are impaired, Fluids can accumulate to form Dampness or Phlegm and cause edema. The Spleen can easily be affected by External Dampness, which can impair transformation and transportation.

b) Controls Blood

The Spleen keeps the Blood circulating in the vessels and prevents it from extravasation. Insufficient Spleen Qi can lead to the Blood flowing outside of the vessels, causing bleeding syndromes such as hematuria, hemafecia, uterine bleeding, etc.

Besides controlling the Blood to prevent bleeding, the Spleen plays an important part in making Blood. If the transformation and transportation functions of the Spleen are good, Blood and Qi will be plentiful. This is the reason why the Spleen is called the “Root of Post-Heaven Qi”.

c) Controls the Muscles and Four Limbs

The Spleen extracts Food Qi from food and transports it all over the body. If the Spleen is strong, the refined Qi is directed to the muscles, especially to those of the limbs. The state of the Spleen is an important factor in determining a person’s physical energy. If Spleen Qi is weak one will feel tired, cold, the muscles will be weak and may atrophy in severe situations.

d) Opens into the Mouth

This means that appetite relates to the transportation and transformation functions of the Spleen. When these functions are working properly, the appetite and taste will be normal. Otherwise, abnormal sensations such as a sticky mouth, a tasteless sweetish taste or a bitter taste will occur.

e) Manifests in the Lips

The Spleen is the foundation of Qi and Blood in the body. Red and moistened lips or their absence reflect the status of Blood and Qi in the body and also respond to the transportation and transformation of food and drink by the Spleen

f) Controls the Raising of Qi

The Spleen’s function of raising the Qi is another way of expressing its function of extracting the food Qi and sending it to the Lungs and Heart and upper body.

The Spleen also exerts lifting effect along the midline of the body, which ensures that the organs are in their proper position. If the Spleen is weak in raising Qi, prolapse of various organs can occur.

g) Houses Thought

Thought (Yi) resides in the Spleen and corresponds to the function of thinking, concentrating, studying, focusing and memorizing. However, the Heart and Kidneys also have an effect on thinking and memory.

If Spleen Qi is weak, then thinking, concentration and memory will also be weak. On the other hand, excessive mental work can weaken the Spleen.

h) The Fluid of the Spleen is Saliva

Saliva is the fluid of the mouth, which is the opening of the Spleen. Saliva circulates upward to the mouth and doesn’t dribble out. Disharmony between the Spleen and the Stomach can quickly increase the amount of saliva and cause dribbling.

i) Dreams

Chapter 80 in Plain Questions states " if the Spleen is deficient, one dreams of being hungry or of building a house if the dream occurs in late summer."

Chapter 43 in the Spiritual Axis states "if the Spleen is in excess one dreams of singing and being very heavy; if deficient, one dreams of abysses in mountains and of marshes."

Western Medical Functions

The spleen is located on the left edge of the stomach, inferior to the diaphragm and is about the size of a fist. There are two distinct areas within the spleen, white and red pulp. The functions of the spleen include the following:

(i) It filters blood but not lymph, because the spleen has only efferent lymphatic vessels. Macrophages in the spleen remove bacteria and other pathogens, cellular debris, and aged blood cells. (ii) It destroys old red blood cells, removes the iron from

the heme groups and binds the iron to the storage protein. (iii) The red pulp contains large quantities of blood, which enters the circulation when required. It also stores blood platelets. (iv) It is active in immune responses. T cells proliferate in the white pulp before returning to the blood to attack non-self cells. B cells proliferate in the white pulp, producing plasma cells and antibodies that return to the blood to inactivate antigens. (v) During the first five months of fetal development, it produces red and white blood cells.

(Scientific Qi Exploration. Part 17a. Meridians and Organs will be continued next month in the January 2012 issue.)

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Quotes from Lao Tzu

Be content with what you have,
rejoice in the way things are,
When you realize there is nothing lacking,
the whole world belongs to you.

Manifest plainness, Embrace simplicity,
Reduce selfishness, Have few desires.

Kindness in words creates confidence.
Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.
Kindness in giving creates love.

Knowing others is wisdom,
knowing yourself is Enlightenment.

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength,
while loving someone deeply gives you courage.



Chinese Ways to Open Your Perceptions through Training Kundalini Energy

中国式的Kundalini能量训练打开你的感知

by Raven Cohan

The Chinese (or Ancient Daoist) ways of looking at the systems of Kundalini* energy development for self-healing, has variants that do not make one pathway right or another way wrong. You like different kinds of music yet still can co-exist in a world that plays others' tunes. A similar example is that you sometimes hang others framed renderings of art to be appreciated in your home. Sometimes you accept some really strange works which many friends think to be just awful.

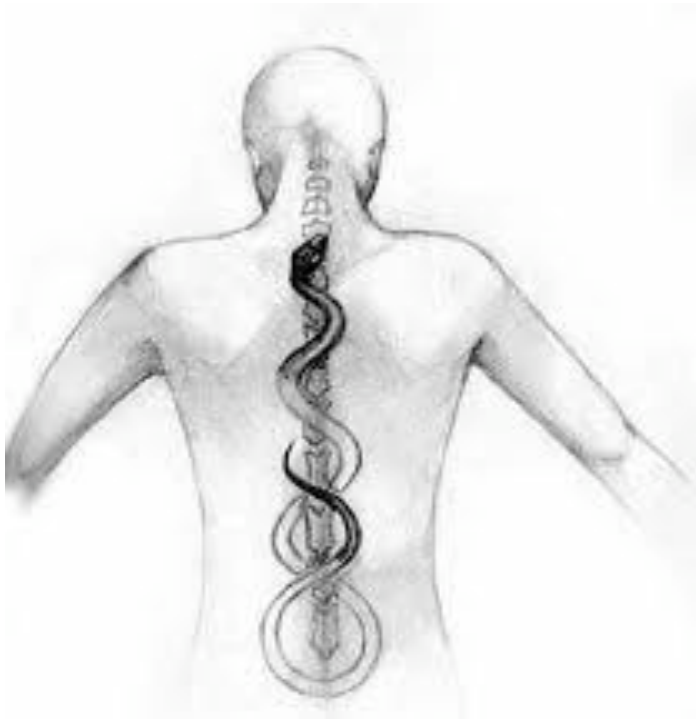


To begin exploring how energy moves inside you in the ancient Chinese ways, please love the energy first. You don't have to love it like a favorite piece of music or art. After all, energy is just energy. Love the concept of being part of all the energy in the Universe. Imagine that energy is a gift in a package that can be opened from any side.

It's usually more challenging to open a package from the inside out. Most open from the out to the in. Most climb a ladder first starting at the bottom and then going to the top. Most people observe with their eyes facing what they consider to be our usual way of looking at things: in front of us. (Normally in society, that is the side where our face is and not the back of our heads.)

By including in your bucket list, the idea that you could learn to SEE from the back of your head rather than keeping to the common belief that everyone has one usual way of seeing via the old Newtonian physics reality, such an intention might encourage you to open yourself to a new, Quantum possibility. Sticking to and not budging away from the majority of world citizen's doctrines is simply being very stuck. Training your Kundalini energy allows people to find ways to get unstuck. Perhaps so far, you think I am asking you to let go of all your senses and throw aside reason. Yet as one example, the Chinese ways to open your perception through training Kundalini energy, unlike the most commonly known Indian Kundalini training, allows the possibility that the energy goes around in orbits, rather than only up and down. There are many dimensions in a hologram. There are many dimensions of this Earth's surrounding cosmos that out of habit, you and I often forget about. What if you could be amongst the small percentage of modern people who have begun to understand what many ancient cultures seemed to understand, but many gave up on. They dropped out because our more recent ancestors had become people whose worlds were shrinking because habitual behaviors were being adapted more often than being open to possibilities that were more complicated. Ancient teachers simplified things for people so that they wouldn't have to be convinced and so the easier way was passed down from village to village from generation to generation through thousands of years!

You can train enough to allow into your reality more edifying concepts that behave beyond common observable realities you have always accepted. You can train to ask more questions without denying the small



possibility that there are variations you never considered learning about before. However, perhaps you have never even thought of training in new, life expanding ways because you permitted yourself to be temporarily stuck.

Imagine sheep exiting out of the pen in their BAAHHHH! BAAHHH! type of way. Following other sheep in a business-as-usual routine, is what we humans often do, too. What if one sheep found a door in an unexpected place and exited through that door and all the other sheep behind it simply followed? Those sheep would likely find themselves in new, unfamiliar and possibly scary pastures that might even have a different type of grass upon which to feed. It might be a delicious type of grass or it may be poison, but then again, perhaps it is a type that the sheep find only different and tasting strange to them, but it makes them stronger and healthier than they have ever been before?

Humans with reasoning and methodology try new things once in a while. Converting to new, foreign ways might be a challenge to many people. The world is made of people who are a walking-talking hologram of unlimited life stuffed into the individual, familiar bodies in which they grew up, while unquestioned, older concepts shaped them. Now, if it is your hope to evolve, you can re-shape your concepts with minimal strictures imposed by habit and comfort. As an example, I personally continue simply playing with the extremely challenging concepts including developing my most

positive virtues, given by my teacher over thirty years, to me and my peers who are students and teachers. Becoming a better human being; not necessarily a magical being, is really all that I care to aspire toward! Kundalini, in my opinion as it has been taught to me can open you to confront seemingly new pathways to heal yourself from being stuck in states that you call illness. Be it physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or energetic, there are ways to get back on track toward health that you are in charge of from the inside out! The Ancients called this Alchemy. Many formulas are guidelines for each of us to learn carefully with a teacher. When it morphs into something after years of training so that you now trust that which was seemingly impossible; can you now take it as proof that you allow receiving? Consider finding a teacher and go really, truly slow and easy. Trust that you will learn what you need to know. Maybe you will learn a lot or a little or won't even learn that much in this lifetime. Some don't believe we have more than one life time... But, what if? What if?

** Kundalini energy is simply defined as a procreative force that can be channeled and trained in your body. Many use it for self-healing. All over the world, there are many systems that have evolved which engage you in transformative exercises, quite notably in India and China.*



Raven Cohan is a Senior Universal Healing Tao Instructor of Mantak Chia's system and long time performer since childhood. Mantak Chia certified her in '83 after starting in his first class of non-Asians in N.Y.C. in '81. Raven was reading about meditative ways since she was 15 and began to practice at 19. She loves to teach alchemical formulas that she believes we can benefit from when we are neither too rigid nor too loose. Visit her beach classes on beautiful N. Hollywood Beach between Miami and Ft. Lauderdale. See her web site: www.taoTLC.com

A Legacy: Your Final Footprint

(遗产：你最后的脚印)

by Rena Reese



Mention the names of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King and Eleanor Roosevelt, and people immediately associate each of them with their legacies. Reflecting on the lives of Albert Einstein, Gandhi, and Helen Keller will naturally call us to celebrate their life's work and achievements. The achievements of each of these people were quite varied, important and far-reaching. However, don't be fooled into thinking you'll have to win the Nobel Peace Prize to have a legacy that matters; a modest life holds a powerful legacy too.

There was a time that each of us filled our lungs for the very first time with our first breath. Juxtapose this awareness in considering that you will one day exhale your very last breath too. All of the breaths you will take in-between will make up your personal timeline, yielding your legacy. Whether a life lasts moments, months, or a century will not diminish this truth. Further, the value of a legacy is not measured by the degree of fame attained in life or in the size of our last will and testament. Although these can be components of the final footprint we will leave in this life, there is much more that makes up the awesome concept of a legacy. Mindfully creating our legacies as we make decisions, build relationships and invest our energy each day will leave us with greater peace when our last day-- and last breath-- arrives.

How do you mindfully create a legacy when it is something that seems so illusive and intangible?

A legacy is most often built upon a lifetime of simple interactions and daily decisions. Occasionally legacies are built on a heroic act like that of Todd Beemer and Navy Seal Michael Monsoor. When Todd Beemer heroically stormed the cockpit of a hijacked plane with other passengers on September 11th and Michael Monsoor threw his body on a live grenade to shield his fellow Navy Seals from the blast, they were making decisions in the moment. And in the same way, our day-to-day decisions matter in constructing a life legacy too. Deciding who you will be in every day relationships, at work, and in moment-to-moment decisions will offer a great place to mindfully build your legacy.

Things to consider as you design your legacy:

- Financial abundance is more than a means to power, attainment of luxuries and security, but it is also an opportunity to further a cause, lift up individuals and support something you value. How can you put some of your financial resources to work for what and whom you value most?
- Your relationships and connections, whether they last a lifetime or mere moments, house the potential to propel people to greatness and inspired living. Recognize the gifts of those you meet, acknowledge the efforts of those who do a job for you and show gratitude without measure.
- Pour love and acceptance into a child. Whether you are a parent or not, you have the opportunity to mold a new generation with every interaction you have with a child. Buy some lemonade from the child who has set up a stand on the corner, mentor a child, donate to a scholarship fund or simply turn off your TV and cell phone when you are eating dinner with your child.
- Extend your sphere of influence. The Internet has made it possible for a woman who lives in South Carolina to learn from a woman who lives in South Africa. Be open to opportunities to positively affect people you may or may not ever meet in person.
- Seek opportunities to give help and give hope. These simple four letter words have a way of etching themselves on a person's heart for a lifetime. An encouraging word, a leg-up, offering support in a crisis or a simple

acknowledgment can provide the opportunity to completely change the trajectory of another person's life. And most often, it won't even cost you a dime.

- Respect the planet and all living things. Switching to a refillable bottle for your gym jaunts may not seem like much, but the small decisions you make to walk instead of drive or bring your own travel mug to the coffee shop to get your morning latte add up. Crank up your awareness that the earth is a living host.
- Be a person of integrity and you will earn the respect of those in your life. This will have your family and peers celebrating you and your biggest critics admiring you. This respect most often comes from speaking truth, acting humbly, and offering respect in your connections with others.
- Be a smile-maker. We are presented with countless opportunities every single day to make someone smile. Whether it is a compliment, a gesture of support or breaking out that hilarious one-liner at just the right time, seizing those opportunities imprints your legacy on the heart of another.
- Share your talents and natural-born gifts. Whether you own a company that builds beautiful homes or you are responsible for lovingly landscaping them, share your innate talents with the world. Your beautiful voice, ability to advocate for another or gentle manner with a child may be examples of some of the special things that you have to offer the world. Share them.
- Participate in values-based work. Honoring your values in your work will carry over to your home life too. This creates a whole-life scenario that is congruent with your core beliefs. This is a powerful element to include when creating a legacy you'll love. Participating in work that opposes your values will erode your health, level of happiness and muddy the vision of your legacy.

When Mattie Stepanek was approaching the end of his short life he asked his mother Jeni, *“Have I done enough? Will it last?”* This young man of 13 had not only appeared on The Oprah Show many times promoting his message of peace, but enjoyed a very special, personal friendship with Oprah too. Mattie wrote several New York Times best-selling books, inspired audiences of thousands with his eloquent speeches, and raised millions for MDA. So one might wonder how it is possible that this child, who was an acclaimed poet, peacemaker and philosopher could possibly query his mom in this way. The answer to this is that it is in our nature to wonder if our life has made a difference in the world. We want to know that the world is somehow better because we were here. We want to feel extraordinary—even if it is well hidden in the very ordinary aspects of our lives.



President Jimmy Carter eulogized Mattie saying, *“We have known kings and queens, and we’ve known presidents and prime ministers, but the most extraordinary person whom I have ever known in my life is Mattie Stepanek.”* And the truth is, whether a person lives thirteen seconds or lives 113 years; his life matters and holds a legacy. Mattie taught us to distinguish being important from being famous and that it is a right and a gift to be able to touch another human being. So if you want a place to mindfully begin building a legacy you will love, why not begin there?

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Traditional Chinese Medicine, Food Therapy and Cancer Prevention

中医、食疗与癌症预防

by Helen Hu, OMD

When we discuss how Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can help prevent cancer, we might think we have to take something to kill the cancerous cells in order to prevent those cells from growing into a tumor. I believe that by the time cancer cells begin to grow in a body, that body already has a “pro-cancer condition” that creates a cancer-friendly environment. If the “pro-cancer condition” is eliminated, the more chance one has to win the battle.

The concept of “pro cancer condition” is very broad. It is a condition of imbalance between our body and our living environment (such as extreme sun exposure, cold, hot, dampness, or pollution), and an imbalance of our internal organs.

The cells in our bodies need a healthy, nourishing, and non-toxic environment. Like the optimal soil conditions necessary for seeds to grow, our cells require the right temperature and ph-balance to function normally. No matter how good the “seeds” are, they cannot grow well in a bad soil. Similarly, our cells cannot function normally in a pro cancer condition, a condition that increases the chance of someone producing cancer cells.

Another part of the pro cancer condition results from an imbalance within internal organs, which primarily derives from an unhealthy diet, life style and stress. These imbalances can create phlegm or stagnate the blood or Qi (energy). If there is a blockage in these areas, both congestion and deficiency will occur – as if a river was blocked; one side would result in congestion, the other side would be void of water (deficiency). Water that is congested for a long time will turn into a stagnant pond. This can be compared to a lump starting to grow in the body. In addition, at the same time, the deficiency side of the blocked river has no fresh water flowing, similar to the way blockages in our body contribute to decreased circulation and decreased ability to provide nutrients to our organs. In a pro-cancer condition, organs lose their balance and the body does not have the strong immunity necessary to clean up the toxins, resulting in a weak defense against cancer cells.

What are the indications that our body’s immune system has started to weaken?

TCM believes that our body’s strongest defense comes from good and free flowing Qi (energy) within and among all five important organs: heart, liver, spleen, lung and kidney. Each organ’s defensive energy will guard certain parts of the body. We need to pay attention to our bodies, to identify the signs and symptoms that indicate our bodies’ immune systems are weak. Here are some indications:

1. Easily catching colds and the development of allergies or herpes are related to the decline of lung organ defensive energy.
2. Easily fatigued, a bland taste in the mouth, or prone to diarrhea indicates a weakness of the spleen organ.
3. Skin changes (with more small red moles especially around wrist and abdominal area), easily angered, short temper and impatient is related to liver organ imbalance



4. Sensitive to cold, feeling cold and frequent urination indicates low kidney energy.
5. Insomnia, anxiety, ulcers in mouth, and no motivation to participate in activities indicates weak heart energy

What should we do if we start to show signs of a weakened immune system?

Our immunity gradually decreases with age. The first step in strengthening our immunity is to correct any unhealthy life style factors that compromise our immunity.

As a first step, one’s basic life style needs to be examined and perhaps modified:

1. Sleep: It is very important to have at least a good 7 hours of sleep per night for people after middle age. In Chinese Medicine, it is believed that nighttime is yin time. The body is rebuilding during this time and restoring body energy and substance that we consume during the daytime (yang time). Long-term sleep deprivation causes the body to lose the time necessary to rejuvenate. If the immunity is compromised, it decreases the lymphocyte numbers and liver detoxification process.
2. Unhealthy emotion: constant worry, depression, negative thinking and prone to become upset easily by little things. All these emotions can directly or indirectly affect the production and maturity of immune cells.
3. Sedentary life style: recommend at least 30 minutes of exercise per day.
4. Excessive drinking and smoking: both can decrease the activity of NK (nature killer) cells and impair the body’s anti-viral capabilities.

Chinese Food Therapy:

Chinese food therapy is a very important part of TCM. Restoring and nourishing the body by using food therapy is the best way to be proactive in prevention.

If one sees signs of a pro-cancer condition in the body, there are several basic food therapies/recipes we can consume daily:

1. When one sees signs of Lung energy deficiency:

Lung Qi Congee

Spring rice: 100g

Wild Chinese Yam (*Dioscorca Opposita Radix*): fresh 100g (dry : 30g)

Bai he (Lily bulb): fresh 100g (dry 30 g)

Astragalus: 20 g

Make with water; cook all ingredients until they are soft and smooth. Serve as breakfast daily.

2. Weakness of Spleen organ:

One Cucian Carp fish tail (*Carassius auratus*) 150 g.

Dry ginger: 10g

Dry tangerine peel: 5g

Pepper: 1g

Sha ren (Cardamon): 3 g

Mix all spices and fish with a small amount of salt. Cook with water. Drink the soup and eat the fish. Once a day for 2 weeks as course of treatment.

3. Liver organ imbalance:

The first step to alleviate liver imbalance is to stop smoking and drinking, if you do so. The second step is use TCM food therapy, to support the liver in recovering from damages.

a) Go Ji Berry Congee

Spring rice 100g

Go Ji berry 30 pieces



Sesame seed (50 g. baked to brown in pans, then crush into powder)

Cooked rice and Go Ji berries in water until soup becomes smooth; before serving add sesame powder and vitamin B1 powder. Take once a day for 7-10 days as a course of treatment.

b) Mushroom Date soup

Black fungus mushroom: 15 g (Soak in water until soft. Cut into small strips.)

White fungus mushroom: 15 g (Soak in water until soft. Cut into small strips.)

Chinese red dates: 15 pieces

Stir fry all ingredients for a short time (about one minute) then add 100 cc water and cover. Slowly cook for 5-8 minutes to make soup, then add salt, a few drops of sesame oil and green onion (cut into small pieces for flavor) right before serving.



4. Compromised Kidney energy:

Lotus Seed and Ginger Congee

Organic Black Rice 100g

Astragalus: 30 黄芪

Walnuts: 20 g. 核桃

Eucommia Bark: 10 g. 杜仲

Dry Ginger: 10g

Cinnamon: 5g 肉桂

Put above ingredients in a pot with water. Cook for 2-4 hours over moderate heat. Best way to cook it is to use a crock-pot filled with cool water and cook overnight until everything becomes softened. Serve warm as breakfast or serve with dinner along with other kinds of food.

Take daily for one month as course of treatment.

5. Heart and sleep problem

Rice and Whole Wheat Porridge (Congee)

Spring rice (or sushi rice) 100g

Whole wheat (whole grain) 100g

Chinese red dates: 6 pieces (without kernel) 大枣

Stir fry sour date kernels: 10g 炒酸枣仁

Cooking instructions: Wash whole wheat and boil in water for 30 minutes. Use the wheat juice (discard wheat) to cook rice, dates and the sour date kernels to make congee.

Serve: Take 1-2 times per day for 5-6 days

In her Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic, Dr. Hu has used one of her Chicken Soup recipes to restore overall body immunity, body energy, and promote well being. It has been used by many patients who undergo chemotherapy and experience fatigue and low immunity, patients with chronic conditions, and in recovery for illness. For people without ailments, it is best taken during the wintertime to promote health and strengthen the body's immunity and well-being.

Dr. Hu's Therapeutic Chicken Soup Recipe

One Whole Organic Chicken

Astragalus: 30g 黄芪

Chinese Wild Yam: 30g

Cordyceps capsule: 4-6 capsules 冬虫夏草胶囊

Shitake mushroom: 6-7 pieces 花菇

Chinese red dates: 2-4 pieces 大枣

Vegetables: as you wish

Ginger and Salt



Cooking instruction: put Cordyceps capsules (4-6) inside of the stomach of the chicken and add all of the other herbs and ingredients, with water to cover. Cook at a moderate temperature for 2 – 4 hours. Continue adding water to the pot to make a sufficient quantity of broth and cook the chicken until the whole chicken falls apart. Drink the soup and eat the meat as you wish for 5 days as a course of treatment. You can also use the broth as a base for other kinds of soups.

Note: this soup can also help people to restore their energy and support the immune system. It has helped many people with chronic disorders, post surgery recovery, people who are undergoing chemotherapy or after chemo. For healthy individuals, it is consumed for prevention, increased well being and longevity.



Dr. Helen Hu, originally from Beijing China, has studied Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) since the age of 12. A Cardiologist and practitioner of integrated medicine for nine years before immigrating to the United States, Dr. Hu passed the "U.S. Licensing Medical Exam" (USLME) in 1997 while simultaneously obtaining her Oriental Medical Degree (OMD) in the US. Dr. Hu currently directs and manages a successful TCM practice in San Diego. She lectures locally on Acupuncture and the benefits of combining Eastern / Western styles of Medicine. Dr. Hu has been practicing Tai Ji and Qi Gong over 25 years, and she teaches these ancient Chinese arts Saturday mornings on Shelter Island in San Diego as a gift to the community and to help promote well being and longevity. www.bodywithoutmystique.com or www.OMDweb.net

(book review continue from Page 74)

Lastly, the author takes you through how the way of energy exercises can be nurtured from early childhood, to teenager, to meet the physiological needs of women, middle age, and old age. This is truly an exercise system for life. The very last chapter includes exercises for self-care and for common health issues as some of the medical benefits of this system are explained. There is even a discussion of using this system for first aid.

This is the kind of book that you will come back to; time and again as you gain understanding and the length and times of your practice increases. One must be patient, persistent and practice in a diligent manner to reap the many benefits of learning this Qigong system. May the Qi be with you.

Reviewed by Salvatore Casano Ph.D. R.N.



Salvatore Casano R.N., PhD – a registered nurse with a PhD in Holistic Health, and is an ATCQZ certified Tai Chi and Qigong instructor. His Tai Chi and Qigong journey began over 20 years ago while working as a chemistry instructor, when he felt the need for a more holistic approach to health care. Participating in many programs and projects relating to health, Dr. Casano educates the community on living a healthier lifestyle to avoid obesity and diabetes, and as a way to reduce stress. Over the years, he has learned from many masters including Bill Philips, Marc Issacs, Richard Chu, as well as two ATCQA advisors, Dr. Roger Jahnke, and Bill Douglas. Dr. Casano, along with his wife Veronica, often sojourn together on his healing path, as they use their skills in helping others connect the mind, body, and spirit. They have four adult children, seven grandchildren, and a cat, "Tiger."

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The Way of Energy: Mastering the Chinese Art of Internal Strength with Chi Kung Exercise

By Master Lam Kam Chuen.

Softcover 191 pp. Published by Simon & Schuster 1991.

ISBN: 0-671-73645-0 \$14.95

Reviewed by Salvatore Casano, R.N., Ph.D.

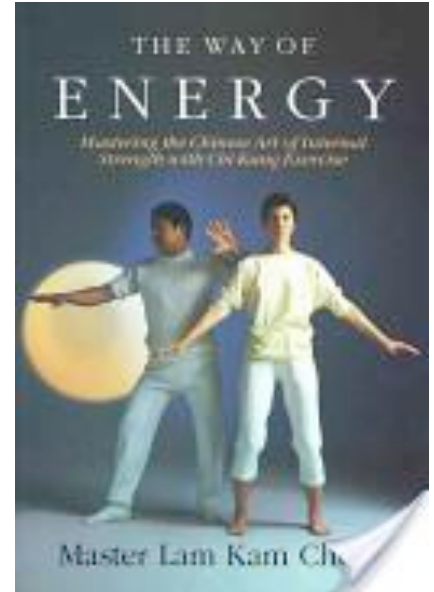
This well done book on the Zhan Zhuang (“standing like a tree”) system of Qigong is meant for individual self-study. **“Like a tree with its deep roots, powerful trunk, and great spreading branches reaching into the sky, you will appear to remain unmoving. In reality, you will be growing from within.”** (p11). The book is easy to read with lots of beautiful photos and instructional diagrams to help perform the exercises and to emphasize certain concepts. The reader is encouraged to work through all the exercises at their own pace following all the detailed instructions given in the text.

The book is divided into four parts. Part 1 takes the reader through a set of warm up exercises, learning the method of breathing and relaxing, how to stand with correct posture and balance and coordination of mind-body internal connections. As a result of these standing practices one can experience many different body sensations which are thoroughly discussed, so one can monitor one’s progress.

Part two of the book is the nuts and bolts in constructing this energy system practice. The reader is led through the Ba Duan Jin or “Eight Strands of Brocade” exercises. These exercises increase the flow of energy along the full length of specific meridians, which affect the internal organs these meridians pass through. The Ba Duan Jin creates a nice warm up to begin the five positions of the standing qigong practice. The reader begins with standing in *wuji*, then to *holding the balloon*, followed by *holding your belly*, *standing in the stream*, and the more taxing 5th position *holding the balloon in front of your face*. One stands in each posture for a recommended amount of time. A whole practice routine follows, called *The Full Circle* where these 5 positions are held in a certain sequence for a total of 30 minutes. The sequence begins with *wuji*, followed by *holding the ball in front of chest*, *holding the balloon in front of your face*, *standing in a stream*, *holding the belly* and returning to *wuji*.

Additional exercises are taught, bringing a total of 9 positions of Zhan Zhuang. Some of the newer exercises come with a caveat. These exercises involve being weighted on one foot while holding a posture, and have a strong effect on the cardiovascular system. The reader is advised to have medical approval before doing these exercises since they can tend to raise blood pressure during the period of training. These exercises are the same standing exercise previously learned, but done with weighted leg. The benefits of these exercises are many: better rooting to the ground, stronger legs, enhanced balance, increased energy flow, and tranquil mind are just a few. **“Beneath its sloping shoots, the bamboo’s stem is gently curved. It takes the force of all the elements-enduring, rooted, calm. Unlike the trees that break and fall, its stem is just a hollow, nothing more. Its strength is in its emptiness.”** (p. 110)

The remaining chapter in Part 3 discusses the mental visualizations and internal flow of energy (Qi) by using imagery and mindful intentions. Through diligent practice one can get the internal energy to flow and actually feel this internal energy as well. Part four of the book deals with how these energy exercises can affect your daily life with helpful hints for doing energy exercises upon awakening, in the office, while sitting or using the telephone, using the computer, traveling, sports, gardening and other leisure activities, lifting heavy weighted items.



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Yang Sheng

Cultivating Qi for Body, Mind & Spirit

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 work toward the same goals!

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- 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.